



Steeple News

2011
January

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ
he is a new creation; old things have passed away;
behold, all things have become new.

—2 Corinthians 5:17

We will continually praise

God's Holy Name ;

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 9

TOO MUCH FOR CHRISTMAS

This past Christmas, my children and grandchildren sat in our living room opening an endless flow of presents from under the Christmas Tree. It was my job to keep the wrapping paper from piling up too high so I brought in garbage bags to collect the once pretty packaging.

You could barely make out the Christmas music from the stereo amid the din of tearing paper as each one furiously tore open gifts that took hours to buy and wrap, but only seconds to open. By the time it was over, the living room looked like an explosion at Toys R Us. The grand kids got away with a bounty of loot that would have rivaled six months of Black Beard's plundering.

This kind of thing gets me to pondering. And when I ponder, I get into trouble with the powers that be. I thought to myself, "Whew! So much stuff! Will they ever get to appreciate it all? Do they understand the sentiment of love and care that went into picking all this stuff out? Will we ever be able to pay for all this credit card spending...?"

Back at the turn of the twentieth century thirty-nine of the richest people in the world were listed in a newspaper. Among them were thirty-eight men. One of them was a woman – the richest woman in the world, who, when she died, was worth 100 million dollars. (That's about \$18 billion in today's economy) She had inherited ten million dollars as a young woman, and had parlayed it into a fortune even by today's standards.

Unfortunately, this woman never enjoyed her extreme wealth. Her name was Hetty Green, and up to the time of her death, was living in a rented tenement in Hoboken, New Jersey. She moved there from her home in Vermont to be near to her bank in New York City. She lived in abject poverty, yet made daily trips to her "office" at the bank to count her money and clip coupons.

Always in black, her clothing was tattered. It was said that she ate cold oatmeal, because it cost too much fuel to heat it up. Hetty visited free clinics to get medical treatment until the doctors got wise to her scheme. The bankers in the financial district called her “The Witch of Wall Street,” because of her odd behavior and eccentric obsession of hoarding money. She had no friends or family that wanted much to do with her.

I suppose we often go from feast to famine and back again. Few people know how to save a few pennies for a rainy day, while others live niggardly existences socking away everything they own, living lives most miserable. In the Bible, material wealth was considered a blessing for which we are to be thankful. Too little material resources cause hardship and despair, while too much wealth might cause some to be eccentric and haughty and insensitive to the needs of others.

The riches of heaven spoken of in the book of Ephesians is a wealth that supercedes the wealth of the Donald Trumps and Bill Gates. You can't hoard it, because once you have it you will want to share it with everyone you meet. It can't make you eccentric, because God's riches allow us to see ourselves as others see us. You won't become selfish because holding on to eternal treasure makes us compassionate, generous and filled with joy.

Poor Hetty died without enjoying the benefits of her earthly fortune. But after her death in 1916, her heirs donated large sums of money to colleges, museums, and charities that benefit from her fortune to this very day. Romans 11:29 says, “The gifts of God are irrevocable.” No wavering economy can take that away from us.

—Pastor Gary



Remember In Prayer

Judy Shover, Charlie Pendergrast, Tom Long, Gladys Knott, Bob Schuster, Jack Sullivan, Roma Swhetz, Elinor Biro, Asher Nilkolajers, Terry Oberly, Max Krueger, Janis Russ and her friend, the family of Bonna Jean Schneider, Linda Grech, Phil Grech, the family of Harold (Hal) Grant , the family of Richard Knittle , Craig Seeley, Marianne Snyder

...may the Lord give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

--2

Thessalonians 3:16

The LORD blesses his people with peace.

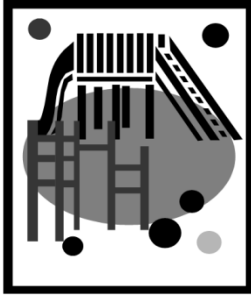
—Psalm 29:11



**Congratulations to
Grandpa and Grandma Hoffer**

Thank You to all who supported the Milan Service Unit of the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Drive. With the generous help of the community, over \$500.00 was raised to help the Berlin Heights community. We are grateful to Linda Salmons and Peggy Kuhl at St. Anthony's in Milan, Citizens Bank in Berlin Heights, all our bell ringers.....you made it happen. Thank you for spreading "good news".

—Christian Enlistment



POINT OF LIGHT 10TH ANNIVERSARY

In February 2001, a group of mission minded people gathered to talk about what we at First Congregational could do for hands on mission work. That evening Point Of Light Missions was formed. Over the last decade we have had dozens of people work on dozens of missions. From the installation of the church playground in May 2003 to Back Bay 2010, we have done many great things.

In February 2011, Point Of Light Missions will be celebrating our 10th anniversary! We will be hosting a coffee hour and would like to display pictures from the various missions we have worked on over the years. If you have any pictures you would like to share, please contact Becky Coleman. —Point of Light



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2010

AND MUCH
MORE!



VICTORY
KITCHEN
SANDUSKY, OH



Women's Fellowship

January Meeting

January 4, 2011 meeting in the Fowler Room at 7:00pm. The program is "Exercise with Arthritis made Simple and Ease (E.A.S.E.) by Barb Bement.

Save for Mission Work

- Cancelled stamps
- Plastic Laundry Buckets with Snap-On Lids Only
- Beads and Buttons
- Manufacturer's Coupons

Work days : Tuesday, January 25, 2011
 Tuesday, February 22, 2011
 Tuesday, March 28, 2011

Thank You to Christian Enlistment

Dear Barb, I want to report the total deposited from the kettle and the two early checks and a \$60.00 donation from the Berlin Heights Garden Club was **\$763.50**. I personally think that was wonderful!!! A wonderful effort and response. Good Job!!!

—Peg Kuhl

St. Anthony's Church

Salvation Army Milan Unit

Gordon Food Service GFS—FUN FUNDS

Raise money for our church while you shop at Gordon's Food Service.
Help the church reach its goals when you buy the groceries your family needs. GFS products are available in bigger than supermarket, offering a better value for your money. Shoppers can find thousands of items from lasagna, fruit, chicken breasts, cheese, bread, burgers, to bottled water, detergents and paper towels!
Membership is free.
Fun Funds cardholders receive coupons and specials.

Every time you shop, show your Fun Funds card to earn the rebate.
Check the shelf tag for premium Fun Funds items which earns up to a 10% rebate.
All products earn a minimum of 1%.

Enroll by filling out the form available at church and bring to store.
Or go online at <http://gfs.com/funfundshomepage?OrgNumber=2452290>

—Women's Fellowship

GLScript Gift Cards !

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**Remember your everyday spending can help our church.
See the GLScript Team**

Holly Schedley, Marianne Snyder, Lisa Robson, Diane Willis

Women's Fellowship Program Year 2011

Dates	Program	Hostess	Devotions
4-Jan	E.A.S.E.	Barb Bement	Michelle Martinek
6-Feb	Sunday Family Fun Day	11:30am WF's	Trisha Bragdon
1-Mar	Chocolate Party	Jackie Holland	Becky Coleman
5-Apr	Guest Night Congregation	WF Mystery Dinner Fowler Room	Bobette Nemire
1-May	Sunday Mother's Tea	Women's Fellowship	Ethel Lois Smith
6-Sep	Guest Night Area Women	Women's Fellowship Salad and Dessert	Connie Deehr
4-Oct	Lisa Marcum	Evelyn Johns	Wilma Jean Kernell
1-Nov	Service Project	Pat Carson	Holly Schedley
6-Dec	Missions	Pauline Malone	Sandy Shively

Stewardship Message

The Need for Love Continues

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up..."

Matthew 2:13

Christmas and all the surrounding hoopla are over, and it is very tempting to just sit back, digest the season, and rest from giving for a while. There are credit card bills to pay, trees to take down, and houses to clean, and that seems enough for January.

The thing about babies, though, is that they continue to need all sorts of care, and we have just celebrated the birth of a baby! Joseph was called to flee with Mary and the infant Jesus to save him from Herod's dangerous fear. Mary needed to feed him, change him, and rock him to sleep as they traveled. Seasons change, but the need for love continues.

And that's what giving springs from, is it not? Love. Parents, foster parents, grandparents, godparents, churches, and all who care for children continue to give to them in season and out because they love them. God remembers what it is like to be a child! Consider the children of your church and of your town; what kind of love do they call forth from you today? How can we continue our Christmas love of children all through the new year?

Rochelle A. Stackhouse is the Senior Minister of The Church of the Redeemer, United Church of Christ, New Haven Connecticut.

January 2011

God is still speaking,



**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Outdoor Ministries News - Ohio Conference

SUMMER CAMP 2011

Planning for 2011 camps is nearly finished. Look for new camps, yearly favorites and the return of a popular camp or two from the past.

Your colorful camp mailer (with lots of photos from 2010 summer camp) will be in your mailbox in January. We look forward to seeing YOU at camp next summer!

2011 CAMP WORK DAYS

Pilgrim Hills - March 26 & September 24

Templed Hills - April 30 & October 1

Join your colleagues at the . . . Ohio Ministries Convocation

January 24-25, 2011

[Crowne Plaza Columbus North](#)

6500 Doubletree Ave., Columbus OH 43229

Faith and Race: New Opportunities

Sponsored by the Ohio Council of Churches in partnership with the Kirwan Institute, the Columbus [Community](#) Relations Commission, and Everyday Democracy.

[Online registration through the Ohio Council of Churches](#)

January 24 - UCC Luncheon

Join your UCC colleagues for lunch, conversation and fellowship at the Crowne Plaza during the Convocation.

Register for the lunch by Tuesday, January 18 by [email](#) or by calling [800-282-0740](#), Ext 202.

Lunch cost: \$20.00, payable at the door.

**A Day With God and Self
for 2011**

March 19, 2011 (Saturday)

May 3, 2011 (Tuesday)

September 10, 2011 (Saturday)

November 1, 2011 (Tuesday)



Join us again this year at the delightful [Prettyman Center](#) at [Pilgrim Hills](#). Join us for a day away from the stress of work—a day devoted to reconnecting with God through silence, worship and nature.

**Ohio Conference
Office Address Change**

Please make sure you have made the office address change on all your mailings to us.

Our new address is:

6161 Busch Blvd., **Suite 100**

Columbus, OH 43229

Our phone numbers and extensions remain the same.



For Your Information:

Giving with Your IRA

Have you ever wished you could stretch your dollars a little farther, or find a way to do more for the people and causes you love? If you are fortunate enough to be over 70 ½ and have a traditional IRA, our government has again opened a window of opportunity for 2010 and 2011 to allow you to easily make your wish happen.

The Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 restores provisions that allow individuals at least 70 ½ to request their IRA administrators make distributions directly to their favorite charities, including our congregation. This distribution can be counted against your required minimum distribution if you choose; it will not be counted as a taxable distribution to you; and you are allowed to make distributions to charity of up to \$100,000 in any given year. In some states, making your charitable gifts through your IRA will save you state taxes, since this income will not be included in your Adjusted Gross Income. The combined impact of saving state, local and federal taxes is most dramatic for non-itemizers, who are now able to give tax-free dollars to charity – stretching their dollars by 25, 30, or even 35 percent! This opportunity can allow people to give more to our congregation at the same or reduced “out-of-pocket cost” to them. You might consider fulfilling your normal support of our operating budget with a gift from your IRA, or use this opportunity to stretch your gift to a capital campaign. This act is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2010. Because it is so late in the year, the provision allows individuals to make a qualified charitable distribution from their IRA trustee to a charity any time during 2010 or during January 2011 for the 2010 tax year.

If you are over 70 ½, or will be before December 31, 2011, we encourage you to be in touch with us for more information. We have sample request letters for your IRA administrator and more information on how this act can benefit you, and all of the charitable causes you love, in the months ahead.

For more information, contact the Christian Church Foundation at (800) 668-8016.

Calendar of Prayer

United Church of Christ



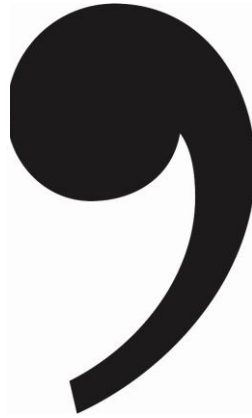
Many of us mark the New Year by making resolutions, which is really a very Christian thing to do. The Christian faith holds out to all people the continuing possibility of redemption. As church-goers, we are offered the opportunity for new life every Sunday. At worship, the ritual goes like this:

confession of sin, assurance of forgiveness, promise of obedience.

In resolving on New Year's Day to do better in the future, we may not be aware that we are recapitulating a rite of Christian worship. But that may be due to the kinds of resolutions we make. Instead of resolving to be punctual for a change, or to forego second helpings of dessert, why not adopt John Wesley's Rule this New Year's Day?

Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.

**We will
continually praise**



God's Holy Name

**Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 9**