



Steeple News

December 2011



Pastor's Page

The legend is told of the time Satan and his demons were having a Christmas party. As the demonic guests were preparing to depart, one grinned and said, "Merry Christmas, your majesty!" At that, Satan replied with a growl, "Keep it merry my friend. If they ever get serious about it, we'll all be in trouble."

The deep significance of the Christmas season is its power over evil. The Christ Child came into a dark and foreboding world. It was a world of strife, cruelty, torture and murder. Amid the peaceful scene of the manger cradling the baby Jesus, a powerful force was coming into the world and the world would not be the same.

There has been a lot of hoopla about manger scenes on public property and the prohibition of public school children singing Christmas carols during school hours. Some courts have actually approved Christmas themes in public on the grounds that "Christmas is a civic holiday that is not necessarily religious in nature."

When we come to admit that Christmas has been hijacked by the economic god of consumerism and religion-free secularism we acknowledge that the power of Christmas has been defused. If we took Christmas seriously, the secular powers would be ferociously hostile to the advent of Christ and all its trappings. Remember: Christ has come to make the crooked places straight and the high places low. If this is true, business and government should be terrified where they stand.

A true Christmas would speak out against consumerism and the exploitation of labor. If department stores were serious about all the Christmas decorations that adorn their stores they would have to rethink how they pay their workers a meager minimum wage and purchase products made in sweatshops in third world countries.

If the White House were serious about the massive decorations that grace the white marble palace there would be more economic building around the world and less economic exploitation of weaker nations.

If the Church was really earnest about the holiday that it claims to own, our churches would be integrated and diverse with people from every socio-economic sector of society. The poor and the rich would worship the Christ Child together. The pews would be filled with people of all nationalities and languages and Americanism would only be one ethos among many others.

Once Christmas reverts from a civil holiday where banks and schools and government buildings are closed, to a cosmic *holy day* that deals with the world on equal and just terms, the demons of hell will certainly shake in their boots.

Have a *real* merry Christmas this year
Gary Proietti



Remember in Prayer

The family of Thomas Demuth who is survived by his brother George (Cheryl) Demuth and his sister Inez Avery, Anna Wargo-kidney transplant, Stan and Jean Schroer, Kegan Grames, Ritty Andrews, Luella Tuttle, Bob King and his friends Betsy Williams and Will Heiser, Jackie Harward, Jim and Jean Nichols, Tom and Jackie Holland, Robert Stilgenbauer, Don Hupfer, Faith Proietti's niece, Lisa Robson's brother Doug, Carter Bragdon's aunt Janice Bragdon, Brandon Doyon, Randy Weaver, Judy Shover, Donna Blackann, the family of Hollie Sneider, Helen Burgess, the Stewardship Team, Vision Team III, people of Oklahoma earthquake, and victims of abuse.

Thank You

Dear Friends, I wish to thank you for the many beautiful cards you sent my daughter, Sharon while she was at Briarfield of Milan. She enjoyed each one of them.

Love in Christ, Eileen Wikel

Dear Members and Friend of the First Congregational Church, U.C.C.,

Wow—the past several years have been a real balance of highs and lows. I truly appreciate all the cards, prayers and visits to my Mom, you made while she was in FTMC and TCJ.

I am still numb and my brain is mush and I know in God's time this shall pass. My brothers and I were graciously blessed with loving parents.

May God, our loving Creator, bless you all.

Sincerely, Jenny Kelley and Family

Pastor Gary, Thank you for your phone call shortly after the death of my Mom, Gordis Jean Brutsche. There is a huge void in my life, but I have peace knowing her Spirit is free. I appreciate your concern and thoughtfulness. Sincerely, Jenny Kelley

Christian Enlistment wishes to thank our

- ◆ Stewardship Team leaders, Mary Ann Robinson, Wilma Jean Kernell, Pauline Malone, Roger Wallace, Connie Deehr, Lindsay Aruskevicius, Marianne Snyder, Linda Phillips, Bobette Nemire and Barb Bement for volunteering to present 2012 Stewardship "Gather My People Home" Drive.
- ◆ Thanks to Brad and Linda Phillips for seeing that we had baskets to deliver our message.
- ◆ Thanks to Becky Coleman for making favors for the Stewardship dinner.
- ◆ Thanks to EHOVE's Culinary students and Chef Michael Edwards for a delicious meal. What a wonderful treat!
- ◆ Thanks to Reverend Roger Oats for speaking to us about our relationships to each other.

Thank You to Ethel Lois Smith for donating a walker and a quad cane to the church.



Baby Announcements

Becky & Jeremy Milller had a baby girl, Reagan Louise on October 8, 2011 7 pounds 6oz, 21"long. She has on older brother Travis. Grandmother, Diane Willis and Great grandparents , Charles and Sally Williams

Lou Ann Gioffre welcomed a new niece, Olivia Catherine Eakin, born November 11, 2011 Parents: Len & Kara Eakin and Grandmother Gail Smith Eakin.

Lectionary Readings**12/4/2011, TRUE,"**

Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

12/11/2011, TRUE,"Third Sunday of Advent

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Hope Restored",3

12/18/11 TRUE,"Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

12/24/2011, TRUE,"Christmas Eve

Isaiah 62:6-12

Psalm 97

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20",3

12/25/2011, TRUE,"First Sunday after Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]

John 1:1-14

Sing with Joy",3

12/29/2011, TRUE,"Psalm 148

Isaiah 49:5-15

Matthew 12:46-50",3

Lectionary, 12/30/2011, TRUE,"Psalm 148

Proverbs 9:1-12

2 Peter 3:8-13",3

—Diaconate

Keep In Touch Send a Greeting

Kenneth Charles Hahn,	678-D Katherine Way Ashland	OH 44805
Leroy Hayes,	12505 Chapin Rd,	Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Gladys Knott,	64 South Street,	Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Max Krueger,	8303 Main Road,	Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Jim and Jean Nichols,	P O Box 263,	Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Judy Shover,	30 North Berlin Road,	Berlin Heights, OH 44814
Jacqueline Harward	Gaymont Nursing Center	66 Norwood Ave. Norwalk OH 44857
Peg Puder,	224 Williams Street,	Huron, OH 44839
Richard (Ritty) Andrews,	4B Blossom Drive,	Norwalk, OH 44857
Linda Grech,	Twilight Gardens 196 W. Main St.	Norwalk OH 44857
Ruth Hite,	Norwalk Memorial Home,	272 Benedict Ave Norwalk, OH 44857
Mr. and Mrs. Horace Hill,	1613 Willow Drive, Sandusky, OH	44870
Martha Downing	12300 St Rt 61 S Berlin Heights	OH 44814
Donna Blackann	4 Valley View Dr. Berlin Heights	OH 44814
Martha Wright	P O Box 284,	Berlin Heights OH 44814
Luella Tuttle	14012 Florence-Wakeman Road,	Wakeman OH 44889
Georgianna Brunow	9606 Thorpe Rd Berlin Heights	OH 44814
Pam Hinman	Luther Oaks 36 Executive Dr Apt 23,	Norwalk OH 44857
Tom Holland	Erie County Care Center 3916 Perkins Ave.	Huron OH 44839
Peg Reising	Admiral's Point 1920 Cleveland Rd E,	Huron OH 44839
Jack Twaddle	5000 St Rt 601,	Norwalk OH 44857
Bob Schuster	Veterans Home 416 Columbus Ave.,	Sandusky OH 44870
Peg Puder	Admiral's Point 1920 Cleveland Rd W,	Huron OH 44839



The Christmas Tree in the Narthex needs donations of hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, socks and underwear for children and adults ...all sizes to be given to those in need in the Berlin Heights area. You can place the items under the tree or on the tree.

Hanging stockings is a tradition in many homes. Women's Fellowship has 16 Christmas stockings to fill. Donation of stocking stuffers for ages 3 and up would be appreciated. A donation box is located in the Fowler Room where the children's Christmas tree is located.

—Women's Fellowship

Dear Family and Friends in Christ,

The Diaconate Committee would like you to know what is happening in December and January:

- ◆ **December 18th** will be the Children's Christmas Pageant Program during worship service.
- ◆ **December 24th** will be a Candle Light Worship Service at 7:00 pm only.
- ◆ **December 25th** we will have a program during our worship service sharing our fellowship with Christmas carols.
- ◆ **January 8, 2012** will be our Annual Budget Meeting/Potluck

The Committee has had a year full of eventful and fun things. We only pray that we can make it even better next year! We would like to thank the three members who are leaving our group, which are Norma Robson, Grant Coleman and Diane Willis. We will miss all of you and appreciate all the things you volunteered to do to help make our Committee become stronger and more successful! If anyone wants to become a working member of our Committee for 2012, please contact Bill Deehr or Pauline Malone before our January meeting. (We welcome all fresh ideas!!!)

May this merry season touch your home with laughter, this giving season fill the earth with kindness and this special season wrap the world with GOD's love.

The Diaconate Committee wants to wish all of you a:

Safe and Wonderful Christmas Holiday Season!
(It's Christmas... there is magic everywhere, if you believe!)

Bill Deehr-Chairperson	Diane Willis
Roger Wallace-Vice-Chairperson	Nathan Nemire
Amy Pogasnik/Secretary	Becky Coleman
Norma Robson	Grant Coleman
Tom Robson	Alexis Burnham
Sandy Shively	Mike Drake

Church is Home because.....

This Church is Home because it has touched my family in so many ways, starting with my grandparents, that it feels like home! (If you have an hour I'll run it all by you!)

— Ethel Lois Smith

Church is Home because it is where my spirit can find renewal and purpose.

—Linda Phillips

Church is home because....We moved here in 1937. I was raised in this church. It was home to all my Hahn relatives as we grew up. I always feel love and family here.

—Martha Wright

STATISTICS DON'T LIE!!! How to stay safe in the World today!**Where IS the Safest Place?**

1. Avoid riding in automobiles because they are responsible for 20% of all fatal accidents.
2. Do not stay home because 17% of all accidents occur in the home.
3. Avoid walking on streets or sidewalks because 14% of all accidents occur to pedestrians.
4. Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water because 16% of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.
5. Of the remaining 33%, 32% of all deaths occur in Hospitals.

But... You will be pleased to learn that only .001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders.

Therefore, logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is at Church!

And . . . Bible study is safe too!

The percentage of deaths during Bible study is even less.

So, attend church, and read your Bible! IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE!

UNDER MANAGEMENT FOR OVER 2000 YEARS. —email communication 11.14.11

DREAM LIST for FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



1. Harvest Sharing
2. Youth Leader
3. Accessible Church Building
4. Community Events-Ice Cream social, Carnival Bizarre, Movie Night
5. Audio System-Hearing System
6. Projector in Sanctuary
7. Church Van/Bus
8. Librarian
9. Historian
10. Seniors Minister
11. Children's Pastor
12. Improved and More Parking
13. Overflowing Attendance
14. Year Round Sunday school
15. Air Conditioning in Sanctuary
16. Classroom Partitions
17. Community
18. Breakfast/Lunch
19. Safe place for children in summer
20. Teen program
21. Larger area for choir and musicians
22. Large storage area
23. Restore Lost Confirmands
24. Evening Worship
25. Church Camp
26. More participation
27. More paid staff

—Vision Team 11

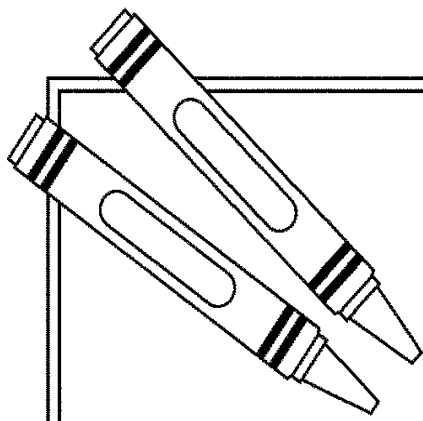


Fisher-Titus Medical Center - Health Ministry Program

December is Advent, the time we are preparing for Christmas, a time filled with excitement and busyness. For some of us this adds up to more and more stress. When stress is prolonged or very little is done to relieve our negative physical or emotional response to stress our body sends signals. We need to listen to these emotional signals; feeling tense, irritable, constantly pressured, unable to get worries and problems off our minds; having difficulty falling asleep or waking at night, having trouble thinking clearly or making decisions also being upset by things that normally do not upset you. Physical symptoms can include: stiffness across the neck and shoulders, knot in the stomach, headaches, shortness of breath, numbness or trembling in hands, legs or arms, nausea, diarrhea or dizziness just to name a few. What can we do to manage the stress in our lives? It can be as simple as getting enough sleep and rest. Sounds simple, but many of us under pressure push ourselves harder and longer, becoming so stressed that we become counter-productive. Slow down. The stress response has also been called the “hurry-disease” because we get on such a treadmill of rush, rush, rush. Take time to “smell the flowers”; make a human connection; to give and receive love, caring and attention. Take time for fun and play. It will bring balance to your life. Most of all remember the true reason for Christmas and enjoy the journey of Jesus’ birth! (Taken in part from Healthful Hints Vol. 2)

“...and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” Luke2:7.

***—Jill Schafer R. N.
Parish Nurse
Fisher Titus Health Ministry***



Just for **KIDS**

Give thanks

Find the words that are missing from the verses below. Use the graph to find the letters. For example: 3, 11 = b.

1) "I $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,7}{\quad}$ my $\frac{1,10}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,8}{\quad}$
 $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,8}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$ when I $\frac{\quad}{2,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,4}$ $\frac{\quad}{3,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,4}$ $\frac{\quad}{3,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{3,11}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,4}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,9}$
 you in my $\frac{\quad}{2,10}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{3,4}$ $\frac{\quad}{1,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,4}$ $\frac{\quad}{2,9}$ $\frac{\quad}{1,6}$." (Philemon 1:4)

2) "Be $\frac{3,10}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,8}{\quad}$ with the
 $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,10}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$... always and for
 $\frac{2,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,8}{\quad}$ giving
 $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$." (Ephesians 5:18, 20)

3) "Give $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$ in all
 $\frac{2,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,9}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,5}{\quad}$ $\frac{3,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,7}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,11}{\quad}$ $\frac{2,4}{\quad}$ $\frac{1,6}{\quad}$."
 (1 Thessalonians 5:18)



Graph								
1	l	J	s	n	g	y	G	i
2	e	o	h	k	d	r	p	c
3	a	t	v	u	w	m	f	b
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

Holy Humor

Point of View

One enterprising man asked the Lord, "Lord, how long is a million years to you?"

The Lord replied, "To me, a million years is like a second."

The man asked, "Lord, how much is a million dollars to you?"

The Lord said, "To me, a million dollars is like a penny."

The man asked, "Lord, may I have a penny?"

The Lord answered, "Sure, just a second."

Financial Planning

Q: Who was the wisest financial investor in the Bible?

A: Noah, who floated his stock while everyone else liquidated their assets.

Good Question

"Teacher," Tommy asked in Sunday School, "I don't understand. You're always saying that 'the children of Israel did this' and 'the children of Israel did that.' Didn't the grownups ever do anything?"

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Dec. 3	Linda Moon
Dec. 5	Jack Twaddle
Dec. 5	Linda Phillips
Dec. 5	Scott & Lisa Nash
Dec. 7	Gary & Shelia Andrews
Dec. 11	Rianne Gibbs
Dec. 12	Joanne Grech
Dec. 12	Kip Soviak
Dec. 12	Wm. Ratti
Dec. 14	Faye Waldron
Dec. 14	Jason Carter
Dec. 14	Lynford Grant
Dec. 15	Amber Harkey
Dec. 15	Don Hupfer
Dec. 15	Lisa Harkey
Dec. 17	Katherine Stipp
Dec. 17	Rita Holler
Dec. 19	Addison Wilson
Dec. 21	Gilbert & Amy Chambers
Dec. 26	Sarah Holler
Dec. 27	Eli Shover
Dec. 27	Patrick Leonard
Dec. 29	Christopher Harper
Dec. 29	Josepheen Soviak

December Worship Leaders

Dec. 4 Ushers: Roger Wallace, Nathan Nemire
 Diane Willis, Norma Robson
 Acolytes: Chase Aruskevicius
 Liturgist: Linda Phillips
 Children's Story: Ethel Lois Smith
 Nursery:
 Coffee Host: Congregation

Dec. 11 Ushers: Roger Wallace, Nathan Nemire
 Diane Willis, Norma Robson
 Acolytes: James Hill
 Liturgist: Confirmand
 Children's Story: Rev. Gary Proietti
 Nursery:
 Coffee Host:

Dec. 18 Ushers: Roger Wallace, Nathan Nemire
 Diane Willis, Norma Robson
 Acolytes: Lanease Cook
 Liturgist: Pauline Malone
 Children's Story: Advent Program
 Nursery:
 Coffee Hosts: Christian Education

Dec. 24 Acolytes: 7:00 Meredith Holler

Dec. 25 Ushers: Roger Wallace, Nathan Nemire

Diane Willis, Norma Robson

Acolytes: Tristen Wikel

Liturgist: None

Children's Story: None

Nursery: None

Coffee Hosts: None



American Red Cross

Blood Drive

Friday, December 2,

in the Fowler Room

1:00pm – 6 pm



Number and Color

Cost \$7.00

6 1/2 pot

_____ **Red**

_____ **White**

Total Amount of Order _____

Orders to Sandy Shively -Diaconate

In Honor

In Memory



Christian Enlistment looking for Bell Ringers for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive. Dates and Times: Fridays, December 2, 9 and 16 from Noon to 4:30pm and Saturdays, December 3, 10 and 17 from 9am to 11:30am. 1/2 hour shifts. All the proceeds will help those in the Berlin Heights community.

—Christian Enlistment Barb Bement



The Christmas Fund Offering

Sunday, December 18, 2011

Christmas is a time for giving, and the UCC's Christmas Fund is a wonderful way to give a gift to those who have faithfully served the church and find themselves struggling with financial needs in retirement.

First Congregational Church and Society
United Church of Christ
Reverend Gary Proietti
5 E. Main Street
P.O. Box 66
Berlin Heights, OH 44814
419-588-2102
e-mail address: bhcong@frontier.com
www.thebigwhitechurch.com

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year