

February 2019

The Cornerstone

Christ Church United Methodist
700 S. Marshall Road, Middletown OH 45044
513-422-7364 (telephone) • 513-422-2161 (fax) • www.christum.com



Staff

Wynston Dixon, Pastor
Debbie Alexander, Director of Music Worship
Betsy Balger, Accompanist
Julie Coleman, Office Manager

10:30 am - Sunday Worship

9:00 am - Group Study

Sunday Adult Classes

Room 113: *Calvary Class*
Room 115: *Sojourners Class*
Room 118: *Searchers Class*
Library: *ReachOut*

Sunday Youth Class

Room 23: Jr. High/Sr. High

Nursery Care

10:15 am - noon, Ages 0-Pre-K, Rm. 27 & 29

Sunday Morning is Looking a Little Different

Start times for Sunday School and Sunday worship changed as of January 20. Both adult and youth Sunday School classes now meet at 9:00 am followed by coffee and fellowship in the lobby from 10:00 am to 10:25 am. Our new morning worship hour has moved to 10:30 am.

Please share the news, and be intentional about inviting family, friends and neighbors who do not have a church home to join you on Sunday mornings at Christ Church.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

FAITH--Let's Build on It!

As you will remember, Christ Church received a very generous gift from the family of Carol and Paul Hoskins after Carol's passing in July 2018. The gift, in the amount of \$99,700, was designated to help us reduce the mortgage obligation on our church building. At the time of the gift, the family encouraged us to begin a capital campaign to raise additional funds to help us continue to reduce the remaining debt balance which launched our "FAITH--Let's Build on It!" Campaign to accomplish what the Hoskins' Family started.

As of January 27, we have received gifts and pledges totaling \$32,680 toward paying down our mortgage! Of this total, \$25,540 will be added to the Hoskins gift in February and applied directly to our mortgage balance. The remaining \$7,140 are actual pledges received to be paid by the end of the campaign.

While our "FAITH--Let's Build on It!" Campaign will not officially end until July 2020, anyone wishing to make a special one-time campaign gift or pledge commitment to the campaign can still certainly do so up to the end of our campaign in 2020. A gift in any amount is always welcome! Thank you Christ Church.

Letter from the Pastor



My beloved Parishioners,

Happy New Year! I hope and pray that each of you had a blessed holiday. Thank God we have ended and begun a new year.

The past year has been a challenging one for the church, but God has been faithful to His people and the church. I must commend the staff for their continuous faithfulness and loyalty to Christ Church. We could not have done it without the commitment of the staff. Thank you for a job well done considering all circumstances.

The new year brings opportunities for new beginnings. We will be exploring new areas of ministries.

Most of us have made our resolutions for 2019, but let me urge each member and friend of Christ Church to include a commitment to reach out to at least one unchurched person for the Lord. The unchurched population of Middletown is very high. What would happen to our congregation if 10 of us decided to bring in one person this year. I'm looking for 10 persons who will stand up and take this challenge. Perhaps you are here today because of a personal invitation from someone else.

We must admit that the Christian church is in crisis - spiritually, morally, and financially. The reason is that the church has strayed from the Bible. God will be faithful to his church as long as God's people humble themselves and seek His face. Let me quickly say, despite the crisis in the church, the church is the only means of hope and light for this dark world. Thanks to all of you who joined in prayer and fasting for our church on Tuesday, January 15. And special thanks to those who came out in the bad weather for the prayer meeting that evening.

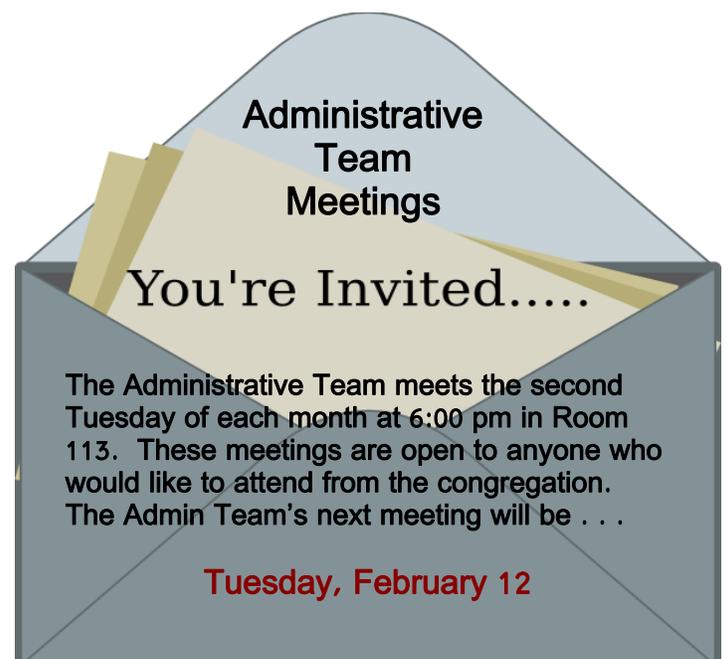
We are aware that we are living in some difficult and scary times, but the church of Christ needs to provide a word of hope in these difficult times. Sometimes I feel like churches are so caught up in their own insecurity, rivalry and finances that they have lost sight of their mission.

No one knows the details of the 12-month journey of 2019, but one can know that God who destines in love and leads in the path of righteousness is with us. As in any journey, there will be hazards and pitfalls, and there will be pleasant and happy stretches. Let us keep in mind our ultimate destination during 2019 --- and keep it Christ centered. Have a blessed year and enjoy the journey.

Thank you for your spiritual, moral, and financial support for the year 2018. Thanks to all of you again for the birthday and Christmas gifts that were given to me. We are looking forward to great things in this new year.

Love,

Pastor Dixon





The United Methodist Women will meet on Thursday, February 21, at 10:00 am in Room 113
 Program Speaker: Marlon Styles Jr., Superintendent, Middletown City Schools

All are invited!

Financial Update (as of 12/31/2018)

	<u>Month of December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$38,357	\$294,990
Expenses	<u>(\$24,638)</u>	<u>(\$277,827)</u>
Income/(Loss)	\$13,719	\$ 17,163

Note: Our mortgage payment was made in full for December. Compared to November, our income increased significantly while our expenses decreased slightly resulting in a significant increase in the net income.

As a benchmark, our budgeted expenses for 2018 averaged just over \$26,200 per month. The good news is that our actual December year-to-date expenses averaged just a little over \$23,100 a month and our actual giving averaged around \$24,500 a month!

A second benchmark used was to compare our average weekly envelope giving in 2018 to the previous year. That comparison indicates that we averaged approximately \$500 less per week of giving (\$500 x 52 weeks would have increased our annual giving by over \$26,000!).

While our year-to-date income was outstanding, we need to remember that we did not pay \$27,000 of our connectional expenses in 2018.

Should you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Barb Martin.



Food Pantry Has Great Need for Additional Pantry Donations

The Salvation Army is anticipating that the affects of the government shutdown will have a tremendous impact on the Food Pantry beginning in February and are currently trying to secure extra food that may be available through Shared Harvest.

In January, Butler County issued food stamps to all recipients for both January and February. It was thought that the food stamps distributed in January would get recipients through part of February if properly managed by the recipients. However, the pantry is already starting to see people where this was clearly not the case.

Additionally, applications for persons not currently receiving food stamps were not processed during the government shutdown. It is still unknown just how quickly the new applications will be processed during the current 3-week respite.

What this all means is that the Food Pantry would deeply appreciate any additional food or monies that you are able to donate. Food items can be brought to the church and monetary donations can be placed in the Sunday offering plate and marked "Food Pantry."

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Christ Church is committed to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth and has in place a "Safe Sanctuary" policy to help guide us in this commitment.

To ensure we are following these policy guidelines, we need ADULT volunteers each week in the nursery and in the youth Sunday School classroom. Nursery volunteers will work alongside our youth volunteers, and while classroom volunteers are not expected to teach, you will be in the classroom to provide a presence and to assist Sheri Blunt if needed.

Volunteer sign-up sheets can be found in the lobby.

Worship Committee Team Report . . .

The Worship Team has been entrusted with an awesome responsibility of planning worship for God's children on Sunday morning. The team has been meeting to plan the order of worship for each service, and is being very intentional about planning services that will minister to the needs of the people that God will bring our way on Sunday mornings.

Prior to the merger of the two services, the majority of the feedback received was positive and mirrored other discussions on the subject. While most people are willing to be flexible, the biggest concern is what the service will look like and whether it will lose the traditional sense or the free flow of the contemporary set up.

As we plan the worship service, the team has used the following four questions as our planning guide:

How can we get people to focus on Jesus Christ and not on what we've done previously in worship?

Is it (worship) relevant for making disciples or is it just trying to entertain or please people?

Worship is a verb. Are we providing an opportunity for real worship?

Are we open to all emotions and anointing of the Holy Spirit?

After a day of prayer and fasting on January 15, we gathered as a congregation that evening to close out our day with a special prayer service in the sanctuary.

The committee then worked on a rough draft of what the order of worship will look like which is as follows:

Invitation to the Holy Spirit (could be one of 5 different forms)

Worship Music Set

Prayers of Petition (can include the Lord's Prayer)

Offertory (Doxology)

Scripture (with prayer of Thanksgiving for the offering)

Music Selection

Message

Prayer of Reflection

Music Selection

Benediction

This order of worship is not set in stone, and will vary each week until we get it right. And regardless of what is printed, we will always be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Each section for the above outline also gives reference to God. The **Invitation to the Holy Spirit** is preparing our hearts for worship; **Worship Music Set** is praising God in song (Come into His presence with praise and thanksgiving); **Prayers of Petition** is seeking God's grace, asking God for something; **Offertory** is an offering of thanksgiving and giving something back to God in appreciation for what He's done for us; **Scripture** is God's Word to the Church; **Music Selection** is reflection time on the scripture; **Message** is God's Word to us; **Prayer of Reflection** is our response to God; **Music Selection** is our commitment; **Benediction** is the blessing we receive to go out and be disciples for Christ.

Abbreviated below is a summary of some of our thoughts:

- (1) Christ is to be the center of all services.
- (2) Services are likely to be different every week, avoiding any one pattern.
- (3) Some weeks may seem more traditional and some weeks more contemporary in our effort to blend. (Example: some services will include the familiar Doxology, Lord's Prayer or The Apostles' Creed.)
- (4) Music too will be blended not just in type of music but in who is singing/playing . . . choir, praise team, congregational singing, solos, piano solo, organ, guitar, drums, etc.
- (5) We are trying to please all and do it in ONE hour which is a significant challenge especially on a Communion Sunday.
(*We would ask that you please let us know if it is problematic for you should we occasionally run over in time.*)

Finally, please be reminded that the service is to praise and worship God. He is the ONLY audience on Sunday morning, therefore, everything we do has to bring glory to Him and Him alone. Our purpose is to point people to Jesus Christ and not the pastor, lay leader, choir, praise team, liturgist or organist.

Members of the Worship Team include: Pastor Wynston Dixon, Debbie Alexander, Deona Bethart, Janet Sauter, and Jane Tipton. Please feel free to share with these team members your ideas, suggestions, criticisms or blessings on the work they are doing.

February Birthdays

- 3 Jim Murry
Tom Sparks
- 4 Beulah Gibbs
Don Hawkins
- 6 Gary Daugherty
- 10 Vicki Greider
Jack Myers
- 11 Jack Achberger
- 12 Emily Miller
- 13 Jeff Berns
- 14 Rachel Siewny
- 15 Vera Ward
- 16 Becky Leonard
- 17 Sue Hounshell
Rex Lawson
- 18 Alexis Grams
Pam Johnson
- 19 Jayne Achberger
- 20 Ray Peterson
- 21 Janet Layne
- 22 Shirley Cox
- 23 Betsy Balger
Jim Buckey
- 24 Pam Seibold
- 25 Joshua Kassner
Mark Ward
- 26 Tonia Caudle
Walker Williamson

February Anniversaries

- 12 Jim and Debbie Alexander
- 14 Don and Sandy Smith
- 16 Scott and Becky Leonard
- 26 John and Leslie O'Hara

It Is A Girl . . .

Congratulations to David and Janet Sauter upon the birth of their granddaughter, Aylee Renee, on January 14.



A very heartfelt thanks to each of you for your ongoing support of the Salvation Army food pantry. Christ Church continues to be the largest private contributor to the pantry. In 2018, CCUM contributed 4,684 pounds of food to help those food insecure families in our community. This represents the nonperishable food donated in the *Feed My Sheep* monthly drive as well as the money given towards the purchase of food. In addition, CCUM members worked 2,106 hours at the pantry which represents over 67% of the volunteer hours used to run the pantry. Thank you Christ Church for your generosity.

Thank you for the flowers and for your cards and prayers following the death of my father. Your expressions of love were deeply appreciated.

Mary Wade



The Family of Kathy Stitsinger who passed away on December 17, 2018

Ron and Judy Spaulding upon the death of Ron's mother, Evelyn Spaulding, on December 27, 2018

February

2/1	SHALOM	2/16	8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library
2/2	SHALOM 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Kitchenette	2/17	7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC
2/3	7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC	2/19	3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117
2/5	3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:30 pm Link's University, 115	2/20	10:00 am Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 3:30 pm Yoga, 118 5:00 pm Men's Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary
2/6	10:00 am Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 3:30 pm Yoga, 118 5:00 pm Men's Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary	2/21	10:00 am United Methodist Women, 113 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby
2/7	1:00 pm Membership Care, Library 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby	2/23	8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library
2/9	8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library	2/24	7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC
2/10	7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC	2/26	3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:30 pm Link's University, 115
2/12	3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:00 pm Admin Team, 113	2/27	8:00 am Miami Valley Woodcarvers, 113 10:00 am Bible Study, Library 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 3:30 pm Yoga, 118 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary
2/13	10:00 am Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 3:30 pm Yoga, 118 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary	2/28	8:00 am Miami Valley Woodcarvers, 113 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby
2/14	4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby		

thank
you!

SHALOM could not happen without the people of God. Thank you to all who supported this incredible ministry this winter with your time and resources so that those without a place to call home could be cared for and experience God's love during their time at Christ Church. Your ongoing support for the homeless in our community is deeply appreciated.

Thank you so much for your monetary gift this Christmas and for allowing me to continue to serve in the church office. Thank you also to the youth for the hand painted coffee mug filled with Christmas candies. Christ Church, you continue to be such a blessing.

Julie Coleman

Christ Church United Methodist
700 South Marshall Road
Middletown, OH 45044

COMPASSION PRODUCTIONS AND
EXTREME FAITH PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

MARRIAGE DATE NIGHT

FRIDAY
MARCH 1
Show 7:00PM | GA Doors 6:30PM | VIP Doors 6:00 PM

BERACHAH CHURCH

1900 Johns Rd • Middletown OH 45044

Information & advance tickets available at
ExtremeFaithProductions.com
or by calling **480-812-1100**

AMBERLY NEEZE
Comedian / Author / Speaker
from Aspire Womens Events

LELAND KLASSEN
Lead Role in the movie *Extraordinary*
and Christian Stand-up Comedian

JONNY DIAZ
Christian Recording Artist with
hits *Breathe & More Beautiful You*

A NIGHT OF LAUGHTER & MUSIC

Advance Tickets Per Couple Pricing

- \$35 General Admission for 2
- \$50 VIP Tickets for 2 (includes early entry and pre-show Q-n-A with the speakers)
- \$75 VIP/Reserved for 2 (includes reserved seats in front section, a gift for you, and same VIP privileges as above)