

Thoughts For the Journey — October 2014

May We Always Be Thankful

A family sat down to eat. The mother served leftovers for lunch. As her youngest son prayed, he said, “God thank you for this food and the hands that repaired it.” Are we thankful today? As we have moved the calendar and activities to November, almost automatically we think of Thanksgiving Day. The word comes from God and he wants us to learn and practice the spiritual discipline of thanksgiving. We are to “be thankful” (Colossians 3:15). When are we to be thankful? We are to “give thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:20). 1 Thessalonians 5:18 reads, “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Throughout most of life’s circumstances, God wants us to practice living with thankful hearts. Scripture teaches us in 1 Timothy 2:1-3 “The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well, so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live” (The Message). Prayer is an avenue to express our thankfulness to God. There is no time, place or person who should ever find us unthankful and ungrateful in our hearts!

Shakespeare, in his play, Twelfth Night, Act III, has a character making the following statement, “I can on other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and thanks ever thanks.” That statement effectively sums up the attitude Christians should have toward God. There are times, places and persons for whom it may feel difficult to be thankful for God. Painful circumstances, problems and persons can usually annoy us first rather than bringing feelings of joy. The scriptures are pretty clear, God wants us to choose being thankful in every time, every place and every person.

The famous scholar, Matthew Henry was once accosted by muggers and robbed of his bag. After the incident, he wrote these words in his diary, “Let me be thankful first because I was never robbed before; second, although they took my bag, they did not take my life; third, because, although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed.” The apostle Paul sums it up in 2 Corinthians 9:15, “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” God is so good! Let us beloved, in this Thanksgiving season, lift up with thankful hearts the unfathomable love and mercy of God as demonstrated at the cross, our souls are made to cry, “Thanks and thanks, and ever thanks!”

Blessings for the Journey

Rev. Chuck

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

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ELYRIA, OH 44035
Permit No. 8

DATE— NOVEMBER 2014

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

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

NOV. BIRTHDAYS & ANNIV.

- 2 Carol Wilson
Charlene Nichols
- 3 Ruby Burdick
- 6 Kristen Carpenter
- 7 Taylor Daniels
Robert M. Browne
- 8 Jerry & Sharon Mullins
- 9 Rita Ward
Marlene Daniels
- 11 Christine & Randall Smith
- 12 Dawn Schieferle
- 13 Harry & Marlene Daniels
- 19 Ruth Nash
- 20 Val Fletcher
Renee Carpenter
- 23 Bruce Burdick
- 24 Bill & Maureen Cromling
- 25 Denise Mott
Ken Hicks
- 26 Cathy Dusky
Harry Daniels
Darrell Wilford
- 29 Marge Houston

Serving at the Lord's Table:

8:00 Angie Carter, Scott White

9:30 Theresa Sizemore, Carol Bokman, Mike Mott, John Klinect, Tammy Hammond, Chris Chapman, Theresa McDonough

ELDERS: Jeff Hensley and Bob Hammond

NECC Biking/Train Event

On Sunday, Sept. 28th, 10 of us rode our bikes on the Towpath Trail to Peninsula where we enjoyed dinner at the Winking Lizard Restaurant. Three of us rode back on the trail, logging a total of 22 miles for the round trip. The other bike riders decided to ride the train for the second half of their journey. It was a gorgeous day for biking along the Towpath trail (in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park) and enjoying all that nature has to offer (including deer, birds, and snakes). The sunset on the ride back to the car was absolutely stunning!



Hopefully more NECC family and friends join us next September for this annual event because everyone has so much fun!

From Bread & Wine to Faith and Giving
Transformation Sunday – November 23, 2014

Transformation..... Starting as one thing and becoming something else. Brokenness made whole. The downtrodden raised up. The powerless empowered. Scarcity turned into abundance.

Every Sunday, we meet at Christ's Table to receive symbols of God's transforming love in the form of bread and wine. At the table, God uses the loaf and the cup as signs of God's pure, unbounded love for us and for all. These elements are signs of God's will for all people to live together in love, peace, justice, and abundance. When we eat the bread and drink from the chalice, we embrace God's unconditional love as the basis for our lives as individuals and communities, and we commit ourselves to live in God's ways of love.

God gives to us at the table and, in turn, God's giving inspires and empowers our own giving. We are reminded that those who gather at "God's Giving Table" are called to *become* a giving people. During the month of November, we will have the opportunity to consider how God gives so we can give; how we receive so others may receive. We will learn more about the opportunities for individual, community and global transformation provided through North Eaton Christian Church.

I encourage you to be present each week leading up to Transformation Sunday, Nov. 23 when we will individually and collectively commit our intentional financial support of the transformations that occur through the ministries of this congregation.

We will culminate this period of reflection and response with a celebration dinner at 12 noon on November 23. During worship one of these next few Sundays, please indicate on the Friendship Register in your pew the number of people from your household who plan to attend that celebration dinner (i.e., "Dinner=2"), or you may call the church office (440-748-2230) with that information; we will contact by phone those who have not had a chance to R.S.V.P. otherwise. (This will help our meal committee adequately plan and prepare.) I look forward to seeing you each Sunday at Christ's Table, and especially on Transformation Sunday, November 23!

God's blessings,
Diana Tyler
NECC Council President and Stewardship Campaign Chair

CLEVELAND CHRISTIAN HOME—
Wish List copies on the table in the Narthex or choose a gift from the Christmas Tree. Help us make the holidays sparkle for the children and families served by the CCHOME.

- MONTH OF MISSION** —Collecting the following items for NOVEMBER:
- *Cornerstone Among Women* — Pocket change on the small table display.
 - *Food Pantry* — Canned and Dry Soups
 - *Salvation Army*—Winter gloves, hats, scarves

Thanksgiving Special Offering 2014

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning. Proverbs 9:9

The Thanksgiving Special Offering will be collected on November 9th and November 16th. This offering assists students attending 14 Disciples undergraduate colleges and 7 seminaries and divinity houses. The Thanksgiving Offering is put to use together with The Disciples Mission Fund and individual contributions to create grants and scholarships for students who want to attend Disciples Institutions.

Attending a Disciples Institution allows students opportunities to become better leaders in the church, workplace, and community. The gifts received through the Thanksgiving Offering will support over 26,000 students. Consider the many generations of pastors, who, if not for the support of faithful congregations and individuals over the ages would not have flourished as our pastors, teachers, and leaders. Have you considered the impact of the pastor in the life of your church, community or region? Our institutions help prepare our pastors for the service and leadership they provide to our communities, let's thank them by supporting the Thanksgiving Offering.

You can make your donation by using the special Thanksgiving Offering envelope in the pew, or by using a regular offering envelope and writing "Thanksgiving Offering" on the outside.

Stephanie Tyler Garvin

CHRISTMAS Vacation Bible School — Parents morning out.

Our Christian Education Dept. is excited to host a ONE DAY Christmas VBS again this year on SATURDAY, Dec. 6th, 2014. There will be breakfast served at 8:30 and the program will go from 9:00-12:00 (Noon). Parents and guardians, we'd love to lighten your load this holiday season and give you the gift of a free morning.

Your children will have a wonderful time learning about the true meaning of Christmas while moving through different rotations of a Bible lesson, craft, music and more. A "love offering" will be collected for Cornerstone Among Women. Children ages 3 thru 5th grade are welcome.

There is no cost for this event. The materials will be purchased through NECC Fair Grant Funds. Registration is a MUST, with space limited to 40 children. DEADLINE for registration is Monday, December 1st, 2014.

To register, go online to:

<http://goo.gl/forms/muvds2W44X>

OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE 440-748-2230



Book Club Reflection..... The Christian Fiction Book Club just finished *Hadassah: One Night With the King* by Tommy Tenney. This book is a fictional account of Queen Ester. There is a part in the book when Mordecai is speaking with Hadassah (Ester) after they learn that Hadassah is to be taken to the palace to be a candidate for the queen. They are both upset about the situation, but Mordecai explains, "Sometimes we have to live with far less than our highest wish. We are not second-class persons to Him just because our lives have taken us to some low places: some of them of our own making, some of them not. I believe even then He can do mighty things through us. He can reveal a purpose for our suffering. Your story is not over, Hadassah. In fact, I'm convinced it has hardly even begun." This passage got me thinking about how completely upside-down our lives can seem at times for so many different reasons. God created Adam from the dust of the earth, and he can turn ashes into beauty in our lives, too. Whether self-made or not, if we allow God to take the lead in every situation we find ourselves and rely on his guidance, we can rely on the promise that "God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Christian Fiction Book Club

The book that we've chosen to read for November is *Kisses From Katie: A Story of Relentless Love and Redemption* By Katie Davis. (non-fiction.) This is the story of how a short mission trip to Uganda changed the life of 18 year-old senior class president and homecoming queen Katie. She gave up a comfortable life and followed God's calling to care for the less fortunate of the world. If this sounds interesting to you, read the book and join us on Monday, Nov. 17th at 7:00 p.m. at the church to discuss "*Kisses From Katie*."

Please see MELISSA FOLK with any questions.

POINSETTIA SALES — orders will be taken on Sunday, Nov. 9, 16 & 23.

Cost is \$10.00 and they are available in RED or WHITE (7.5 inch pots). They may be purchased IN MEMORY or IN HONOR of someone. Payment is due at the time of your order, with checks made out to NECC. You may also stop by the church office during the week to place your order.



Sunday School Adult Class: *A Thrill of Hope*

This DVD based study presents the familiar story of Christmas as told us in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. This study blends the Christmas story through word and art. Each biblical passage is illustrated and interpreted through the stunning artwork of, John August Swanson. Along with commentary by some of North America's premier Biblical scholars this particular study will be informative and thrilling. Please plan to join us on November 30, 2014 for a wonderful start to our Advent/Christmas season. This will be a six week study. We will start by 11:00 each Sunday.



Blessings, Rev. Chuck

Cleveland Christian Home —Christmas Wishes 2014 (Copies are on the table in the Narthex or choose a gift from the Christmas Tree)

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



Visit www.cchome.org FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLEVELAND CHRISTIAN HOME and their needs. Any questions call POLLY TALLOS, 748-2246.

News Among the Pew

Blessings and continued good health to: Jim Ponting, Susie Naylor, Darrell Dieterich, Alberta Amos, Dawn Schieferle

Our sympathy is extended to: *Ruth Haupt on the death of her husband John. John was also Mary Bengough's brother. John faithfully baked the small loaves of bread that we use each week on the communion table. He was a cookie baker for all our bake sales.*

THEY ARE MISSED: MARY BENGOUGH has sold her home and moved to the Dayton area (Piqua) to be near her daughter, AMY STAFFORD and her husband have sold their home and have moved to their other home in North Carolina.



THE PRESENCE

Captain A.E. Borthwick painted his famous picture "***The Presence***" in 1910. It hangs in St. Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh, Scotland. The first time I saw a print of it was in the main office of the First United Methodist Church in Royal Oak, Michigan. It was my home church and I loved the painting.

Later, as a candidate for ordination in the Disciples of Christ, I saw another print of it in the regional office of Ohio. Jokingly, I ask if I could have it. The office manager said there were many people in line ahead of me who wanted it. The print still hangs in the regional office in Columbus. However, thanks to Jim and Judy Ponting, I have a copy hanging in my home. While they were in Scotland they purchased several copies. One of them hangs in the church office.

When I first saw the painting, I thought it meant that while worshippers in church were all down front praising God and taking communion, Jesus was actually standing in the back with some poor soul kneeling in prayer. It was a message of criticism of formal worship, while Jesus is concerned for the genuine faith of the person kneeling in the back. This is a common mistake of those who attempt to interpret the painting.

Fortunately, the artist clarified his meaning. He intended to convey the message that *Jesus is present in both places*. Jesus is present up front with the faithful worshippers and in that back row with the person alone at prayer. The light of God illuminates both areas with God's presence. I like that interpretation much better than my uninformed one.

I am deeply grateful to both Jim and Judy Ponting for giving me a copy. I look at it and am encouraged by God's presence everywhere. I look at it and remember the little boy who first saw it in the office of one of the persons who inspired me to ministry.

Dr. Paul H. Durbin

*Jesus where're thy people meet,
There they behold thy mercy seat;
Where're they seek thee thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.*