

Thoughts for Our Journey: DECEMBER 2012

Advent, A Season of Waiting for What Will Come to Pass

Like those who witnessed the first coming of Christ, we hear God beckon to us during Advent to make ourselves available to God in new and courageous ways. Beloved, we are invited to practice a unique kind of hospitality with one another: the sort of hospitality that makes room for people to share the strange ways in which God is moving in their lives; the sort of hospitality that encourages people to put down our wearisome baggage and trust God to fill our empty hands and hearts. This form of radical hospitality encourages others to believe that God is always in the business of making things new, bringing life into spaces that feel barren and strengthening the weak to receive and offer the gifts of God.

Advent is a season to ponder as well, to listen, to understand that prayer is as much about cultivating stillness and attentiveness as it is about offering our words to God. This spiritual exercise, listening to God, is a difficult business. It requires a willingness to be patient and to be still. It requires disciplining ourselves to consistent times of sitting quietly before God and waiting for God to meet us in that space. When we are still we can better attune ourselves to the thoughts and feelings that can well up within us. I invite us in the midst of the holiday preparations to create times for ourselves to pull away and be still in the holy silence. In doing so, we will be responding to God's own invitation to deepen our communion with the Holy.

Beloved as we anticipate God made flesh in Christ Jesus, we dare to relinquish control, to harness our empty life-numbing habits and to forfeit logic and reason because God often acts outside of such boundaries. Advent is a season in which we are reminded that God invites us to listen, dwell, wait and trust in communion with one another. No one is left to discern God's life-altering activity alone, to hold God's promises alone or to bear the burden of divine blessings without faithful companions, whether human or angelic. Advent is a season for our imaginations to run wild as we contemplate a God who becomes human. We are given a wider glimpse of God when we allow Advent to be an invitation to dream beyond our comfort zones of what we think can happen in our lives or what God can do. In Advent we receive four weeks to dwell on what God's vision might be for us and for those whose lives we touch. Four weeks to dwell on how the courage of expanding our imagination might feel into the growing kingdom of God. We have four weeks to gather our wits about us for another year; preparing our bodies, minds and spirits to receive the Christ Child and take him out into the world for others to see and praise, worship and obey; the Christ with whom we dream big and imagine wildly.

Blessings for the Journey,
Rev. Chuck

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

Christmas Eve Worship — As we prepare for Christ's coming, may we prepare our own hearts and minds more deeply and intentionally. We are providing two Christmas Eve Candlelight services to celebrate the arrival of the Christ Child. Join us at 7:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. Included in both services will be favorite Christmas hymns, scripture readings, communion and a candlelight ceremony.

North Eaton Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
35895 Royalton Rd. Grafton, Ohio 44044
Address Service Requested

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ELYRIA, OH 44035
Permit No. 8

DATE— DECEMBER 2012
Minister: Rev. Charles Butcher
Christian Ed. & Youth Director: Polly Tallos
Secretary: Londa Blaine
Music Director: Miki Saito
Pathways Counseling and Growth Center: Dr. Ralph Thompson

- DEC. Birthdays & Anniversaries....**
- 1 Terri Wearstler
 - 3 Donna Burdick
 - 4 Cindy Thompson
 - 5 Leslie Klein
 - 9 Ken & Cindy Hicks
 - 11 Gerry Piscola
 - 12 Marty & Sally Belfi
 - Randy Kuhn,
 - Diana Tyler,
 - Buz Bokman
 - Robin Galvin
 - Brandy Burdick
 - 13 Sandy & Jim Hales
 - 14 Nicholas Rodak
 - Antonia Spector
 - 15 Ralph Thompson
 - 16 Lorraine Cragin
 - 17 Glen Thompson
 - Helen Walkden
 - 18 Jeff Brunger
 - Doug Blaine
 - Bob Burdick
 - 19 Tony Piscola
 - 20 Holly Hill
 - 21 Stephanie Szuch
 - 23 Joseph Klein
 - 24 Barry Daniels
 - 25 Jan Brooks
 - 26 Nolan Gamble
 - 29 Debbie Cihla
 - 30 Pam Daniels

Serving at the Lord's Table in DECEMBER....

- 8:00** Mel & Marie Ternes
- 9:30** Floyd Chapman, Bill Chapman, Royce Klein, Mary Bengough, Dave Carpenter, Mike & Paula Krasnevich, Theresa McDonough, Amy Stafford, Tyler Bokman, Paige Bokman



ELDERS — Ralph Thompson & Melissa Folk

Ladies Christmas Brunch

Saturday, Dec. 15th, 10:30 a.m.
 All ladies are invited to join us for a Christmas Brunch and beautiful music by the Anderson Trio, for only \$5.00 per person. Come and be renewed and refreshed during this busiest and most blessed season. Enjoy a sumptuous brunch and joyful music. Allow yourself to sit back and rest in the presence of the Lord. Tickets may be purchased after worship or call **PAT ABLES (748-2610)** to make a reservation till December 9th.



DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council meeting will take place on Sunday, December 9th at 12:00 (Noon). We will be looking at a PROPOSED BUDGET for 2013, to present to the congregation (at an upcoming meeting to be determined at the Council meeting). We are also looking for 2012 ANNUAL REPORTS from the Elders, Diaconate, Trustees, all committees, other recognized church groups, and elected officers. These are DUE TO DIANA TYLER, no later than JANUARY 10TH. Email address—Diana@dianatyler.com or mail them to 38131 Butternut Ridge Rd. North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039. Any questions call her @ 440-458-5829.

ANNUAL REPORTS — please include a summary of your activities January 1, 2012- December 31, 2012, as well as a list of committee members, pertinent financial information, special projects, outreach specifics, etc. Please contact Diana if you have any questions.

THANK YOU to DON NASH

Now that we have officially had our “small dusting of snow”, it is time to put the lawnmower away for the winter. Our thanks and appreciation to DON NASH for keeping our lawn neatly mowed and looking green. Our thanks also to MEL TERNES for coming to the rescue, whenever heavy rains prevented Don from mowing but the grass kept growing. This required help of bigger and heavier machinery.

Don has devoted over 20 years of volunteer time and energy to the lawn and lawnmower at North Eaton Christian Church. THANK YOU good and faithful servant! We are blessed. NECC Trustees

CLEVELAND CHRISTIAN HOME --- Christmas Wishes 2012

(COPIES ON TABLE IN THE NARTHEX)

Help us make the holidays sparkle for the children and families served by the Cleveland Christian Home. CHOOSE WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU:



Put your effort where it is most needed by using our Top 10 List.

Make an online donation at www.cchome.org and let us do the shopping.

“Sponsor A Child” for Christmas: Purchase all the gifts for one child (About \$200).

Ask for a list of larger items needed for programs or families. (SEE POLLY)

Volunteer to shop, wrap gifts or receive and inventory donations.

Cancelled Stamp Project: CHRISTMAS is the time we celebrate the birth of our Savior, but it is also the time when we keep in touch with our friends and family by mail. When you receive your Christmas cards this year, please take a moment and tear off the stamp in the corner of the envelope (leaving 1/4 in. around the stamp). Brown bell stamps are unusable. The stamps can be placed in the SHOE BOX on the table in the Narthex. The veterans and Habitat for Humanity will be grateful for your support of this project. A blessed Christmas to all.

Marlene Black

Special CHRISTMAS OFFERING

"Good News of Great Joy"

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people....'"

Sometimes we get to be the angels who sing out Good News of Great Joy: "I've been inspired by changes going on in my church." "I'm going to Camp Christian this summer!" "We've called a new pastor." "I've decided to become a minister." "Help is on the way!" "There really are people who care."

Collectively, like an angel choir, we inspire the best in congregations; in gatherings of youth; in candidates in ministry; in mission to the world. 100% of this offering will stay in OUR REGION as a collective witness to our shared faith. Your generous gift will sing God's praise. Specially marked envelopes are in the pews, or add it to your regular offering, marking it clearly.

NECC CHRISTMAS CONCERT

On Saturday, December 22nd the family and friends of the North Eaton Christian Church are attending the Praise Apella Christmas Concert. This will be held at the Medina Performing Arts Center. The cost is \$15 for tickets and the concert begins at 7pm. This is an event for the whole family. Len Houser from the Fish radio station has 2 daughters that perform in this group. I need to know if you would like to order tickets. If you have any questions contact me at bokmans@att.net or by calling 440-891-1819. You can mail your payment to: Carol Bokman, 23705 Sawmill Bend, Olmsted Falls, OH 44138 or give it to me at church on Sunday morning.

"Good Luck Potluck!"

Everyone seemed to enjoy the smoked pork that Tim Tyler brought to the summer church family picnic, so he's decided to offer it again --this time, at a December 30th "good luck potluck".

Eating pork as part of a New Year celebration is a tradition which aims to bring "good luck" to the household, based on the forward movement of the pig as it roots in the ground (as opposed to poultry, which scratches backwards). The superstition is that, by eating port, those in the household are hoping for forward movement, into prosperity and good days ahead, as opposed to continuing any troubles or bad luck of the previous year.



The potluck will take place at 11:15 a.m. on Sunday, December 30th. Please indicate on the friendship register if you'll be attending by listing the side dish, salad, or dessert you will bring. Diners are also encouraged to bring board games or group party game ideas for fellowship after the meal.

VOLUNTEERS who will help setup and or clean up are asked to contact PASTOR CHUCK OR TIM TYLER (458-5829) to offer their services.

LifeShare Blood Drive

Thank you for all the time and work you invested in managing your recent blood drive. Through your efforts, 6 individuals presented for donation, 4 donors were unable to donate, and we collected 5 units of blood. Each unit will in turn save as many as four lives. On behalf of LifeShare and the critically ill and injured in our midst, thank you again. Our mission to supply Northeast Ohio with a safe and adequate blood and component supply would not be possible without you.

Honor Roll: William Eldridge, Ed Carter, Bob Weber, Chuck Butcher

LifeShare. It's about Life.



ANNUAL ADULT "Potluck" Christmas Party ...Sunday, Dec. 9th Join us at the home of ED & ANGIE CARTER, 11950 Castleton Lane on Dec. 9th at 5:30 p.m. as we celebrate this joyous season with our church family. Bring your favorite family food/dessert. Appetizers & punch at 5:30 and dinner at 6:00.

ADVENT begins on Sunday, December 2nd—What might happen?

Have you ever heard a child exclaim, "Oh, I just can't wait for Advent?" It was that time before Christmas when we had no choice but to wait—for the days off from school, cutout cookies, and presents that magically appeared under the tree on Christmas morning. Even the cool Advent calendar with chocolate behind each window for every day of Advent was not enough of a distraction. Chocolate or not, there was no getting around the waiting.

This year, let's embrace Advent as a season not merely for waiting, for waiting often signifies inactivity. Instead, let's embrace Advent actively, with eagerness and excitement, preparing for the joy of the birth of love and peace in our lives and in our world. As we prepare for Christ's coming, may we prepare our own hearts and minds more deeply. We wait not, but rather we make preparations for the coming of Christ our Redeemer. This is the arrival of our Lord and Savior, after all!

About this we can be sure: Christmas will come. Somehow we'll wind up on Dec. 24th realizing it's almost that time, the big day. Show time! Only this year, we'll have not missed Advent. We'll have not missed the unique opportunity to prepare for it, participate in it, and practice what it means to take an active role in the birth of Christ's peace and love in the world.

"Our Town and All Around" coupon books are IN and cost only \$28.00.

NEW THIS YEAR — \$25.00 in coupons for groceries at our IGA, so that would cost you only \$3.00 for the book after you use all the coupons. BOOKS are available after worship in the fellowship hall or in the church office during the week. (440-748-2230).

NECC COOKBOOKS are available in the church office --- 748-2230 \$10.00 each

Country Christmas Bazaar 2012

God has again allowed many faithful persons to use their gifts and talents to put together another successful North Eaton Bazaar. As time passed and Nov. 10th grew near, the bazaar seemed to develop a life of its own — tables were rented (we even had to turn some away), sweets were baked, treasures accumulated, tables were set up, decorations appeared and wonderful aromas wafted from the kitchen.

No one person is responsible for the success of the bazaar — only God can be praised and given the glory! THANK YOU.

The sum of \$2,534.74 will go towards our roof fund.

God's Blessings,
Pat Ables

Breakdown of the Bazaar earnings of \$2,534.74

- Table Rental—\$375.00, Kids—\$46.00, Trash/Treasures—\$357.75, Kitchen—\$352.79, Bakery—\$527.25
- Ticket Raffle Sales—\$800.00, Sunday Misc.—\$75.95

Comparison to last year: We were down a little in the Kid's room and ticket sales (due to scheduling problems at IGA) but numbers do not tell the story of a very successful day at the bazaar here at North Eaton Christian Church. New and old friends came an enjoy a wonderful room full of beautiful items, delicious food and priceless fellowship. God was shining down on us with a warm and sunny day.

Everyone who came that day was truly a winner.



WINNERS of the Bazaar Raffle

- Smith Dairy Coupons — Karen Mack Arseno
- Schild's IGA Chicken — Joan Saimkon
- \$25.00 Cash (Eve Circle) — Don Binnie
- Bean Bag Tree Game — Marlene Black
- \$30 Gift Cert. (Sparkle) — Shari Insley
- \$20 Gift Cert. (Sparkle) — Ruth Nash
- \$50 Gift Card — Michelle Rader
- \$50 Cash (Rebekah Circle) — John Vilevac
- Pink & Blue Quilt w/pillow — Mr. Tomasheski
- Handmade Quilt (Roberta Balogh) — Ann Stanton (Barb Koerner's daughter)