

THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY — NOVEMBER 2015

Just Plane Wrong

I recently read the following article about a plane that experienced difficulties and it got me thinking about the twists and turns in our spiritual journeys. It was a perfect landing – almost. The Piedmont Airlines pilot guided the 737 jet onto the ground and down the runway without a hitch. Perhaps the approach was a little rough, but none of the passengers really noticed. It was a perfect landing – almost. The only problem was that the plane had landed at the wrong airport. The flight had originated in Charlotte, North Carolina and should have landed at Bush Field at Augusta, Georgia. When the landing gear was about three feet off the ground, the pilot realized he was somewhere else. The pilot unmistakably landed at Daniel Field, to be precise, a smaller airstrip some six miles from Bush Field.

The pilot apologized to his passengers. The entire crew apologized. They offered everyone complimentary food. And do you know what? The passengers were not satisfied. In fact, the only thing that could settle them down was for the airline to find them transportation to their original destination. They did not appreciate being led astray to a plane they didn't want to board.

This got me thinking, our spiritual journeys are a lot like the experience the disgruntled passengers had. Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-23 that many people are travelling a route which will guide them to the wrong destination. In the final hour of judgment, apologies will be of no value. If we've not arrived at our intended and expected destination, changing locations will be impossible. Take a good look at the pilot of our life. Where is he taking us? He may dress in navy blue and braids, but does he steer us toward our final true destination of heaven? If not, then we need to parachute into the gracious hands of God and trust our souls to the one true Eternal Pilot and Guide.

*Blessings for Journey,
Rev. Chuck*

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• **ADULT "Potluck" CHRISTMAS PARTY @ the home of Ed and Angie Carter. Join us for a great evening of good food and great friends on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 5:30 P.M.**
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Advent begins on Nov. 29th and Christmas is very quickly behind. We are asking for those blessed with the gift of musical talent to help make our worship service more special. If you are willing to do special music (vocal or instrumental) please contact MIKI SAITO, 330-858-6683. If you are willing to be a part of a duet, group or by yourself.....please contact Miki.  
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DATE— NOVEMBER 2015

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

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NOV. BIRTHDAYS & ANNIV.

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

Living on the Vine

The Christian Fiction book club read, "When Jesus Wept" by Bodie & Brock Thoene. It tells the story of Jesus from John the Baptist preaching to Palm Sunday, through the eyes of Lazarus. Through the story there is a wonderful parallel between a vineyard and Christian faith. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Any branch that doesn't bear fruit, he cuts away. And he cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit. Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in me..." This is what Jesus said to Lazarus in one of their first meetings. Lazarus' reflection on Jesus' words is, "From that time, though I doubted at first, I came to admire and love Jesus of Nazareth. And I knew he loved me. He connected my heart to his. Like the morning of bud break, when the first new green foliage breaks forth from the vine, I was far from bearing fruit. My faith was small, about the size of my thumbnail, like the tiny clusters in early spring. All the promise of fullness and quality exists within the cluster from its beginning. But everything depends on the branch remaining united to the nourishment of the vine." If we continue to live attached to God through Jesus, we will grow into the richness and fullness of life that He designed, just like plump, sweet grapes living on the vine.

Elder Edification

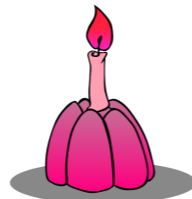
I had the joy of attending another elder's workshop in September, this one led by the Reverend Bruce Barkhauer. The topic of the workshop was stewardship. One of the first things Rev. Barkhauer said, really caught my attention, was that God created enough for all. We've created a distribution problem. That's where stewardship comes in. In the Bible, there are three types of giving: tithe, celebratory offering in addition to the tithe, and alms to the poor. He didn't focus on only monetary/material giving but also on ministry, speaking about vision for you, for your church. I am a giver. I think I always have been, and I always will. It's in my DNA, but sometimes I wear myself out with trying to give of myself too much. Rev. Barkhauer didn't leave out a message about this, too. He reflected on creation- You work for six days and you have enough for seven. Everybody rests on Sabbath, everyone is equal then. He reminded us that in Exodus 16, this idea of rest is reinforced with the story of Manna in the desert. Manna could not be kept or it would spoil the next day, except Manna kept for the Sabbath. The Israelites were to rest. Generosity should look like Jesus, Red. Barkhauer said, I agree. Jesus gave freely and generously. He also took time to be alone and to be in communion with his (and our) Father. Thank you, Giver of All, for the words I needed to hear.

Christmas ONE DAY VBS

We are excited to again host a one day **Christmas VBS** on Saturday, **December 5th from 9am to noon**. This year's theme is The Great ADVENTure. Children will start around the breakfast table and will have a wonderful time learning about the true meaning of Christmas through Bible lessons, crafts, music and more. The children will also be given a snack. A love offering will be taken for **Cornerstone Among Women**. Children ages 3 through 5th grade are welcome. There is no cost for this event; the materials are purchased through NECC Fair Grant Funds. Registration is a **MUST**, and space is limited to 40 children. Deadline for registration is Monday, November 30th, 2015. If you have questions or would like to volunteer to help at Christmas VBS, please see Polly Tallos, Melissa Folk or leave a message in the church office at (440) 748-2230.

SECRET SISTER Birthday Party — The birthday bash was attended by 9 women and 3 men (who graciously helped us cleanup after the party). It was a fun time with delicious food, and presents. Our Holiday Party is scheduled for January 10th. Meat will be provided and we ask you to bring a dish to share. Our theme for the luncheon will be snowmen. If you have a favorite snowman you would like to share for our "table centerpiece," please contact Sharon Mullins or Paula Krasnevich.

Happy Birthday



Paula is in need of your secret sister information, to get it updated — please contact her as soon as possible.

Deacons Meeting, Nov. 15th at 10:45

ALL Deacons (8:00 & 9:30) — If you can serve as a Deacon at the 7:00 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, please contact Paula Krasnevich or Rev. Chuck.

8:00 Service — if you have felt a calling to service, but have never been asked or you have served before and are willing to serve again, please contact LAURA KUHN. (Two more would be a great help.)

NECC Biking Event

On Sunday, Sept. 27th, eight of us rode our bikes on the North Coast Trail from Oberlin to Kipton and back. Then we enjoyed dinner at Lorenzo's Restaurant in downtown Oberlin. Three more joined us for a leisurely dinner on the patio. The food was delicious, the company was awesome and it was a gorgeous day for biking with family and friends. Join us next September for this annual event, because it really is a lot of fun! Even if you don't ride a bike, I know you can eat dinner.



Another Reflection from attending the General Assembly (Polly Tallos)

I had the opportunity to go with Erik to a heavy metal concert in downtown Cleveland. 10+ bands starting at 2 PM going until after 9 PM. Some might say that was my whole '100 acts of'. During the evening I stepped outside to get some fresh air and quiet. As I was standing there a man walked by, not a homeless person but someone who look a little dirty, a little out of place. He went to the corner, turned around and headed back towards where I was standing. I was afraid he would stop and ask me for money, so I stepped back inside to avoid him. Then I thought about what I had heard at General Assembly, 100 acts of kindness. What could I do? What if he did ask me for something? So I went back outside...just to make myself available. I didn't hunt him down. I was willing to offer to buy him dinner at the food truck parked outside the concert venue but he ended up crossing to the other side of the street, finding a couple of guys to bum a cigarette. So I didn't do an act of kindness that day, but I did think about it and make myself open to the opportunity.

To do "random acts of kindness" we have to be willing to step out of our comfort zone, make ourselves available and remember to be like Jesus.

CYCLE FOR LIFE EVENT



On Saturday, September 19th, the team Dawn Riders (Ralph Thompson and Carol Bokman) successfully participated in the Cystic Fibrosis Cycle For Life event. Ralph rode 65 miles (and then a little extra because of getting lost in Akron) and I turned around at the 27.5 mile mark for a total of 55 miles on the Towpath Trail to help raise funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. This was Ralph's third year of participating in the event and my second (how bad can it be if they both came back for more). The route entailed starting in Peninsula at the Winking Lizard Restaurant at Peninsula. We felt the impending threat of rain and thunderstorms during the entire ride, but most of the time then pedaling all the way to Canal Fulton which was the turnaround point (or halfway) and then back e raindrops ended up falling someplace other than on our route. It appears that this is an annual event and it would be nice to have other church members and friends join us on this adventure next year. I would never willingly decide to pedal that many miles in one day, however, knowing what Dawn endures most days of her life gave me the motivation and determination to make this journey. Our team raised almost \$1400 for this event which puts us in 3rd place for team fundraising. Thank you so very much for all of the prayers and donations from our church family. As always, the people at NECC are very generous, supportive, and compassionate towards its members' needs. Maybe one day soon a cure will be found for Cystic Fibrosis.

WORSHIP TEAM "INVITATIONS" During the Christmas Season

This year throughout the Advent and Christmas season the NECC Worship Team is inviting you to help make this season more meaning during worship by bringing in items to be used to enhance our celebration of Jesus' birth. We are using the theme "**darkness and light**" this year.

Please bring a **Christmas star** to church by December 6th and place it in the box on the fireplace in the fellowship hall. Please keep in mind that the star will be hung in the Narthex. It can be store bought or homemade. Please label the star so it can be returned to its owner. This is to remind us that we are being "*led by a star*" towards our Savior.

We are also inviting you to participate in a local mission project. We will be working with Midview Schools to help fulfill wishes from the **ANGEL TREE and Coats For Kids**. We will have sizes, ages and gift suggestions soon. There will be a designated area of the coat rack in the narthex for you to hang your donated coats. *Please see POLLY TALLOS if you would like to get an order.*

Nativity Scene— On Dec 27th we will add additional **animals** to our Nativity. The animals can be made out of any type of material, bought or homemade but they must be able to stand alone and a size that will add to the beauty and importance of the Nativity. Please label them so they can be taken home after Epiphany Sunday. There is also a box on the fireplace in the fellowship hall for you to place these animals.

Important Collection Dates:

STARS - bring in by December 6th.

NEW CHILDREN'S COATS/JACKETS and ANGEL TREE WISHES — See Polly Tallos

SMALL ANIMALS (NO STUFFED ANIMALS) - bring in no later than December 27

Our thanks and appreciation, Your Worship Team

Adult Sunday School Class: *Not a Silent Night*

This year's study for Advent and Christmas looks at these special seasons from a fresh perspective. This coming Advent and Christmas season we will experience these seasons with the one person who knew Jesus more than anyone else -- his mother, Mary. Imagine the pain she felt at the crucifixion, her pride as Jesus' ministry grew and her unrestrained joy when she looked into his tiny face that fateful night in the stable. Rev. Dr. Hamilton will help us witness the life of Jesus from Mary's unique perspective. We will start at the very end of Jesus' story and travel back in time to the very beginning -- the night of Jesus' birth. Please plan to join us for this study that can add the spiritual depth for your Advent and Christmas seasons. We will start on Sunday, November 29, 2015 at 11 am. In the Sunday school room off the fellowship hall.



NECC Prayer Chain Policy

There are those times when it is always beneficial to remind ourselves concerning various activities and practices of the NECC congregation. One of those at this time is our email prayer chain ministry. It is especially appropriate to cover these details when a new person takes on a new responsibility. Our new facilitator for the Prayer Chain is, Diana Tyler.

This vehicle (emailing) praying for those in need is an extremely beneficial prayer ministry for NECC. Therefore, with the recent explosive use of social media in our culture it becomes necessary to review our use of this ministry for the healthiest ways possible. As a result the Elders of NECC have initiated the following directives.

The Prayer Chain can be initiated only by direct request and by permission from the person being prayed for or by permission granted from the immediate family member.

Requests for the Prayer Chain first need to come to the church office the pastor/church secretary will then notify Diana concerning the prayer request.

General Facebook postings ARE NOT considered “official prayer requests.” Those desiring prayer must contact the pastor or the church office directly by phone call, text, email or a personal visit.

The Prayer Chain will then be started only after the request has been made through the “official request.” Only information authorized by the person being prayed for may be shared. Please keep in mind, to keep the information brief and factual. No speculating.

All information provided in the Prayer Chain request is to be kept as confidential. We highly encourage praying for the person, the family, the care team and all those involved. However, do not share the confidential information with others in public, not by Tweet, not by Facebook posts or Facebook news and not by InstaGram. Any public sharing is right and privilege of the individual or the family involved.



Thank you NECC congregation for your involvement in our precious prayer ministry. Thank you for your faithfulness and attentiveness to the many prayer needs of our congregation. As Paul encouraged the church at Thessalonica in, 1 Thessalonians 5:17 which reads, “pray without ceasing . . .” So I also encourage us at NECC to continue to pray without ceasing for each other.

Blessings, Rev. Chuck

COUNCIL MEETING—Sunday,

December 13th NOONEveryone is encouraged to attend our Council meetings, even if you do not have a vote. You do have a right to express your opinion and to learn and know more about how decisions are made for NECC.

BREAKFAST BUNCH—

Our thank you to Laura and Randy Kuhn for making the arrangements for another great get-together for breakfast at Blue Sky on Oct. 18th. Another one will be coming soon.

Consecration Sunday – November 22, 2015

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 all.* We are reminded at the table of the Lord, of God’s unlimited giving and blessings for us. Our consecration program concentrates on, “Measuring What Matters: Stewardship as Discipleship.” Our guest preacher on Nov. 22nd will be Rev. Dr. Paul Biery, retired Ohio pastor and Ohio regional elder.

We will conclude our consecration Sunday with lunch at noon. I encourage us all to be present on Consecration Sunday, November 22 when we will individually and collectively commit our intentional financial support of the transformations that occur through the ministries of our congregation.

Christmas Cookie Sale

Saturday, Dec. 5th

12:00-1:00 P.M.

Mix and Match homemade Christmas cookies by the excellent bakers at North Eaton Christian Church. Only \$8.00 a pound. Bag or box them—they make great gifts or a treats for co-workers, friends and family.

Any questions, see Polly Tallos or call the church office, 440-748-2230.



THANK YOU to the ladies of Rebekah Circle for filling Halloween candy bags for the Midview Trunk or Treat and to the Chi Rho and CYF who filled the bags for our Columbia Trunk or Treat. We gave out over 600 bags plus some extra candy we had when the bags were gone. Thank you to EVERYONE who generously donated the candy and to Carol Busche for taking pictures.

This congregation is awesome!

Polly Tallos, Youth Director

CONGRATULATIONS TO: *The newly weds, Jamie and April Purdy who were married in our sanctuary on Oct. 10, 2015.*

Justin & Lise Cochran on the birth of their son, Greyson Anthony on Oct. 3rd. The proud great grandma is MARY TITE.

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL:

- 12 helpers cooked, served and cleaned up for our
- 48 guests. 6 carryout meals were delivered. The
- homemade apple crisp was a hit with everyone.
- Our next free meal is Tuesday, Nov. 24th at 5:30.
- All are welcome to join us for dinner or come as a
- volunteer and join in the fun.

Election Day Bake Sale for our Youth:

We made \$450.00 from the **bake goodies and sandwich sale.** Our JYF went shopping to fill a few of the Christmas Shoeboxes and the rest will go to other mission projects for Christmas.

Our appreciation to all who baked and to all the VOTERS who bought. The support from our church and the community is amazing.

Thank You — Polly Tallos, Youth Director