

The VOICE

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Writings From The Rev - January 2010

“Everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new!” If this sounds a bit scriptural to you, you’re absolutely right. It’s found in the Bible in 2 Corinthians 5:17. However, by itself, it’s a case of scripture being taken out of context. But it’s such a great line to use at this time of the year. What better words could be used to describe our entering into another New Year.

The New Year has been marked by some kind of celebration ever since people began keeping track of time. It’s a celebration that continues to be observed in almost every country of the world, even if it’s not always celebrated on the same date. From the earliest days of recorded history we find the Chinese, Egyptian, Jewish, Roman, and Mohammedan began their year on different dates. This was even true for the early Christian community. In the past, the New Year day of celebration took place on Christmas Day, Easter, March 1st, and March 25th. It wasn’t until the 1500’s, when the Gregorian calendar was introduced, that January 1st gained popularity as the first day of the New Year.

Have you ever wondered who decided that the New Year should start on the first day of January? I mean, why would anyone think to start something in the dead of Winter? It’s a strange time, in the midst of the cold and the snow, (at least in this area) when people are less likely to be out and about, a season when things around us seem so lifeless. Yet, when you stop to think about it, what better time to start fresh and new than at the point when things seem most dormant.

I have sensed that more than a few people at North Eaton Christian Church are experiencing a kind of dormancy, at least in respect to the calling of your new Settled Pastor.

Some of you may be wondering, “Why is this process taking so long? Why aren’t we moving faster?” The truth of the matter is, when a congregation has had a long-term ministry, such as the one you have experienced, there is always a bit of down time needed to gain a proper perspective. It’s important to look back and reflect on all the opportunities and experiences that have led you to the place where you are right now. And we have done that this past Fall with the creation of your Church Time-line, the celebration of your 167th Anniversary and the celebration of your ministries.

It’s good to embrace the past, not holding on to everything, but taking the best with you, so that as we move into the future, we carry with us, the wisdom and understanding of those earlier times. This is going to help you in the decisions that are waiting for you in calling your new minister.

In the next few months of this New Year, believe me, the pace will pick up, and more is going to be asked of you in developing a Church Profile; a picture of who you are as a congregation that can be shown to perspective candidates. It should be the best picture you can present.

This new year brings into play the next phase which involves small group gatherings that will be both practical and spiritual in nature. You’ve been looking at your past, as a congregation. Now we move forward to examine where you are at the present, and where you want and need to be for your future. I believe the Good News is that the Spirit of God is at work in all this. We just need to be open to God’s Spirit so that we might see and be a part of the new. In Christ, everything becomes new.

May God bless us all in this coming new year.

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Grafton, OH 44044
Permit No. 8

Interim Minister: Rev. Ralph S. Wearstler
Christian Ed. And Youth Director: Polly Tallos
Secretary: Londa Blaine
Interim Co-Worship & Music Directors: Diana Tyler/Lanson Wells
Pianist/Organist: Kim Speiran-Wells
Pathways Counseling and Growth Center: Dr. Ralph Thompson

Youth News

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

The Election Day Bake Sale and Christmas Cookie Sale were very successful. Many Thanks to those who donated baked goods, Christmas Cookies, time and energy to make our fundraisers so successful. Money raised will be used to help support the events and Mission Projects of the youth groups. The continuous caring and generous support of the Youth Groups by the congregation is awe inspiring and much appreciated by the youth, adult leaders and especially Polly Tallos.

The Youth lead mission projects were well supported also.

Food Scavenger Hunt: 450 food and paper items

Cleveland Christian Home: 40 Christmas gifts including games and clothing

Over \$600 in gift cards (Some donated, others bought with proceeds from the Christmas Cookie Sale)

50 School Related Items

The JYF will be collecting for the “Souper Bowl of Caring” on FEBRUARY 7th (first Sunday in February). They will be asking everyone to donate \$1.00 that will then be given to Dunham Ave. Christian Church to help support their Saturday Free Meals. The JYF will also be asking everyone to bring in a can of soup or other non-perishable food item to be given to the NECC Food Basket program. ***Our goal is \$201.00 and 201 food items.***

Chi Rho and CYF will be going on the WANEW Retreat the weekend of February 12-13, 2010. We will be going to Camp Christian with Westlake, Washington Ave, and Franklin Circle Christian Churches. Our theme is “Love and Service”.

Hiram Mid-Winter will be held at Westlake Christian Church, March 5-7, 2010. Host families are needed. If you are able to help by housing 2, 4, or 10 high school youth in your home for two nights please let Polly Tallos know.



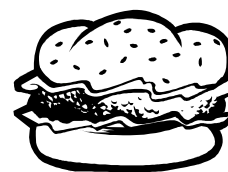
Planning has begun on the CYF's 2010 Mission Trip. We will be contacting our sister Disciples congregations in the area to see if any of them would like to go with us.

Super Bowl Hoagies

\$4.00 each or 3/ \$11.00

Orders taken throughout the month of January.

Pick up on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb 7th after worship



Sandwiches will have ham, bologna, salami and American cheese. Lettuce and tomatoes will be in a bag on the side. Hoagies are made fresh Sunday morning, ready to be eaten while you watch the game. You can place an order through out the month of January. The Youth are selling Super Bowl Hoagies to help support their events and Mission Projects.

9:00 AM Sunday Morning Bible Study

“If You Want to Walk on Water, You’ve Got to Get Out of the Boat” By John Ortberg

Leader: Fran Walker

Starting: Sunday, January 17, 2010

If you missed this class during the 10:45 study time you have the chance to check it out at 9 AM. You're one step away from the adventure of your life. John Ortberg reflects on the biblical story in Matthew 14, and applies it to our lives today. (Matthew 14 is the story of Jesus walking on water.)

Please join us for this 6 week class, as we learn to face our fears, discover and embrace our unique calling, and experience the power of God in our lives. Call Fran Walker, 371-1740 or stop in the class on Sunday, January 17th and see what it is all about.

We meet in Room 1 and 2 off the fellowship hall.

Family Fun Activities for 2010

(Tentative dates & activities)

These activities are planned with family and friends in mind. Mark your calendar so you don't miss out on the fun. More dates and events will be forthcoming. If you have place you want to go or have been and want to share it with us, please let me know at bokmans@att.net or call Carol Bokman 440-891-1819.

We hope more people will want to join us this year as we have fun and get to know each other.

January	January 24th, 6:00-9:00 Tobogganing at the Strongsville Chalet (\$10.00 each) (Financial assistance available—See Polly Tallos or Rev. Ralph before Jan. 24th)
February	Game Night
March	Laser Tag
April	to be announced
May	May 23rd, Lake Erie Crushers baseball game @ 5:05 p.m.
June	Canoeing
July	To be announced
August	All Church Picnic
September	Cuyahoga Valley Railroad Trip
October	Hayride/Bonfire
November	Roller Skating
December	To be announced



January 2010 Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Holly Gross
- 4 Roberta Balogh
Sandy Gross
- 5 Dan Gross
Gabriel Mango
- 6 Erin Martin
Mike Carpenter
- 7 Jen Wilson
- 9 James Purdy
- 10 Richard Blaine
Brandi Maser
- 11 Hope Swindell
- 12 Betty Brown
- 13 Helen Literati
Fran Early
- 14 Chris Hensley
Larry & Eileen Weber (60)
Mike & Paula Krasnevich
- 15 Lucy Vernadakis
- 16 Bill Cromling
Marty Belfi
- 18 Laura Kuhn
Alberta Amos
- 20 Allison Cihla
John Klinec
- 23 Carol Bokman
- 26 Karen Klinec
- 27 David Houston
- 28 Mary Lou Johnson
- 30 Hanna Susak
- 31 Matthew Gross

FEBRUARY

- 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

Outreach Programs—Stamps

Two outreach programs have come to my attention using cancelled postage stamps of all kinds: VETERANS and HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

All you need to do is tear off the corner of the envelope with the stamp on it and bring it to church and place them in the box on the fireplace in the fellowship hall or mail them to the church. .This is a simple, but valuable way to help two very worthy organizations.



Thank You, Marlene Black

Breakfast with Santa.....

On Saturday, Dec. 5th approximately 80 children and family members attended our annual Breakfast with Santa. They enjoyed a wonderful breakfast, crafts, a visit from Santa and the story of Jesus' birth. Thank you to everyone who helped make the event a fun event and a family tradition for those who attended. Your time and talents are greatly appreciated.

Melissa Folk

“MOMS IN TOUCH” International
Attention Moms! Do you worry about your children? Come experience how you can replace your anxiety and fear with peace and hope, by praying with other Moms. (Grandmothers, aunts, and caregivers are welcome too!) Moms In Touch International gathers Moms together to pray specifically and spiritually for our children and school. Join with us in praying for this next generation. J join us on Wednesday, January 20th at 7:00 p.m. for an informational meeting about starting a church based group here at North Eaton. For specific questions about this meeting contact BETH WILSON at 748-6122 or beth.wilson72@verizon.net.

For more information about MOMS IN TOUCH INTERNATIONAL, visit www.MomsInTouch.org

Dear Friends,

Terri and I would like to express our warmest Thanks for the many Christmas greetings and cards, and gifts of all sizes, shapes, tastes, smells, and colors. What a joy to celebrate this Advent and Christmas season with you.

We have been with you for just a short time and you have made us feel so much a part of your Church Family at North Eaton Christian Church. We pray that God continues to bless all of you in this coming New Year.

In Christian Love,
Rev. Ralph and Terri Wearstler

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News Among the Pews

CONGRATULATIONS TO: Bob Browne on his graduating from Cleveland State University with a Masters Degree in Business.

Mark Mullins on his graduating from Why-O-Tech University in Blairsville, PA on Dec. 18th with a degree in Mechanics and Body Work.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS TO: Mel and Tammy Gamble on the birth of their son, Nolan Earl, on Dec. 26th weighing in at 7 lbs. 15 oz. The proud grandparents are Jerry and Sharon Mullins and excited big sister, Cassondra.

Mary and Matt Reisinger on the birth of their daughter, Evangeline Theresa, January 1, 2010 weighing in at 6 lb. 4 oz. The proud grandpa is Bill Nowagarski.

Our sympathy is extended to: Jim Ponting and his family on the death of Judy on Jan. 1, 2010. She will also be missed by her church family and friends. She was a very important part of all of our lives. Let us keep each other in prayer as we try to deal with the loss of a dear lady.

Dear congregation,
Our many thanks for all the prayers, cards and phone calls. Please continue to keep us in prayer. Our thanks to Rev. Ralph for his visits and phone calls.
Carol Steffen, and Lisa & Roger Woodby

Dear Church Family,
Thank you for the love, support and many kindnesses shown to our family. The North Eaton Christian Church family is "one of a kind" and very special to The Hein/Altman family.
Jim, Bob & Scott Hein & families
Nancy & Greg Altman & families

Thank you to Rev. Ralph and all the carolers,
Thank you so much for coming out in the cold weather to sing Christmas carols. What beautiful much and a wonderful surprise. You made my day! God bless you. Betty Hawke

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OFFERING ENVELOPES 2010

2010 Offering Envelopes have been distributed. Do not use your 2009 envelopes anymore. Even if you have some left, throw them away. Please let me know if you did not get your envelopes and I will get them to you.

Thank you to the following people for giving of their time on Sunday mornings counting and recording our contributions: Mike Mott, Stu Hicks, Mark Carpenter, Pam Daniels, Robin Bricker, Carol Busche, Dave & Laura Carpenter, Phyllis Chapman, Carol Wilson, Linda Rodak, Cathy Dusky, Jim Ponting, Randy Kuhn. Our thanks to Luci Vernadakis for picking up the deposit bag at the bank on Mondays. Thanks to their families for understanding that this time given is important to the church.

Thank you to our ladies who have given of their time and talent on Donut Sunday, each month, to take blood pressures (before and after we eat those huge cream sticks with chocolate frosting!!!): Genee Slusher, Cathy Dusky, and Beth Wilson.

Laura Kuhn, Financial Secretary

A Tribute to Judy Ponting (12/16/39-1/1/10)

Judy Ponting, a Licensed Lay Minister, served North Eaton Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as Minister of Pastoral Care beginning in 1992 until her passing on January 1, 2010.

Judy served our congregation over the years teaching adult Bible classes, serving on the Diaconate and as an Elder, and leading classes and services in Healing and Meditation and Prayer.

In 2003, she received her Certificate in Ministry from Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky. Judy had participated in the school's Lay Ministry program since 1993 and took additional coursework in Grief Counseling, Pastoral Care and Leadership, which led her to lead workshops in the Ohio Region's District 2 on "Hope and Healing in Death."

A more-than-thirty years attendee of the Christian Women's Ministry Fall Retreat at Camp Christian, Judy served on its executive Committee, led the Retreat and served twice as Chaplain (1998 and 2004).

Pulpit supply took Judy to approximately 20 different churches in Ohio, in addition to serving at North Eaton during the senior pastor's absence. Judy found it exciting to visit other churches; her travels led to many lasting friendships.

She was instrumental in starting a "Prayer Shawl" ministry in 2007. Over 100 men, women and children have received a shawl in times of sickness and celebration, hoping they will feel God's love from our church family enveloping them.

Judy and her husband, Jim, were married October 12, 1958. They have three grown daughters and six grandchildren who have been the loves of their lives.

Judy also loved tending the flowers in her and Jim's 3 acre yard, and making time to relax and read. Red rubber high top boots, red rimmed glasses, angels, a good cup of coffee and Elvis were little things that we knew Judy enjoyed. She also traveled to England and the United Kingdom six times, taking along family and friends. She particularly delighted in exploring the cathedrals.

Judy was a much-loved friend to many, and a devoted servant of Christ. Far and wide, she will be greatly missed.

Dear Judy,

Welcome home!

GOD

UPDATE on our "Estimate of Giving" for 2010

A total of **71** giving unites completed Estimate of Giving cards this year.

A total of **25** of these giving units increased their financial commitment above last year's amount.

This gives us a grand total of **\$215,384.86** anticipated income for the next twelve months.

This is a **3%** increase in total giving above last year.

**What a blessing for the support of our Mission and Ministry
here at North Eaton Christian Church.**