



Please join us at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning in our Adult Discussion Sunday School Class as we converse about these topics:

- January 1: New Year, Old Me – Resolutions? Not!
- January 8: Organists and Sinners – Not Much More to Say
- January 15: Good Morning - Joy Comes in the Morning
- January 22: Hand and Foot - What's Cookin'?
- January 29: And the Worst Penmanship Award Goes To...-How's Your Handwriting?
- February 5: Family- Knowing Your Family Tree

Mike Beamish

The Journal

January 2023



St. John's United Church of Christ

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Mike Beamish started off the Sunday School Class on January 1 asking us all about our New Year's Resolutions. I suppose it was not too surprising that most of us admitted that since we are not very good at keeping resolutions, we have pretty much abandoned that tradition. On the other hand, before the class was over, it became clear that we all are determined to improve ourselves and be a bit more like Jesus this year! So, whether it is formalized or not, we do make resolutions.

The church has done that too! The Vision Team formulated a resolution statement for us: BUILDING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY! How do we do that? There are so many ways, but Council approved that 2023 should be our year to build that Welcoming Community by focusing on **outreach to the community and tending to and attracting children**. The budget for this year includes money for a part-time Family Ministry staff person. I hope we actually take these things seriously and do our part to move our Church toward these essential goals. Call them goals or resolutions – we can all do something to make St. John's a vital place of energy and compassion.



Church Staff

Pastor Don Crist

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decrist@earthlink.net

Office Manager

Melissa Stanley

Outside Custodian

Rob Brower

Inside Custodian

Erika Wilson

Senior Choir Director

Becky Pierce

Head Usher

Mike Beamish

Technician

Christopher Reed

Communion Elements

Allison Pierce

Sunday Money Counters

Mike Beamish

John Gibbons

Happy Birthday!

Sharon Wilson – 1/4

Glenn Lytle – 1/7

Sarah Porto – 1/15

Liz Fessler – 1/16

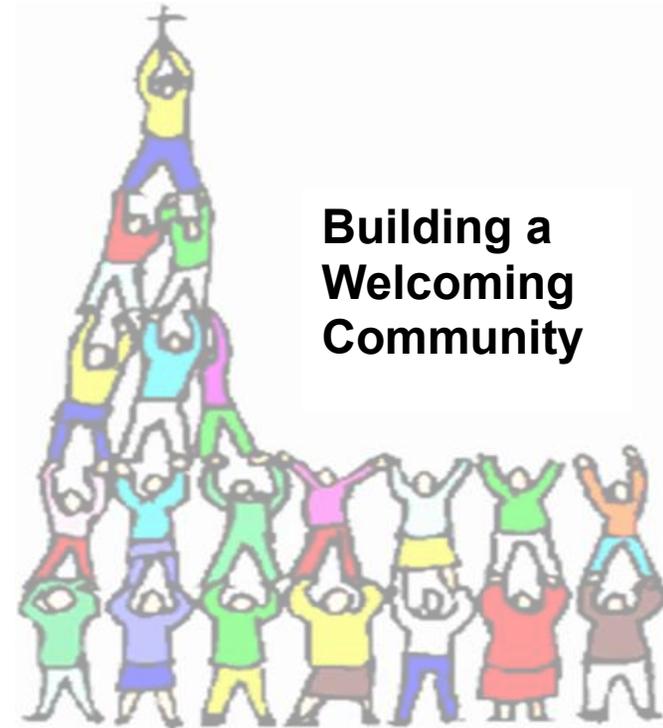
Ruth Jeffryes – 1/29

Stewardship, Finance & Mission December 2022

DATE	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Dec 4th	\$1,721.00
Dec 11th	\$9,111.00
Dec 18th	\$1,589.00
Dec 29th	\$545.97

TOTAL GIVING – Monthly Review 2022

MONTH	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
January	\$9,299.65
February	\$9,860.65
March	\$9,111.39
April	\$14,426.95
May	\$11,381.65
June	\$13,770.12
July	\$8,890.00
August	\$7,004.75
September	\$6,063.58
October	\$7,672.00
November	\$8,235.00
December	\$12,966.97
TOTAL	\$118,682.71



- Providing a space for children to feel loved and accepted
- Providing a safe and attractive place for our neighbors

Vision Team

BUILDING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

This year, St. John's will grow our current and future church with a special emphasis on children, families and our wider community. We will work together to create a supportive and loving environment for all ages through quality educational, social and spiritual activities. We will reach out beyond our own church walls to invite and welcome others to join us in our activities and events.



The vision team presented, and the Church Council adopted, this Vision and Mission statement at the October meeting. As we enter the 2023 new year, I hope we will all keep these words in mind as we go about our daily work here at St. John's.



Volunteers Needed on January 20th

The Gathering Place will be sponsoring a kid's craft day on Friday January 20th from 4-6pm in the basement of the church. Dawn Babylon, a well-respected art teacher in the area, will be leading the class for kids 5-10 years old. We are in need of 2-3 adults to help out that afternoon with set up and clean up, and to assist with the crafts if needed. Please speak to Mary Ann if you can help. This is being funded by a grant from the Miami County Foundation.

Annual Congregational Meeting

Please stay for our Annual Congregational meeting after worship on January 22nd. Also, please bring your own table service and a dish or two to share.

Help Wanted!

Calling a few people who can tell the difference between a microphone and a flutophone! You might just be qualified to help us re-launch the Facebook Live program on Sunday mornings! We have had a request to start recording the service live again but we can't do it without people willing to be on a team to run on the equipment, focus the camera, and turn it off again. Let us know if you are interested in helping in the way. Call the office, text the pastor, or just talk to us on Sunday morning.

Mark Condy

Mark is returning to St. John's on Sunday, January 23rd! Come welcome him back again and bring someone with you!

Grandparent Support Group

The Gathering Place is hosting a support group for grandparents raising grandchildren monthly on the 1st and 3rd Monday, 6:30-7:30p facilitated by Pastor Ann Marie Winters. To register, call Ann Marie at 330.469.6296.

The Cloud

by Phiwa Langeni

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely. – Hebrews 12:1

Cloud computing, a.k.a. the cloud, is a sharing resource that exists on the internet. It remotely stores data for individual computers, phones, tablets, and other devices to access as needed.

The cloud acts as a supercomputer that hangs onto all the stuff we need and has it ready whenever we want to access it. Beyond the convenience of accessing files from just about anywhere, the cloud enables individual devices to direct their resources toward more important and relevant tasks.

My tech-inclined brain makes me quite fond of the idea of dead loved ones joining an ever-growing cloud of witnesses. Though we can't call or text, hug or kiss, fight or snub loved ones who've died, like a computing cloud we can remotely access them in new ways beyond our individual physicality. Before their death, we had to negotiate methods of connecting, even creatively over distance since the pandemic began.

Now, our loved ones are anywhere we are and at any time we need them. Not that they're hovering over us in some spiritual internet. Instead, the collective cloud of witnesses acts as a sort of supercomputer that holds onto our shared memories, love, grief, and losses. In so doing, we're empowered to redirect our energies into the important and relevant work of living into our fullest selves.

Prayer

As we log into another year, remind us that death never has the final word. Renew our access to the cloud of those who've gone before us. Reboot our passion to participate in living out your desire for a whole and healthy creation. Amen.

Let's continually ask ourselves: How can we be more welcoming and inclusive? How can we invite and attract others to join us in our fellowship and spiritual activities? We have already begun putting this into practice. For instance when the women gathered to bake cookies before Christmas, two non-church families, including 6 children, joined in the fun. When we offered a 4-week Advent Soup and Study, 3 members of the broader community joined us for lively and enriching discussions. When we celebrated a St. John's Thanksgiving, several former church attenders were there to eat turkey, reminisce and get re-connected.

Can you think of someone who might benefit from a warm and loving group of friends, or a fun break from the winter doldrums? This can be an opportunity to not only enlarge our church family, but more importantly, show the love of Jesus to our neighbors and friends.



With the busy holiday season behind us, are you looking for an event for the winter months? Would you be interested in planning an event for St. John's?

If so, and you need a little help, the Vision Team's Event Planning Form is available for you to pick up on the bulletin board outside the office. It guides you through things to consider as you plan. I am also available, upon request, to go through the process with you. You can call or text me at 937-335-8538 or email me at ladybugswank@aol.com.

Joyce Swank
Coordinator

Event Planning

The Gathering Place is open for business!!



During Advent we had a well-attended and well-received weekly soup and study group, full of shared stories, lots of laughter, singing and lively discussion. It was co-facilitated by Mary Ann and Ann Marie Winters, former pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church, and included both church and community members. What fun it was to get to know each other and share ideas and experiences.

Coming up we're planning a children's craft event and a macrame workshop for older kids and adults. Maybe we should think about a family game night. Or a book study. Any takers? If I bring the pizza??



PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

Donald Schaffner: Please pray for Paul's brother who has been recently diagnosed with liver cancer. **Pam, niece of Joyce Heffelfinger:** Please keep Pam in your prayers as she's very ill and hospitalized. **Wayne Cunningham:** Please pray for Stephanie Strobe's father who continues to battle bone and liver cancer. He finished chemo and is awaiting a PET scan. **Brent Adkins:** Brent is participating in both cardiac and pulmonary rehab. Meds are still be tweaked a bit. He's continuing to gain strength and stamina. All in all, his progress has been amazing. Please continue to pray for his progress. **Em Finney:** Ginny's sister, Em, has been on our prayer list for a very long time and needs our prayers now more than ever as her illness progresses, and her health deteriorates. **Michael Ham:** Despite his life-long health issues, Michael has accomplished a great deal in his life and is very active in the Troy community. As his health issues mount, Michael could certainly use all the prayers that we at St. John's can offer. **Joe Valentine:** Please pray for Barb Bartel's son, Joe, as he continues to struggle with family issues. **Erika, Logan and Brianna Wilson:** Please pray for Sharon's grandchildren that they may know the love, peace and grace of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Remember our homebound in your thoughts and prayers. Cards are welcome:

Barb Bartel: 4675 Orbison Rd., Troy, OH. 45373

Beulah Bowers: 1220 N. Dorset, Troy, OH 45373

Carletta Gritzmaker: 2896 West Main Street, Troy, OH 45373

Joan Meredith: Lakeview Wing #213, 1567 Garbry Road, Piqua, OH 45356

Please note: Updates and/or amendments to the prayer list are appreciated. Typically, prayer requests will be removed after 4 weeks. If you or a loved one needs to remain on the list, please contact Betty Schaffner at 937-335-6713 or Joyce Reives at 937-477-8268. Thank you.



January 2023



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1	2 Office is Closed	3	4	5 10:00a Twisted Stitchers	6	7
8 9:30a Adult Sun School 10:30a Worship	9 6:00p Trustee	10	11 10:00a History 6:00p Choir	12 10:00a Twisted Stitchers	13	14
15 9:30a Adult Sun School 10:30a Worship	16 Office is Closed 6:00p Council	17 Office is Closed	18 10:00a History 6:00p Choir	19 10:00a Twisted Stitchers	20	21
22 9:30a Adult Sun School 10:30a Worship Congregational Meeting	23	24	25 10:00a History 10:00a Ministry &Outreach 6:00p Choir	26 10:00a Twisted Stitchers	27	28
29 9:30a Adult Sun School 10:30a Worship	30	31				