



Faith Community United Church of Christ

Dialog

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DECEMBER 2011

PASTOR'S CORNER

December is here! That means the Christmas season is in full swing. You will hear Christmas songs everywhere, Christmas sales pitches in the stores, and see Christmas movies and cartoons on television. There is an excitement in the air that is not there the rest of the year. All that stuff is for our emotional and physical senses. But what about our spiritual senses. Is our spirit being nourished as much as our other senses in this Advent season?

Advent means coming, an expectant waiting. In our Christian waiting, this coming, this expectant waiting is for our Messiah Jesus Christ. Like the Christmas songs in the stores, and movies on television our *worship services* are gearing us toward Christmas day. Our *worship services* are not trying to get us to make a financial purchase for a toy, a shirt, or an electric razor. Our *worship services* are trying to get us to purchase the gift of our advent season. That gift is, of course, the birth of the Messiah Jesus Christ. This gift, unlike other gifts for Christmas, is not a gift for the physical body like a shirt would be, or like a toy to play with, or an electric razor to make us look presentable. This gift is a gift for our spirits and our souls.

The gift to us in the form of baby Jesus gives us the gift of *forgiveness* for any and *all* our sins, both our sins of *action*, as well as sins of *inaction*. The gift of baby Jesus also gives us the gift of eternal life. These gifts of the baby Jesus are for everyone, both Jew and Gentile, like the bible says in Jesus' time. In today's world the gift of the baby Jesus just means for *everyone*.



So, in the midst of all the running around from store to store to get those Christmas presents for family, friends, and maybe the mailman, hopefully you will purchase the gift for yourself that the season is all about. Take the gift of the baby Jesus into your arms and into your heart as well. Allow this gift of forgiveness, and eternal life to be in your life every day of the year.

God bless you, everyone!

Pastor Kaufman



Christmas Giving

Once again this year, the family at Faith Community UCC will be adopting two families in need this season. At the time of this printing, we have not received the names and needs of the families yet, but will announce the information during services when all the details have been finalized.

The needs of each family member will be listed on the wall, with names, ages, sizes and any other information that is pertinent. Please study the needs and take the ones you can fulfill. The deadline for bringing in the gifts will be noted in the weekly bulletin and during services.

Food baskets with all the necessities for a great Christmas day dinner will be prepared for each family also. The council will be preparing the food baskets.

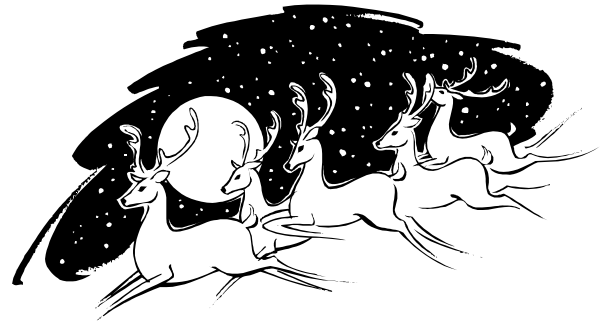
This Christmas project was a great success last year. The photo below from last year testifies to how generous the Faith family is.



December Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY:

- Dec. 1 — John Reichard
- Dec. 1 — Jeff McIntire
- Dec. 3 — Linda Baker
- Dec. 17 — Jeff Baker



Prayer Requests

Please remember the following people in your prayers this month:

- Friends of David Barboza:
- Mrs. Walker
- Shawn Walker
- Cheryl Chesney Walker
- Dorothy Einsel
- Peggy Walters
- John and Inez Reichard
- Eleanor Huss
- Helen Shearon



The Good Bunch will hold their Christmas Party gathering on Dec. 13 at 6:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church, located at Holland-Sylvania and Pilliod Roads. There will be a light ham loaf dinner followed by a Christmas Concert. The cost per person is \$8.50.



A sign-up sheet for reservations is on the bulletin board, or call Nancy and Mel Barrios at 419-893-0500.

Reservations must be in and paid by Sunday, Dec. 11. This is different from previous years in that we need to collect the money in advance. Anyone needing transportation to the event, please let the hosts know. Arrangements will be worked out to get everyone there who wants to attend.



The Faith Community Christmas Dinner will be on Sunday, December 18, following worship services. The meat will be provided with the remainder of the potluck provided by the members and friends in attendance. Please bring a dish to share.

Along with the dinner and visit from Santa Claus, we will be Christmas Caroling in the neighborhood, encouraging our neighbors to join us in singing the songs of the season.

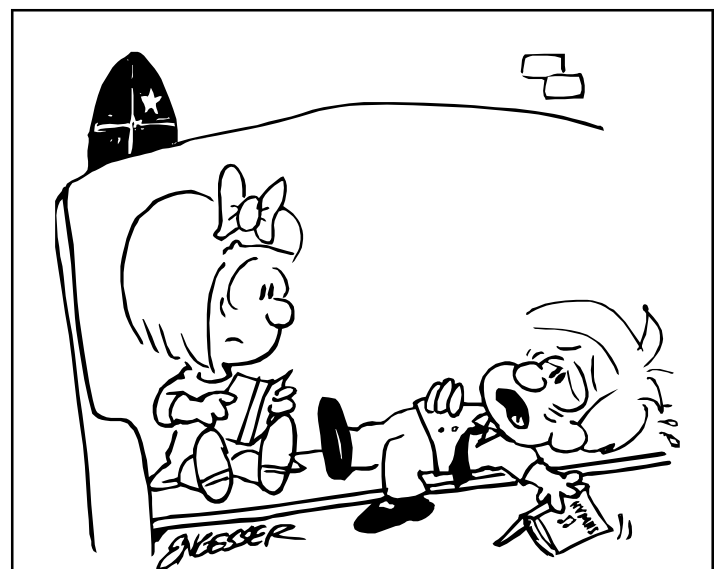
Nominations for 2012 Church Council

We will begin taking nominations for council members on Sunday, Dec. 4 and will continue taking nominations until Sunday, Dec. 18. Anyone wishing to serve on the council in 2012 are encouraged to step forward and volunteer.



The worship leaders for December are:

Dec. 4	Roger Reese
Dec. 11	Tom Parker
Dec. 18	Peg Knapp
Dec. 25	Mel Barrios
Jan. 1	Matthew Utter



"That last 'Glo-ooo-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooria' about did me in."

What is the United Church of Christ?

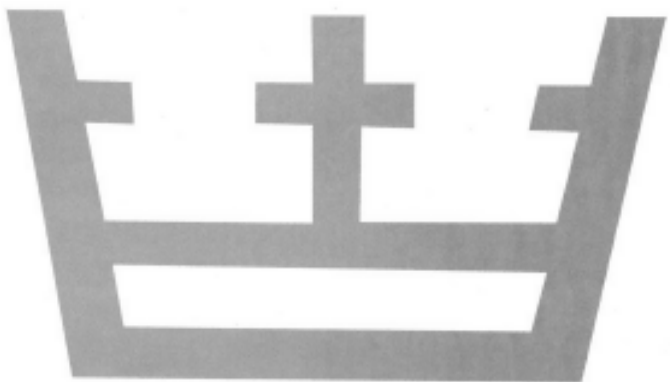
It has been brought to our attention that many of us do not know much about the history of the United Church of Christ. This is the third in a series of articles that we will publish in the *Dialog* each

month. These articles are taken from the booklet "About the United Church of Christ, a guide to more effective church membership."

Your Church Council



The United Church of Christ believes in:



THE TRINITY

Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit are one God.



GOD

Acting in love, God is ever active in the world.



JESUS CHRIST

In Christ, the only head of the church, God has come, conquering sin and reconciling the world to Divine Love.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

God sent the Holy Spirit as the Eternal One's continuing presence and activity in the world.



THE CHURCH

The church consists of a group of people united in Christ through worship, work and witness.



SALVATION

Forgiveness, grace and eternal life are promised to all who have faith.



AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

The Bible is the ultimate rule of faith and practice.



DOCTRINAL FREEDOM

Different covenants and confessions of faith are accepted in different congregations.



CHRISTIAN UNITY

All Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ and must help each other.



BEARING WITNESS

Members must be disciples, in word and in deed—the strength of their faith.



REDEFINING FAITH

Each generation is responsible for rethinking its beliefs, as God's word unfolds and conditions change.



SERVING OTHERS

The mission of the church is to work for justice for all and to establish God's rule in the world.



In the past month we have added a few books to the library shelves. Some were donated to the library by members and friends of the church and others we snagged off the rummage sale shelves prior to the sale.

Following is a brief review of two the new additions:

St. George and the Dragon and the Quest for the Holy Grail, by Edward Hays, (Forest of Peace, Ave Maria Press, Inc., Notre Dame, IN 46556). The George in this story describes himself as a non-hero, ordinary middle-class fellow who heard the call. In this modern-day, late twentieth century fable of the quest for the Holy Grail, George packs up his personal items and bids farewell to his angry wife, confused children, and chuckling neighbors; and with a rusty army sword strapped to his waist sets out on his spiritual quest.

At the end of his first day and night on the road he
continued next page


meets up with an enormous dragon with scarlet scales that flashed orange and yellow. The dragon explains to George that he is a Chinese dragon and Chinese dragons are a good sign of blessing and good fortune. After a night of getting acquainted, the dragon sends George back home where he is met with the derision of family and friends. But still needing to pursue his quest, George converts an old shed on his property into his own private hermitage. The remainder of the book is made up of George spending many hours in his hermitage to which the dragon visits on a regular basis.

Written in journal style, the dragon presents 22 stories to George, each story contained a profound message to help George on his spiritual search. As described on the back cover, "this book contains 22 parables woven within one parable, the journal of an adventure that echoes the greatest of all quests."

It is a fun read for anyone who is not offended by hearing God called "she" and a theological message that all paths lead to God. For coming from a Catholic press, surprisingly, it contains strong allusions to the "New Age" movement in its presentation.

The Name, by Franklin Graham, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN). This book, written by the fourth child of Billy and Ruth Bell Graham, takes on the question "Why does the name of Jesus stir both awe and animosity?" Graham reflects, "Why is it when people curse using His Name, hardly anyone complains? But if you speak about Him with respect or pray in His Name, some people call 'foul'?"

From that point, Graham attempts to respond to the questions. Citing examples of those who blast all things Christian, including the Name, and his own personal experiences of people who have told him



Decorate the Altar for Christmas

The Library Committee is selling Poinsettia plants that will decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. The plants are available in either red, pink, or white. You are encouraged to take them home to decorate your own residence after the service on Christmas Day.

Deadline to order is Sunday, Dec. 11.


I want: red pink white

Quantity (\$8 each): _____

Name: _____

Memorial:* _____

In Honor of:* _____



Please complete, fold and place in the collection plate or in the basket in the office.

Please make all checks payable to:

**Faith Community
United Church of Christ**

*Note: A "Memorial" is to a departed loved one. "In Honor of" could be to someone departed or to someone still living.

face-to-face that they were offended by his use of the Name, Graham goes on to explain, reveal and honor the most important Person who ever lived. "It is an articulate, passionate, motivating and moving tribute to the One who bears the Name" — Jesus Christ. Graham makes it clear that in our "politically correct" world today, Jesus is not

politically correct and goes on to remind all that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

It is a good book and will benefit anyone who finds themselves teetering on the top of the fence, not sure what their own personal feelings may be about The Name.

The Good Bunch

at Bob Evans Restaurant, Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011, Mel and Nancy Barrios, hosts



If you want a Faith Community Calendar for 2012, don't forget to sign-up on the sheet provided on the bulletin board. Deadline to order your calendar is Sunday, December 11.



Worship Services

Christmas Eve — 7 p.m. — Communion
Christmas Day — 10:30 a.m. — Communion

Activities around the church in November



Church receives new members

The last Sunday in October was new member Sunday. Five people joined Faith Community United Church of Christ that day. Pictured above, left to right, Brandy Worthington, Raymond Titera, Pastor Scott, Laura Barker, David Barboza, and Donna Titera.



All-Saints Sunday

On November 6, All-Saints Sunday, a special section of the service was devoted to lighting candles, (pictured above) one for each of the members and friends of Faith Community who had passed away during the preceding year.



A visit from the past

The last Sunday in October also saw a visit from Barbara Sterrett and her son. Mrs. Sterrett is the wife of Faith Community's first pastor. Pictured above, left to right, Barbara Sterrett, Dorothy Kowalski, Steve Sterrett and Karen Sterrett.



Following services, many old time friends and family gathered at a local Bob Evans (pictured above) to enjoy lunch and a visit with the Sterrett family.

All photos in this issue by Joe Kowalski

The Staff serving Faith Community in 2011



Pastor Scott Kaufman



Secretary B.J. Lord



Organist Rita Braker



Pianist Dorothy Kowalski
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Faith family pass out candy for Halloween

