



The Link

May 2015

St. Paul United Church of Christ
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Words of encouragement from Rev. Becky Sunday

In the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to John, Jesus said, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this sheepfold. I will call their names, and they will hear the sound of my voice." It is sometimes easy to forget that the church is a big place and that we are not alone in our endeavors to be Christ's disciples. We get caught up in the goings on here in our own community of faith and we lose sight of the breadth and depth of the whole people of God. Lately, there have been a few events to remind me that we are not alone in the church. We have partners in our Northwest Ohio Association, the Ohio Conference, the wider United Church of Christ, and even beyond our borders.

On April 26, the Northwest Ohio Association gathered together at St. Stephen's UCC in Sandusky for its 52nd annual meeting. As I told those of you who were in worship the next day, association meetings always remind me of family reunions. We get to reconnect with folks that we have not seen in a while, to hear their stories, to renew our friendships, and to celebrate our milestones together. We are reminded in these gatherings that we have a shared mission and that, while we all have particular ministries and missions within our local contexts, there are some things that are better accomplished when we work together in the name of Christ.

Some of you may know that I serve on the Board of Directors for the Ohio Conference. I am just finishing up six years on the board. This September, my second term will conclude, and it will be someone else's turn to represent NWOA to our conference. Again this has been work outside of our local context, but it is important work. For decades, the Ohio Conference has struggled with how to be responsible stewards of our Outdoor Ministry resources and finances. The Board of Directors has worked hard to get a handle on what is happening and has come to the conclusion that some difficult and painful decisions must be made if we hope to have this important ministry continue in any meaningful way. Our own congregation has been blessed by our Outdoor Ministry programming, sending many children and adults to church camp and having our own faith community's life enriched in the process.

Please take time to read the letter from the Ohio Conference moderator, Tim Smith, which is included in the pages of this newsletter so that you are aware of the difficult decisions that are having to be made by the board.

Every two years, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ gathers to worship, to do business, and to celebrate our life together as the UCC. This year, we are particularly blessed to have the General Synod meeting in our own backyard. General Synod 30 will gather in Cleveland, Ohio June 26-30, 2015. You are invited to attend as a volunteer or a visitor. General Synod is a wonderful time of worship, reconnecting with old friends, and making new friends. Imagine worshiping and singing hymns with 4,000 of your closest friends! If you are interested in finding out more about how to be involved with this year's General Synod, go to www.ucc.org. It is a big, beautiful church!

As I write this article, I am ready to say goodbye to Christian Chavarria, our guest from El Salvador. In his sermon at St. Paul UCC this past Sunday, Christian reminded us that even though we belong to different communities, we all belong to the same God. It is our responsibility as disciples of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to follow his example in seeking out the poor, the downtrodden, and the lost and to bring them safely into the fold. It is too easy to divide up the world into "us" and "them"—too easy to turn ourselves inward and forget that there is a big church out there beyond our walls and an even bigger world. We are called to be Christ's disciples, to follow with faith and hope into the world to meet our neighbors. And the great blessing of this call is that when we follow Jesus outside of ourselves and meet Christ in the face of others, we will discover that we are not alone. In fact, we are indeed in great company.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Becky



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April 20, 2015

Greetings and blessings to you in this Eastertide season.

Spring has definitely sprung in my corner of the Ohio Conference (Cincinnati), and I marvel at the daffodils and tulips as they push skywards. The long grey days of winter are but a fading memory. I hope that is the case where you are as well.

Thoughts of sunshine and warm breezes entertain as we look forward to summer. I'd like to remind you that you or a loved one can experience both sunshine and warm breezes at one of the many camps being offered this summer at Pilgrim Hills. The Division of Outdoor Ministry has been hard at work preparing for a great summer so you can "Power Up" and plug into the unlimited connection of the Holy Spirit. Visit www.journeythehills.org to access the Outdoor Ministries website and catalog.

In my previous letter to the Ohio Conference, I shared that, at our April 17 meeting, the Board of Directors planned to review the status of the camping program and its financial impact on the future of our Conference. I'd like to thank all of you who took the time to reach out and share your thoughts. Thanks also to Nate Taylor, Rob Patton, Robin Stanley and Bob Kutschbach, who traveled to join us and offer their assistance and thoughtful advice in moving forward.

During the camping review, after much discussion the Board arrived at a three-pronged plan as a way to proceed.

1) Re-launch and expand Outdoor Ministries so it serves more members of the Conference and reaches congregations in every region and members that reflect the diversity of our Ohio Conference. We will do this through a vision tentatively called "Sacred Making" – recognizing that whenever and wherever we gather together, God is with us and makes the place and the experience sacred. The Conference will encourage and support local congregations to participate in "Sacred Making" through local programming, expertise, events and grants. The majority of our 350 churches and 95,000 members have not participated in our traditional summer camping or camp-based spiritual weekend programs. We believe through the vision of "Sacred Making" we can bring the spirit of Outdoor Ministries to them.

2) Recognizing the importance of the camping program and its contribution towards faith formation, we pledge to continue to support it; but we have reached the conclusion that to ensure a future for the Ohio Conference and Outdoor Ministry we must sell one of the existing camps.

This is not an easy decision. Many of your directors have a deep history with one or both camps. Each camp has helped connect campers to Creation, Creator, to themselves, to each other. Each camp also reflects an important part of our shared history and the story of the Ohio Conference.

Since there are reasons to keep or to sell both camps, the Board plans to put both camps on the market and agree to an offer that best ensures a viable, sustainable, meaningful Outdoor Ministry. We are assuming it could take as long as a year to 18 months before we receive a firm offer.

3) Initiate a capital campaign to build upon the proceeds of whichever camp is sold. The goal for this capital campaign would be to build an endowment of some \$3.5 - \$4.5 million whose income properly supports our summer camping program and generates funding for Sacred Making grants, programming and events. Funding at this level is the only way to guarantee a future for Outdoor Ministries at the remaining camp.

For the more than 700 of you who indicated through the "Affirm Camp" movement that you would support the camps financially – this will be an opportunity for you to help "Power Up" Outdoor Ministries and Sacred Making for many years. Thank you in advance for your support.

The Board will also offer up a creative way in which a congregation that is so inclined can direct a portion of their own endowment towards the success and future of Outdoor Ministries.

A motion to adopt the above approach was made and seconded on April 17; however, we postponed the vote until May 30 so we could once again solicit your feedback. Please note that the Division of Outdoor Ministries approved this approach at their April 18 meeting.

If you have any comments or concerns please direct them to ohioucc@ocucc.org by May 23.

The board also prays for your continued support in our effort to both provide Outdoor Ministries and put the Conference on a firmer financial footing. We are blessed that you are on this journey with us.

Yours in Christ,

Tim L Smith
Moderator, Ohio Conference
United Church of Christ

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

Confirmation Class will be confirmed on
Sunday, May 24th
at the 10:15 Service.
Please plan to attend and welcome
our new confirmands.

A Message from Church Council

- Repair of the flooring in the handicapped bathroom and hall will begin soon.
- The main entrance to the church (Mechanic St.) will be updated to include a keyless entry system. This will insure the congregation and staff's safety while in the building.
- Kristina Hunter has submitted her resignation effective April 30, 2015.
- Faith Formation- Rally Day, FEAST programming for fall 2015, and Sunday School curriculum are all in the planning stages.
- Church Mice-Betty Wiedenbein- Continue to work towards making our church more inviting.
- Living Endowment Board-work continues on booklet for ways to promote contributions to our church.

BIBLE STUDY

There is to be a new bible study that will begin on **Thursday, May 14 at 7:00PM**. This will continue on Thursday evenings through June 18. The study is part of the Uppy Women of the Bible series and will focus on the book of Esther. Please note that even though women happen to be the main subject matter of the series, you don't need to be a lady to participate!



ALL ARE WELCOME! If you have any questions contact Pastor Becky or call the church office.

SUMMER SEWING GROUP

As an extension of our FEAST Sewing group, we are starting a sewing class that will meet this summer, **June 10 – August 12, 2015, on Thursdays**. The class will be project driven, so each participant can start or finish projects at their own speed. This would enable us to meet each week but work on our specific projects and not worry if a class was missed due to vacations or other obligations. We will start after lunch on Thursdays and work at least until 3:30 pm. Participants may wish to join us for lunch or at 1:00 pm. Anyone from 2nd grade on up can join. We always have a great time and learn skills that last a lifetime. Please contact Tami Zvez at tamilz1@hotmail.com or call the church office 419-738-2215 to register or for more information.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY, MAY 31ST



The class of 2015 will be recognized during worship on May 31st at the 10:15 service.



We want to recognize anyone who is part of a graduating class in 2015. If you or a family member would like to be recognized please be sure to contact Pastor Becky by May 18th, with the graduate's name, college/university/program. Also, please indicate if you will be attending service on May 31st. Parents of high school seniors, a brief questionnaire has been mailed to you to collect information about your graduate. There will be a time during the service to bless our high school graduates and send them forth into a new phase of life.

You may contact Pastor Becky in her office (419)738-6216 with questions.

Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School will be June 8th-12th. Hosts are First English Lutheran and St Paul UCC. It will be at First English Lutheran. The theme for this year is Thailand Trek. A registration form must be filled out, which you will

find on the next page or pick one up at your church office.



Summer Lunches for Kids

The Mission Committee asks you to please stay after either worship service on **May 17** for a brief informational session regarding the Summer Lunch Program. The session will be held in the sanctuary following each service. All ages are welcome to stay & hear more about this amazing opportunity to provide meals in our community this summer.

The summer lunch program will run for seven weeks, so many supplies are needed. Please prayerfully consider donating a generous supply of any of the following items. We will begin collecting items now in Timmermeister Hall.

- **Fruit cups**
- **Pudding cups**
- **Pre-Packaged Peanut Butter Crackers**
- **Pre-Packaged Cheese-filled Crackers**
- **Granola bars**
- **Fresh Fruit**
- **Variety packs of individual serving-sized cereals**





Vacation Bible School

Preschool through 5th Grade

With your Hosts

First English Lutheran and St. Paul UCC

At First English Lutheran Church

107 W. Mechanic Street

June 8th-12th

9:00-12:00PM

Registration Form (One Per Child/Helper)

Child's/Helper's Name: _____

Child's Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Last school grade completed: _____

Parents: Mother's Info

Father's Info

Name: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Person registering child. _____

T-Shirt size: Youth _____ (S, M, L) Adult _____ (S, M, L, XL, 2XL)

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Please make your check payable to FELC

Add Music CD \$6.50 x _____ = \$ _____

Total Paid \$ _____

For Office Use Only Amount Paid _____ cash or check # _____

Relationship: _____

Work #: _____

Cell/Home # : _____

Allergies or other medical conditions:

Crew number or name (for Church use only):

Home Church: _____

Would like to be in same group as:

WHAT KIND OF CHRISTIAN SHOPPER ARE YOU?

by Laura Kinstle

One of my hobbies that I enjoy to do is to shop. I don't shop all the time. I just do it on occasion. If you would ask my husband, though, he would say the opposite. I love to shop, especially on line. I am confined to the house most of the time and besides doing my articles for the "Link" and my other housework, I find shopping quite enjoyable.

I really started thinking about this and realized that Christians are like shoppers. There are many kinds of them.

One kind of shopper is one that will not shop at all. He doesn't go to church on Sunday. In fact, he never enters the church or as I would say in shopping language; he never enters the store. He may window shop or look at the church newsletter just to know what's going on in the church in general but he never physically enters the church. Yet, he belongs to the church and has an interest in it from the outside in. (No, not inside out. I mean outside in.)

The next kind of shopper is one that shops occasionally but doesn't really make a habit of it. This is the kind of Christian that goes to church on the holidays, confirmation, baptisms and just the important dates of the year. He has a faith in God but for some reason finds it hard to make it to church. Maybe he lacks motivation or the means of getting to church. But, he still is a Christian and has an interest in church. At least he comes (shops) once in a while.

Then there is the third kind of shopper. He likes to shop all the time to keep up to date on the latest styles and has a general interest in the art of shopping. This is the Christian that comes to Sunday school, church and belongs maybe to choir or other church organizations. This type of Christian always finds it necessary to be in church each and every Sunday.

What kind of Christian shopper are you? Are you one that doesn't like to shop at all, does it on occasion or shops all the time?

I know I fall in between the cracks on being a Christian shopper. I have a genuine interest in church, should attend more often but wishes they were able to participate once again like they use to. I want to shop so badly but my physical health does not allow me, too. Please don't wait until you're not able to shop (or be a good Christian). Do your shopping while you can. You'll be surprised how much there is in the store. Oops, I mean in the church!



Our Church Family

With caring thoughts...



Our deepest sympathy and condolences to **Jeff Dorner and his family** on the passing of Jeff's mother, Doris Dorner, who passed away on Thursday, April 2, 2015.

Our deepest sympathy and condolences to **Jim Hearn Sr. and his family** on the passing of Jim's mother, who passed away on Friday, April 3, 2015.

Our deepest sympathy and condolences to **Fred Schlosser and family** on the passing of Fred's mother, who passed away on Friday, April 3, 2015.

.Our deepest sympathy and condolences to the **friends and family of Louise Simpko**, who passed away on Sunday, April 12, 2015.

Our deepest sympathy and condolences to **Tom Freytag and his family** on the passing of Tom's brother, Joseph Freytag who passed away on April 14, 2015.





HAPPY BIRTHDAY
to our
St. Paul Youth!

May

Lacey Detrick	5/04/2001
Cort Merricle	5/06/1997
Ben Schroer	5/08/1997
Nikolas Hunter	5/11/2007
Henry Krueger	5/13/2011
Jake Groh	5/19/2009
Emory Preston	5/19/2009
Mason Steinke	5/21/2009
Brandon Niemeyer	5/24/2002
Olivia Place	5/25/2001

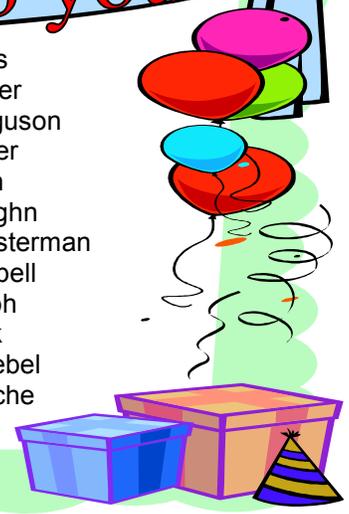
Happy Anniversary!!

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| 05/06/1965 | Harold & Eileen Werling |
| 05/07/1960 | Ken & Hannah Kohler |
| 05/12/1984 | George & Parmie Herman |
| 05/18/1996 | David & Amy Schlenker |
| 05/24/1985 | Jeff & Kay Dorner |
| 05/24/1997 | Josh & Katherine Wellington |
| 05/25/1974 | Rex & Jean Thomas |
| 05/26/1956 | Eugene & Shirley Pohlable |
| 05/26/1990 | Brian & Kim Warner |
| 05/28/2004 | Jason & Janie Childress |



Happy Birthday to you...

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------|-------|------------------|
| 05/03 | Kristine Beane | 05/22 | Colin Jarvis |
| 05/08 | Jarret Webb | 05/22 | Spike Kohler |
| 05/10 | Janie Childress | 05/23 | Sarah Ferguson |
| 05/11 | Ryan Loy | 05/24 | Doris Hibner |
| 05/11 | Jessica Hearn | 05/25 | Hank Stroh |
| 05/12 | Tammy Nuesmeyer | 05/25 | Laura Vaughn |
| 05/13 | Diane Schlosser | 05/25 | Angela Hosterman |
| 05/13 | David Wiedenbein | 05/25 | Kendra Azbell |
| 05/16 | Deb Griffo | 05/26 | Alan Joseph |
| 05/17 | Mary Ann Shroyer | 05/27 | Terry Clark |
| 05/17 | Jean Thomas | 05/28 | Jacob Zwiebel |
| 05/19 | Stan Maxson | 05/29 | Justin Frische |
| 05/19 | Leona Glunt | | |
| 05/21 | Bonnie Poppe | | |
| 05/21 | Kala Warner | | |
| 05/21 | Kristyn Zwiebel | | |



Meetings and Events

BOOK CLUB MEETING



The next book club meeting will be held AT THE GARDENS on **Tuesday, May 19th at 7PM**. The book for this month is "Early Autumn" by Louis Bromfield. We find Sabine Callendar coming back to where she grew up in Durham, New England. The folks there expected a pitiable and broken creature but find Sabine to be a strong and assured individual with an uncanny ability to see through the pretenses of the society that oppressed her as a girl. Sabine challenges the social order and becomes a catalyst for changes in the lives of the people around her. Louis Bromfield was awarded the Pulitzer prize for "Early Autumn" The book is available in the church office, so grab a copy and join us on the 19th.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

National Day of Prayer Service will be **Thursday, May 7, 2015**. It will be held at the Wapakoneta Fire Dept at 12:00 Noon.

FEAST

The last night for FEAST will be **Wednesday, May 6th**. We are going to celebrate with a carnival that night. Also please note, children that we pick up at school need to have a note sent to the Elementary building advising them of how your child will get home for the rest of the school year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL



The last day for Sunday School for the summer break will be **Sunday, May 17th**. For the next 3 weeks lets have a great attendance for all our classes!!!!

WOMEN'S GUILD

Women's Guild will begin meeting again on **Tuesday, May 12th at 1:30PM**. ALL women of the church and their friends are encouraged to attend.

CIRCLE ONE

We will meet for our "Carry-in" meeting at **NOON on Thursday, May 7th** at the TeaSpot on Blackhoof Street. Please call Sheri if you are planning to attend. Hope to see you there. We will then be off for the summer and will not meet again until **September 3, 2015**.

CIRCLE THREE

Circle Three will be meeting at Coffey Cup at **11:30AM on Thursday, May 21st**. All are welcome.

CALLED TO CARE

Called to Care will be meeting **after the 10:15 worship on Sunday, May 10th**. If you would like to join this team to visit our homebound, shut-in, and nursing home resident members, you are welcome!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION/FAITH FORMATION

The next meeting for the Christian Education/Faith Formation Team will be **Monday, May 4th, at 6:00PM**. We will be discussing the booth in the Merchants Building during Fair week; set-up, what to have available and other details. Also, if we are going to be involved with the Christian concert in July. We will also talk about Vacation Bible School which is being held June 8th-12th at First English Lutheran Church. All are welcome!!!!

General Fund

Approved General Fund Monthly Budget	\$26,808.69
Given to General Fund in April	\$19,859.50
Difference	- \$ 6,949.19
Given to Benevolences in April	\$1,035.50
Approved General Fund Budget Year to Date	\$106,818.08
Given to General Fund so far this year	\$ 81,938.71
Difference	- \$188,756.79
Given to Benevolences so far this year	\$5,848.81



Benevolence Giving for May ~ God's Storehouse

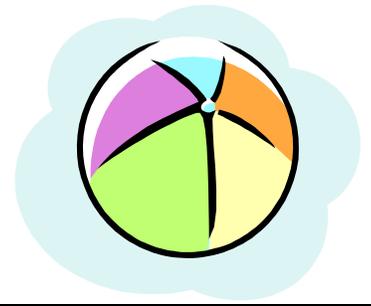
Strengthen the Church Offering



Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is Still Speaking.”



May 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 8:15AM Worship w/ Holy Communion 9:00AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship w/Holy Communion 3-5:30 PM Confirmation Class	4 6:00 PM Christian Ed/Faith Formation Team Meeting	5 7—8:30PM Suicide Survivors Support Group	6 3:00PM Last Day of Feast 6:15PM Cherubs 6:30PM Bell Choir 7:30PM Chancel Choir	7 12:00 Noon National Day of Prayer at Wapak Fire Dept 12:00 Noon Circle One 6:00 Executive Board Meeting	8 12:00 Noon National Day of Prayer at Wapak Fire Dept	9 CRI Sorting 9AM—12PM Eagle Scout Ceremony
10 MOTHER'S DAY 8:15AM Worship 9:00AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:30AM Call to Worship 3-5:30 PM Confirmation Class	11 6:00PM Church Council	12 1:30PM Women's Guild	13 6:30PM Bell Choir 7:30PM Chancel Choir	14 7:00PM Bible Study	15	16
17 8:15AM Worship 9:00AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:30AM Nominating Committee 3-5:30 PM Confirmation Class	18	19 7:00PM Book Club	20 7:30PM Chancel Choir	21 11:30-5:30PM American Red Cross Bloodmobile 11:30AM Circle Three 6:00PM Stewardship Meeting 7:00PM Bible Study	22	23 Graduation at WHS
24 Pentecost/ <i>Confirmation</i> 8:15AM Worship w/ Holy Communion 10:15AM Worship w/Holy Communion	25 Church Office will be closed 	26	27	28 7:00PM Bible Study	29	30
31 8:15AM Worship 10:15AM Worship with Graduates Recognition						