

The VOICE

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(440)748-2230

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Writings From The Rev - November 2009

November is the season of Thanksgiving.

For most people, when you talk about Thanksgiving, images of Pilgrims and Indians sitting around a table sharing food come to mind. Or maybe it's a gathering of your own family. Coming together for that annual big family meal, where you haven't seen or spoken to some relatives since the last Thanksgiving.



For some people it's just a day off; an opportunity to sleep in, relax, and eat a lot of food. On the secular side, it's a National Holiday, a day set aside to give thanks, to count our blessings, to be thankful. On the sacred side, it's all these things, but there is also more to it.

Our church hymns have a section listing several Thanksgiving songs. Many of them we are familiar with, some we have sung since our childhood. Like, "Now Thank We All Our God", "We Plough The Fields", "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come", "We Gather Together", "Let All Things Now Living". These are the old standards, but there are also newer songs, like, "Give Thanks", "Forever Grateful", and "Oh, How Thankful I Am".

All of these songs focus on our need to be thankful for all that God has done for us. Now, don't get me wrong, this is very important in our faith journey. We need to acknowledge that everything we have, every blessing we receive comes from God. But thankfulness also requires a tangible response from us.

True Thanksgiving is best expressed in our willingness to "Give." With this in mind, I'd like to share with you one of my favorite contemporary Thanksgiving songs. It is a song written by Ray Boltz, appropriately titled, "Thank You".



I dreamed I went to heaven, and you were there with me. We walked upon the streets of gold, beside the crystal sea. We heard these angels singing, then someone called your name. You turned and saw this young man, and he was smiling as he came.

And he said, friend you may not know me now, and then he said, but wait, you used to teach my Sunday School when I was only eight. And every week you would say a prayer, before the class would start. And one day when you said that prayer, I asked Jesus in my heart.

CHORUS: *Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am a life that was changed. Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am so glad you gave.*

Then another man stood before you, and said remember the time, a missionary came to your church and his pictures made you cry. You didn't have much money, but you gave it anyway. Jesus took the gift you gave and that's why I'm here today.

CHORUS: (repeat)

One by one they came, far as your eyes could see. Each life somehow touched by your generosity. Little things that you had done, sacrifices you made. They were unnoticed on the earth, in heaven now proclaimed.

And I know that up in heaven, you're not supposed to cry. But I am almost sure, there were tears in your eyes, as Jesus took your hand and you stood before the Lord. He said, my child look around you, for great is your reward.

CHORUS: *Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am a life that was changed. Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am so glad you gave. I am so glad you gave.*

What we say is made real in what we do. Jesus gave thanks for the Bread and Cup, and then went all the way to the Cross, and beyond, for you and me. Let us truly express our Thanks-Giving as well.

North Eaton Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
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Grafton, OH 44044
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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 Co-Worship & Music Director: Diana Tyler/Lanson Wells
Pianist/Organist: Kim Speiran
Pathways Counseling and Growth Center: Dr. Ralph Thompson

Christmas Presents
For Cleveland Christian Home
Now until Sunday, December 6, 2009

The Cleveland Christian Home's Mission is to exist as a haven of hope and healing for children, youth and families struggling with mental illness, abuse and neglect. The Home offers programs and services including, but not limited to:

- **Residential Treatment Program-** caring for boys ages 6-17 who are struggling with emotional and behavioral disturbances because of sever abuse or neglect.
- **Agape Independent Living Program-** serving young adults ages 17-21—especially teen mothers—who can no longer live in foster care or with their natural families.
- **Adoption Program** serves children and youth who are in the custody of state or county authorities because they have been abused or neglected.

The Cleveland Christian Home is able to offer all these programs and services because caring congregations like ours donate time, money and energy to support them.

The Home is asking for new toys, games, and clothes to help give the children and families in their programs a Merry Christmas. Stop in the Fellowship Hall to find out what is needed. If you have any questions, please see Polly Tallos.

Entertainment 2010 Books....

We are once again selling the books. Please let your friends and co-workers know about us. The cost this year is \$30.00. They are available after worship on Sundays or call the church office to reserve your books, 440-748-2230 until December 1st.

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES
NOVEMBER**

- 2 Carol Wilson
Charlene Nichols
- 3 Ruby Burdick
- 6 Kristen Carpenter
- 7 Taylor Daniels
- 8 Jerry & Sharon Mullins
- 9 Rita Ward
Marlene Daniels
- 11 Christine & Randall Smith
- 12 Jackie Haumschild
Dawn Schieferle
- 13 Harry & Marlene Daniels
- 16 Kasidee Stevanus
- 17 Lillian Ingram
- 19 Ruth Nash
Lauren Taylor
- 20 Val Fletcher
Renee Carpenter
- 21 Nick Fitzgerald
- 23 Bruce Burdick
- 24 Bill & Maureen Cromling
Chelsea Langer
Brad Stevanus
- 25 Denise Mott
Ken Hicks
- 26 Cathy Dusky
Harry Daniels
Darrell Wilford
- 27 Floyd Chapman
- 29 Marge Houston

DECEMBER (first of month)
Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Terri Wearstler
- 3 Donna Burdick
- 4 Cindy Thompson
JJ Piper
- 5 Leslie Klein
- 7 Natalie Kramer
- 11 Gerry Piscola
Marty & Sally Belfi

Breakfast With Santa

**Saturday, December 5th, 2009
9:30 a.m.—11:00 a.m.**

Come have breakfast, do a craft, get a picture with Santa, and hear the story of Christmas!



**TICKETS—\$5.00 per person
(2 yrs. and under free)**

RESERVATIONS ARE A MUST!
(Deadline for reservations Nov. 30)

Bring a gift for baby Jesus.
(Donations will be taken to Cornerstone)

Hanging of the Greens

**Saturday, November 29
5:00-7:00 P.M.**

Everyone is invited to join our NECC Family as we decorate the church for the Advent Season. Meet at the church and begin decorating. The church has some items you can use. Chili and hotdogs will be provided. **Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.** If you have any questions please contact Melissa Folk or Polly Tallos.



SPECIAL "Thanksgiving Offering"....

On November 8th and 15th, congregations throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be asked to contribute to a special Thanksgiving offering. The offering directly benefits our 14 colleges/universities and 7 seminaries, divinity houses, and theological foundations, thus providing resources to further the education of Disciples students at Disciples institutions of higher learning. Please give generously to support OUR Disciples students at OUR schools.

Use the attached envelope or include it with your regular offering (mark clearly).

Congratulations to Tyler Bokman

On Friday, October 9th, Tyler Bokman was crowned Homecoming King of Olmsted Falls High School. Tyler had the honor of being crowned by last year's Homecoming King, JJ Haumschild, a special moment for them both. Several people mentioned that the reason Tyler was chosen by the rest of the student body is because he is always so nice to everyone at school. Receiving votes from most of the 200 other band members probably helped too. Congratulations, Tyler! We are very proud of you!

NECC October Hayride

Last month, about 40 people gathered in Robin and Jim Galvin's yard for a hayride and bonfire. Young children through grandparents were in attendance. Everyone had a great time! Several times the hay wagon was pulled through the woods (once in total darkness), hot dogs and marshmallows were roasted over the fire, lots of delicious food was shared and the children participated in a few games. Even though the evening grew chilly, everyone stayed toasty with the bonfire and hot chili provided by the Galvins. This event was such a big hit that we decided to put it on the list of annual activities.

Many THANKS go out to Robin and Jim and their neighbors for making this event so enjoyable!! We hope to see even more people joining us next October.



NOVEMBER Family Skating Event

The November NECC Family and Friends Event will be roller skating at the Roll Arena in Elyria on Sunday, November 22nd.

Stay for our Consecration Dinner after Sunday School and then head for the skating rink. The session is from 2:00 – 5:00 and costs \$4.00/person. Skate rental is \$2.00 for regular skates and \$3.00 for in-line skates. Refreshments are available for purchase.

The rink plays lots of fun music and has some fun activities too. The Roll Arena is located on the north side of Center Ridge Road, just a bit west of the Brunswick Zone Bowling Alley. If several people need help with transportation, we can use the church van.



If you have any questions, please contact Carol Bokman at 440-891-1819 or bokmans@att.net. We hope to see LOTS of people there! (Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult.)

A Time For Bringing Joy.....

All Church Caroling Party Dec. 13th (After Sunday School)

Our purpose is to bring some Christmas Joy to members and friends of our congregation who are not able to get out that much during this time of the year.

We will be gathering here at the Church on Sunday, December 13th, beginning with a Pizza and Salad lunch, then we will head out to Sing, Sing, Sing! Make this a part of your holiday celebration. Make it a re-tradition or a new family tradition. We can provide child care up to age 3 for this event but you must let the office know ahead of time. (If needed, parents can be contacted by cell phone if they need to return to the church early). After caroling, we will return to the church for some nice Hot Coco.

If we have a large enough gathering, we will split into two groups in order to get to as many people as we'd like to. Come share the joy. Contact Rev. Ralph or Carol Bokman if you have any questions or plan to join us.

(If weather conditions are too bad on December 13th, we will try again on December 20th.)

Serving in NOVEMBER 2009

8:00 Maureen Cromling

9:30 Melissa Folk (TL), Sally Belfi (kitchen), George & Diana Butcher,
Jerry Mullins, Mark Carpenter, Mike Mott, Polly Tallos,
Jackie Haumschild, Julie Haumschild

ELDERS -- Bill Cromling, Vern Black



Youth Food Basket Scavenger Hunt

Sunday, November 8

5:30 to 8:00 PM



All our youth groups; Jr. Youth Fellowship (JYF), Chi Rho and Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF) will be having a Food Basket Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, November 8. The youth will head out in several directions to collect food for the North Eaton Christian Church Food Basket program. They will be knocking on doors of NECC members asking for donations. Youth will have a specific list of items to ask for, but all donations will be appreciated.

NECC Annual Christmas Cookie Sale —By the pound!

The youth will be holding their annual Christmas Cookie Sale on Saturday, December 5th from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. The cookies will be sold for \$7.00 a pound. The money raised will help cover the cost of the CYF's Mission Trip in 2010 and the Chi Rho's support of the Cleveland Christian Home.



We need lots of homemade Christmas Cookies to sell. Last year we sold out of cookies! That was over 100 pounds!!

FREE CHRISTMAS CONCERTMark Allen Chapman @ NECC

The ladies of Eve Circle invite you and your family to come and hear the beautiful voice of Mark Allen Chapman here in the sanctuary on Sunday, Dec. 6th at 12:00 (Noon). Mark is a well known Christian singer and this is an opportunity you will want to take advantage of. If you have any questions, contact Dede Prunty or Phyllis Chapman.

NECC Garden Group — How did our garden grow?

The Garden Group has consisted of: Floyd & Phyllis Chapman, Polly, Pete, Erik & Karl Tallos, Edna Carpenter, Ralph & Becky Thompson, Laura & Randy Kuhn, Brian & Shari Insley, Diane Firestine (Chuck & Gene Slusher's daughter), and Mel & Marie Ternes.

The summer flew by as we all planted, watered, weeded, sprayed and harvested our vegetables. (Melvin was the tilling expert.) We have each shared the bounty of our hard work with family, neighbors, friends, church family, and non-profit food distribution centers (the Salvation Army and the Elyria Hospitality Center).

This was our second year together and we have grown in number and knowledge. We invite anyone who enjoys gardening and would like a free plot of ground to use, to join us next Spring. It is so much fun to watch your vegetables grow and then enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Melvin and Marie Ternes

What A Wonderful 167th Anniversary Celebration

It was a full and wonderful day to celebrate our 167th Anniversary. We began with worship and the powerful message given by Rev. Amy Gopp at 1st and 2nd Worship. And we received from her the gift of a hand stitched Communion Tablecloth for this congregation's support of Week of Compassion.

We began our collection of face pictures to help when our new settled Minister is called. We gathered, some 115 plus people, to share a meal and celebration our church history with a timeline, to see where we've been, and where are now, so that with God's help we will know where we going in our future. At the same time, we marked those places where each of us personally connected to our church history.

Thanks to so many for making this happen. To Linda Rodak for lining up the caterer & the many "BUSY HANDS" who made the afternoon possible, our Transition Team, along with Helen Cramer for helping us share our history; Carol Busche and Carol Bokman for taking pictures; and everyone who came to share in this day.

God has truly blessed this congregation.

NEWS from the Worship Team... Technology Improvements!

At the October meeting, the church Council approved the purchase and installation of three video projectors and two mounted screens for the sanctuary. These improvements will provide better visibility of projected song lyrics, prayers, worship readings, announcements, visual aids for sermons, movie clips, and similar worship enhancements from all areas of the sanctuary, including the chancel (front). In addition, the two front screens will provide a balanced, more aesthetic look than that of our current setup. They will also help unclutter the front of the sanctuary and chancel floors, providing more usable space for our choir and worship band. The improvements are scheduled to be in place before the start of Advent. Funding is being provided by the Worship—After 1965 Fund and the Dimaline Memorial Fund.

We are grateful for those saints of the church who made possible these gifts—those whose lives of Christian service were remembered with monetary tributes, as well as those who provided the funds mentioned above. It is our hope that these sanctuary improvements will help us glorify God in new ways, speak a more culturally-relevant language to others in our community as we share the Good News of Jesus Christ, and grow and strengthen God's kingdom here in North Eaton and beyond our walls.

OUR NEW WORSHIP TEAM CONSISTS OF: Diana Tyler, Melissa Folk, Stu Hicks, Paula Krasnevich, Jerry Mullins, Rev. Ralph, Lanson Wells, and Beth Wilson.

TRAINING VOLUNTEERS for projection and sound system: Once this system is in place, we will be training volunteers to operate the projection and sound system. This is a good position for those (men and women) who would like to enhance the quality of our worship services, as well as for those who would like to exercise their creative skills in the graphic arts. With enough people volunteering, we will be able to rotate the responsibilities. If you are willing to give it a try, contact DIANA TYLER or any other member of the Worship Team. We need people from both worship services.

Why does God hate me?!

I have been confronted with a number of "life challenges" this past year. My favorite phrase had become, "Why does God hate me." It seemed like everything was so hard. Mike decided I should go with him on one of his truck runs to Florida. That sounded like a great idea; inexpensive and a fun way to see a state I had never been in, plus spend some quality time with my husband.

Well, as it happened, we had a major accident with the semi. We were flipped on the side of a mountain in Kentucky. This was a very scary and profound occurrence. First, we were met with no severe injuries. This being very rare in an accident like this, I was met with the realization that God did not, indeed, hate me. Second, we were aided by, I believe, angels. Being a large woman, I could not lift myself out of the top of the truck. A stranger jumped into the cab of the truck and popped me out of the cab just like a cork! Next, another angel told me to slide off the top of the truck into his waiting hands. Was he nuts? I could really hurt him. He prompted me into trying and believe me, I felt like I was truly floating to him when I slid down. Next, all the nurses in the hospital were so nice and caring. After being discharged but facing a 5-6 hour wait for a ride home, they kept us fed and comfortable until our ride arrived. Mike is a firm believer that this whole event happened so God could tell me in "no uncertain terms" that He loves, me and this is something I will never doubt again.

Things may happen in our lives that we feel we do not deserve, but I am grateful for the wonderful people who helped us, and for the wonderful church family we have who cared for us the week following the accident.

We are truly blessed. And I will not say, "Why does God hate me?"; instead, I will ask what would God like me to learn now.

Paula Krasnevich

ELECTRONIC DRUMS PURCHASED

Electronic drums will allow a greater variety of musical expression (i.e., different “voices”/instrument sounds) as well as provide better volume control. Those who wish to help offset the cost of this instrument may contact Diana Tyler (440-458-5829 or diana@dianatyler.com), direct your donation to the offering plate or mail it to the church office. Please mark ‘DRUMS’ in the memo line.

USO — “Until Every One Comes Home”

***November 11th, VETERANS DAY we remember
those who have served our country in the past.***



The NECC Mission Group would like to take this opportunity to collect items that the USO will send to our military who are serving NOW. There are lots of little things we take for granted in our daily lives that are not available to them. We will be collecting the following items through NOVEMBER 8th.

Deodorant (M/W), mouthwash (no glass bottles-travel size) dental floss, toothbrushes, toothpaste (travel size), dried fruit snacks, zip-lock bags (not gallon), dry powder drink mixes (small or individual), Hard candy (individually wrapped), chap stick, eye drops, cough drops, batteries, tea bags, beef jerky, Slim Jims.

SPONSORING a “care package”.... For every \$25.00 donation you make, the USO will send a care package with both needed and requested items valued at app. \$75.00 to a deployed service member. You can donate to this program in \$25.00 increments. Make check payable to: Operation USO Care Package. Your donation is 100% tax deductible. FORMS are on the table in the Narthex or see Laura Kuhn. Please give the check & form to Laura Kuhn so we can send them together from NECC. BOX will be on the fireplace in the fellowship hall for all items.

News Among the Pews

Congratulations to:

Lauren (Cihla) and Robert Taylor who were married on Sept. 12, 2009. They had a wonderful honeymoon in Scotland. They are now back home and living in Lakewood.

Cameron Castro on receiving the Cy Young Award. He is a pitcher for the Lake Erie College “Storms.” His proud great grandmother is Helen Literati.

THANK YOU:

“Thank you for your many cards, phone calls, thoughtful acts and prayers that surrounded me during my recent surgery. I am getting better each day.”

Love, Becky Thompson

Dear NECC,

Our family would like to give thanks to all who called and sent cards and especially those who held us up in prayer through Chester’s illness and now in our time of grief. We want to thank the ladies and their husbands who helped prepare and serve the dinner after the memorial service. It was all very beautiful and the food was delicious.

Chester made it to celebrate his 86th birthday on Sept. 2nd and our 37th anniversary on Sept. 18th. Thank God we all got to celebrate together one last time before the Lord took him home. Thank you to Helen Literati for all her visits and prayers. Thank you to Eve Circle for all the cards to Chester and I and to Rev. Ralph for his visits and calls. It was very much appreciated. Please continue to keep my family in your prayers.

Sandy Nowak

PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS FOR COMFORT AND HEALING:

Judy Ponting, Jan Mitchell, Carlene Beres, Tom Kohler, Becky Thompson, Fran Walker, Bob Bricker

LOOKING AHEAD:

Country Christmas Bazaar—Nov. 14th, 9:00-3:00

Consecration Day and Harvest Dinner —Nov. 22nd, 12:00 (Noon)

Breakfast With Santa—Dec. 5th, 9:30 (reservations only)

Christmas Cookie Sale—Dec. 5th, 11:30-1:00

Mark Allen Chapman Concert—Dec. 6th, 12:00 (noon)

NECC Adult Christmas Dinner (potluck) at the Carters’—Dec. 6th, 6:00