

The VOICE

“Working together to make the difference that matters.”

TO WIN TO COMMIT TO GROW TO UNITE

(440)748-2230

Visit us at: www.neccdisciples.com

February, 2009

ALL CHURCH WORKDAY—Saturday, February 28th

A mid-winter church repair, renew and cleaning day sponsored by the church Trustees is Saturday, February 28th from 9:00-3:00. Come for all or part of the day. We will have plenty of work for the HANDY to the not so handy. There is plenty for everyone. The more who come the faster we can get the job done. Please make time in your busy schedule to help us get those little jobs done that we keep putting off!

We will have plenty of cleaning supplies and tools but if you have your own that you like to use, bring it with you.

We will break at 12:00 (noon) for a light lunch provided by the Men's Fellowship.

REMEMBER: The more people, the quicker the jobs done and it's a lot more fun working together with people who love this church and want to take care of it.

Vern Black—Chairmen of NECC TRUSTEES

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Combined Church Services

February 25, 7:30 P.M.

We will once again be joining other Disciple churches and choirs at Christian Temple in Lorain for our Ash Wednesday evening worship service.

Come, share in the imposition of ashes and the Lord's Supper as we mark the beginning of the holy season of Lent.

WELCOME—Rev. Ralph S. Wearstler

On Sunday, February 8, our Fellowship Hour will be a great time to stay, meet and welcome our new Intentional Interim Minister. Ralph and his wife, Terri, live in Mentor, Ohio. They have been married for 33 years, have three grown children and one grandchild.



Later this month, Ralph and Terri will once again be advisors on the Ohio UN Seminar to Washington D.C. and New York City.

North Eaton Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
35895 Royalton Rd.
Grafton, Ohio 44044
440-748-2230
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Interim Minister: Rev. Ralph S. Wearstler
Licensed Minister: Judy Ponting
Christian Ed. And Youth Director: Polly Tallos
Secretary: Londa Blaine
Interim Worship & Music Director: Diana Tyler
Pathways Counseling and Growth Center: Dr. Ralph Thompson

Writings from the Rev.

Dear members and friends of North Eaton Christian Church,

I want to begin with a big, “**Hello!!!**” I don’t know about you, but this is an exciting time for me. What a great way to begin a new year and a new ministry.

For those of you who have just tuned in, I am Rev. Ralph S. Wearstler (*Rev. Ralph will do*) and I have been called by the congregation of North Eaton Christian Church to be their Intentional Interim Minister. My role and my ministry is to help this congregation during their “**In-Between Time**”—that gap of time between the retirement of your former Pastor, Paul Durbin, and the congregation’s calling of a Settled Pastor.

Some of you have already asked, “How long is this ‘In-Between Time’?” Well, since we are so early in the process, my response is, “God only knows.” The thing is, there’s much to be done in the weeks and months ahead. I am grateful that Pastor Paul did a good job of explaining the importance of this interim time.

What happens next is a process wherein you and I as a congregation will look at yourself. I come with a new set of eyes, seeing things that you may no longer notice, or seeing things from a different perspective. I also come with two mirrors so that you can see yourself, not only from the front, but also from the back.

This will be done in a number of ways. We will look at your long history as a congregation, and your personal relationship in that history. We will seek to gain a greater understanding of who North Eaton Christian Church is, your identity past, present and future. We will look at what you do in your ministry for Jesus Christ, and how that is seen by the community around you. We may even discover a new identity; a new sense of mission. (*I know that some of you have been working on this for a while; now, we will expand that to the whole congregation.*)

During this interim time, leadership will grow and it will also change. (*As it has with the departure of your choir director and organist/pianist this last year.*) Just know that this will be a time of encouragement,

empowerment and nurturing. We will also be looking at how leadership is shared among the congregation. (*How many hats do you wear? Maybe you don’t wear any hats.*)

We will be looking at how this congregation is linked to the larger church, through the local community of churches, area and district church involvement, Ohio Regional work and mission, and support of the General levels of mission and ministry. (*Actually, I can already see that this is one of your strengths.*) All of these things will help this congregation to continue to move forward, becoming committed to beginning a new future.

I hope that you will see my time with you as an adventure, not just focused on the structural needs of this faith community, but also on the spiritual needs of each and every member, friend and seeker.

This cannot be accomplished by myself alone, or by a few hardy souls. It is the task and the responsibility of all of us working and sharing together, guided by the grace and wisdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As we move into the Season of Lent, at the end of this month, let us use it as a time of reflection and renewal. Be mindful of Christ’s gifts for you.

As it is stated in Ephesians 4:11-13: ***The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.***

I seek your prayers and support as we make this journey together.

“The Peace of God Be With You!”

Contact information to reach Rev. Ralph:

Cell: 440-289-8219

e-mail: revralphw@SBCGlobal.net

I'm sticking to Paul's advice...

*I've been in my Thursday night DIVA (Daughters Incorporating Victorious Attitudes, if you're wondering) Bible study for several years now. I look forward to spending this time with my sisters in Christ and diving into His word. However, Paul's advice that **we all be involved in a Bible study** has stuck in my brain. Thursday is only one day a week. But I kept thinking that participating one out of seven days for a Bible study is not adequate (it's less than 15%, so I'd hate to see what the hourly percentage is). How does that compare to the hours I invest elsewhere, such as watching television? Ouch! That doesn't show well where my priorities are. I've gotten a self-study Bible course and have pledged to take some of that wasted time and start equipping myself with God's word, including memorizing more scripture. No more excuses!*

*My first week's study dealt with the authority of the Bible. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

I'm going to stick to Paul's advice so that I will be better equipped and encourage you to do so as well.

*Grace and Peace,
Melissa Folk, Sunday School Superintendent*

Enrichment Opportunities...

Before Christmas, Dennis and I went to a Christian marriage retreat, A Weekend to Remember. When I told him that I wanted to go, he seemed hurt and asked what I thought was wrong with our marriage. I told him there was nothing wrong, and I wanted to keep it that way. We had a wonderful time reconnecting to each other and learning some new Biblical outlooks on marriage.

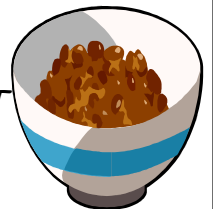
There's always room for improvement and growth when it comes to our walk of faith. I have also received information about growth opportunities for women and children's ministry. (I have materials on the marriage retreat we attended, which is now coming to Cleveland.)

I am going with Polly in April to a Christian Ed and Stewardship conference, a Disciples of Christ regional event. Our Disciples of Christ General Assembly is coming up this summer. There are many opportunities for us as Christians to nurture ourselves. Look at these opportunities as blessings and participate in at least one. If you want information about any of these or have a special topic of interest, let me know. If you get information on one that sounds good to you, please share it. It's always fun to go with friends from church.

His and yours,
Melissa Folk, Sunday School Superintendent

3RD ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

IT'S TIME ONCE AGAIN TO START GETTING YOUR CHILI APPETITE READY FOR ANOTHER FRIENDLY COMPETITION BETWEEN CHURCHES. THIS YEAR, THE CHILI COOK-OFF WILL AGAIN TAKE PLACE AT THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN BRUNSWICK. THE DAY, OF COURSE, WILL BE 'FAT TUESDAY', FEBRUARY 24, 6:30-9 p.m. OTHER AREA CHURCHES WILL ALSO BE PARTICIPATING.



EACH CHURCH IS ASKED TO PROVIDE AT LEAST ONE POT OF CHILI PER 8 PEOPLE ATTENDING. DIG OUT YOUR FAVORITE RECIPE AND ENTER IT IN THE COMPETITION. A SIGN-UP SHEET IS IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL ON THE WALL BULLETIN BOARD. PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED FOR THE WINNERS IN SEVERAL CATEGORIES. EVEN IF YOU DON'T ENTER THE COMPETITION, we need you there to VOTE and EAT and HAVE FUN WITH US!

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE OLMSTED FALLS HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND. THEY ARE QUITE A TREAT TO LISTEN TO. WE HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE THERE!

PLEASE COME AND HELP NECC WIN THE COVETED "CHAMPION CHILI FOR CHRIST" TROPHY, GIVEN TO THE CHURCH PROVIDING THE CHILI VOTED "THE BEST IN 2009." IF YOU WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT CAROL BOKMAN: BOKMANS@COX.NET.



■ **WOMEN'S MISSIONS**

- Cornerstone — Baby lotion, Bibs, Bottles
- Salvation Army— Kleenex (purse size-boxes), Combs



Serving in FEBRUARY

- 8:00** Maureen Cromling, Wade Colvin
- 9:30** Melissa Folk (TL), Sally Belfi (Kitchen), George & Diana Butcher, Jerry Mullins, Mark Carpenter, Mike Mott, Diana Tyler, Polly Tallos, Marlene Black, Julie Haumschild



ELDERS -- Vern Black, Rachel Trimble

FEBRUARY Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 Loretta St.Andre
- 5 Eleanor Smith
Cody Knorr
- 6 Fran Walker
Linda Ickes
- 7 Beth Wilson
- 8 Marie Ternes
- 9 Linda Johnson
Susie Naylor
- 12 Alan Munn
John Haupt
- 14 Bonnie Hicks
Tim Tyler
Mary Bengough
- 15 Kristen Hicks
Jacob Zawoyski
- 17 Glenn Swartz
- 18 Amanda Klein
Kelly Rose
- 19 Gene Yost
- 20 Stu Hicks Sr.
- 21 Royce Klein
- 22 Madeline Blaine
- 23 Breanna Bokar
- 24 Jill & Tom Hartness
- 25 Jim Bokar
Laura Carpenter
- 26 Jeff & Chris Hensley
- 27 Cindy Kaufman
- 29 Edna Carpenter



Photos, etc.

Photos! We all have them. They're in a box in the cupboard, sitting in your computer or still on/in your camera. Pull them out and bring them to the church on Wednesday, February 18 at 6 p.m. We will have a table waiting for you. Just bring your photos and scrap book supplies. If you are not sure what to do, come and we will show you.

Don't do Scrap Booking????? That's OK—bring your Stamp'M Up, knitting, crocheting or sort your coupons. Join us for some fellowship as you work on your project or watch others work on theirs and just relax. This is a great time to let Dad or the grandparents have some time alone with the kids.

Got questions???? See Polly Tallos or call the church office, 748-2230.

CANDY needed for CHURCH and COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT

The Christian Education Dept. will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on PALM SUNDAY, April 5. We are asking our church family to donate small, individually-wrapped candy to stuff in the plastic eggs. Now is the perfect time to buy the leftover Valentine's Day candy. The kids don't care if the candy is wrapped in red foil or covered in hearts. We also need prizes: new stuffed animals, \$5 & \$10 gift cards (Dairy Queen, fast food, etc.) A collection box is in the fellowship hall. If you have questions, contact POLLY TALLOS or MELISSA FOLK.

2008 Reports DUE NOW

It's that time of year again. Yearly reports are due into the office for our 2008 YEAR BOOK. Elders, Diaconate, Trustees, Teams, Small Groups, Committees, etc. We need a year end report from you.

If you are not sure how to write the report or if you are to submit a report, CALL the church office or stop by and look at a past year book.

Week of Compassion Around the World—Around the Year



“Where Is Your Treasure?”

Michaelene has asked me to continue the World Outreach Program through our National church. This year, the annual Week of Compassion theme focuses on, “Where is your treasure?” which is taken from Matthew 6:21 when Jesus said, “...where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” February 15-22 has been designated as your time to share with people around the world who are in need. To give you some idea where your donations will go, listed below are a few regions that are part of our missions program:

In the Gulf Coast region of the United States, Disciples are volunteering at eight mission stations in response to the recent hurricanes. We also contribute to the Southwest Samaritan Ministries in its work with the poorest of the poor on both sides of the border in south Texas.

In Afghanistan, we are helping to rebuild peoples’ lives and communities. Church World Service is teaching children the skills to help them overcome conflict. Week of Compassion is supporting educational programs in countries from Angola to Vietnam.

Three million people have been affected by violence in the Darfur region of Sudan. Week of Compassion is helping to make possible primary health care, water and sanitation programs, education, agricultural support, and much more. Indonesia, which was devastated by a tsunami, has been receiving help for four years, giving support and providing relief where needed.

In South America people in Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay are being supported in their efforts to defend and promote their rights to own their ancestral lands and help with their economic, social and cultural rights. Week of Compassion is continually there to help whenever needed.

May you find your treasure, and your heart, by sharing resources and changing lives with a generous gift to WEEK OF COMPASSION. Thank you.

Grace and Peace,
Marlene Black

Week of Compassion —Around the world, around the year.

Youth on Retreat @ Camp Christian—WANEWL St.
Polly Tallos, Director of C.E. and Youth, took seven youth and two adults to Camp Christian for an annual weekend retreat with our sister churches, Washington Avenue, Westlake, Lakewood, and High Street Christian Churches. It was a great weekend of fun and reflection. The theme for the weekend was centered around friendship. How do we act in our friendships? Who do we include in our friendships? How is Jesus our best friend?

Prayer Shawl Ministry

This ministry began in 2007 under the leadership of Sharon Mullins and Judy Ponting. A team of women in the church & community knit/crochet shawls. As they make the shawl, they are praying as they work for God’s blessing on the person who will receive it.

Each one has a card attached telling them that it is from NECC and carries God’s love and ours to whomever receives the shawl. There is no magic in the shawl. But it is our hope that the person who receives it would feel the tangible evidence of God’s love through the crafter’s hands and heart. It is a hug from God.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry, contact SHARON MULLINS or JUDY PONTING. People who do not make shawls have also been a part of this ministry by donating yarn. We are still in need of people to make shawls. The yarn is stored in Judy’s office and is available any time.

The shawls are given in times of good news and happiness as well as sickness and rough situations. These can be given to family and friends (women, men, children).

Contact Sharon or Judy.