

March 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](http://www.christum.com)

“Impacting the  
Community for CHRIST”



## 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

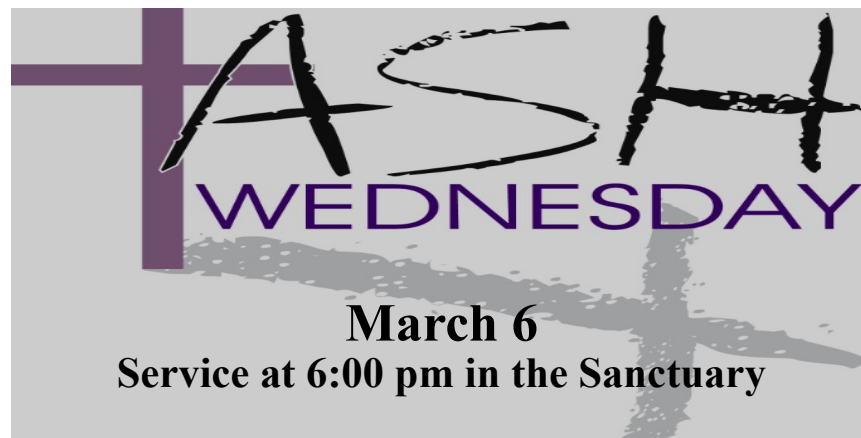
Room 113: *Calvary Class*  
Room 115: *Sojourners Class*  
Room 118: *Searchers Class*  
Library: *ReachOut*

### Sunday Youth Class

Room 4: Jr. High/Sr. High

### Nursery Care

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



Don't forget to set your clocks ahead  
one hour next  
**Saturday, March 9**

# Letter from the Pastor



My beloved Parishioners,

We have entered the Lenten Season as a community of believers to acknowledge our sinfulness and pray for forgiveness. Lent is God's way of stripping us bare of every lame excuse, every illusion, every delusion, and every artificial and phony face we wear.

Lent is a time for spiritual housecleaning, a time to dust off our faith, shine up our commitment, lay in a supply of thanks and decorate our lives with the joy of the Christian life. Lent is a perfect opportunity to scrutinize ourselves carefully under the light of the cross to determine where we are weak as we try to execute the Word of God.

What are the soft spots in our commitment to the suffering servant? Is it an irregular worship life? Is it a hesitation to become involved in the life of the church? Is it a reluctance to return God's many gifts back to him? Is it ignoring his Word? What are the soft spots in your relationship with our Lord Jesus? Let's use Lent to see ourselves as we are before God, to realize our guilt before the cross and to be free in confessing that guilt.

I invite you this holy season to return to God in mind, body, soul, and spirit. The great tragedy of our times is living as though God does not exist. We have crowded God out of our daily affairs. May we use this Lenten Season to return to God with a heart of confession, repentance and redemption. This is the season of return, restoration, and renewal. It is a season of hope and joy, comfort and celebration, for the Comforter has come to lay down his life for those who are seeking life.

Lent is a time for change. There is a sweet, sweet spirit being developed at Christ Church. We can feel it, we can hear it in your voices, and we can see it in your eyes. We have seen the transformation of lives with the power of the Holy Spirit.

We want to thank all of you who have been praying for our transition. Thanks to all of you who believed in us, encouraged us and stayed with us during the uncertain times.

We know that Christ Church United Methodist is not only a light in the community, but also a light in the world. We pray that the light at Christ Church will shine for the lost and the lonely; the saved and the unsaved; the good and the not so good.

We are humbled to serve you. We are exhilarated with the mission before us; energized to meet your expectations of us, and passionate about our calling to minister to this amazing congregation. Our vision is to encourage Christ Church to be a Christ-centered church

utilizing the spiritual gifts of the congregation and becoming an even more active partner in our local, national and global communities. We will encourage the congregation to place special emphasis on developing quality programs that will nurture children and youth, while effectively and efficiently carrying out the mission of Christ through quality ministries.

Some people have been distracted by things that have caused them to pull away from the life of the church. It may be a festering wound, a misdirected word, or an unsympathetic ear that has caused you to turn away from the church. Perhaps we have been more loyal to the minister than to God so that when the clergy is reappointed, we have lost interest in the church. There are many reasons for some to "slip away from the church" and never go anywhere for a number of years until we are called to "come home" to the ground of our being!

I urge you, my beloved, to let this Easter season provide the opportunity to get back on board if you have "drifted away." Why don't you take advantage of your church membership by attending worship on a more regular basis, "show your faithfulness" through more active participation, "take on the likeness of Christ" this Lenten Season and discover a new dimension of our faith. Coming home for Easter includes all of us, and it will help us to grow spiritually.

I hope you can "come home for Easter" . . . this Easter. We will welcome you with **open hearts, open minds, and open doors**. Let this Easter be a time to "start over" if you haven't been here for a while. It is time to make new friends and celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. It's worth coming home for!

Finally, the challenge for every member of Christ this Lenten Season is to invite one person you know who is a member of our church but does not attend any more to come back home and be a part of this great ministry that God is about to do in our midst.

Let this be our slogan as we move forward to build the future of Christ, "**Less of me, God: more of You; None of me, God: all of You.**" Remember, "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." (Philippians 4:13)

Looking forward to seeing all of you at Church – and bring your neighbor.

In His service together,

*Pastor Dixon*

### WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a forty-day liturgical season that initiates the most sacred part of the Christian year. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on the [Great Vigil of Easter](#). Sundays are not included in the forty-day count because every Sunday is a joyful celebration of our Lord's resurrection. Lent begins on March 6 this year and ends on April 20 which is the day before Easter. During Lent, Christians meditate on the great paschal mystery -- the salvation God won for us sinners by the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### WHAT DOES THE WORD "LENT" MEAN?

The word Lent is apparently derived from the Old English *lencten* which means "lengthen." It refers to the lengthening of the daylight hours that occurs in the northern hemisphere as spring approaches. It is in this period of transition from late winter to early spring that the season of Lent falls.

### WHY DOES LENT LAST FORTY DAYS?

The duration of the season of Lent is based on the ancient church custom of requiring catechumens to undergo a forty-day period of doctrinal instruction and fasting before being baptized on the evening before [Easter](#). This probationary period was called the *quarantine* (from the Latin word for forty). The number forty occurs frequently in both testaments of the Bible. It signifies the time that is required for discipline, testing, and separation prior to achieving a goal or new beginning. For example, we read in the Old Testament that it rained forty days and nights during the Great Flood ([Genesis 7:12](#)), Moses communed with God on Mount Sinai for forty days before receiving the Ten Commandments ([Exodus 24:18](#)), the people of Israel were forced to wander in the wilderness for forty years ([Numbers 14:33-34](#)), Elijah journeyed for forty days before he reached Mount Horeb and had a vision of God ([1 Kings 19:8-9](#)), and the inhabitants of Nineveh fasted and repented for forty days in response to the preaching of Jonah ([Jonah 3:4-5](#)). The outstanding instances of the number forty in the New Testament are the account of Christ's ordeal in the desert fasting, praying, and being tempted by the devil ([Matthew 4:1-11](#); [Mark 1:12-13](#); and [Luke 4:1-13](#)) and His various appearances to the apostles and others between His resurrection and ascension during which He strengthened their faith and prepared them for the coming of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 1:3](#)).

### HOW DOES WORSHIP CHANGE DURING LENT?

Since Lent is a season of penitence, reflection, and prayer, worship during this time is solemn and restrained. The somber colors of purple and black replace the brighter white and green of the [Epiphany](#) season. Flowers are generally removed from the sanctuary. Songs of praise like the *Gloria in Excelsis* ("Glory in the highest") and expressions of joy like *Alleluia* ("Praise the Lord") are removed from the liturgy until [Easter](#). Many churches hold special mid-week worship services ([Wednesday evenings](#) at Saint Paul's) and offer devotional activities that help their members concentrate on the traditional Lenten disciplines of fasting, almsgiving (gifts of mercy, or "charity" as it is usually called), and prayer. The practice of these disciplines goes back to the early days of the church and are meant to help Christians recall and be thankful for our Lord's atoning death on the cross.

### WHAT IS ASH WEDNESDAY?

Ash Wednesday (from the Latin *Dies Cinerum*, meaning "Day of Ashes") is the first day of Lent. On this day, Christians focus intensely on their utter and complete sinfulness and the necessity of Christ's suffering and death to earn their salvation. Ashes are referred to many times in the Old Testament as a sign of sorrow, mourning, repentance, and mortality ([2 Samuel 13:19](#); [Esther 4:1-3](#); [Job 42:6](#); and [Jeremiah 6:26](#)). Many churches use ashes during Ash Wednesday worship as part of a rite called the [Imposition of Ashes](#). According to this custom, ashes (traditionally made by burning palm fronds used on [Palm Sunday](#) of the previous year) are mixed with a small amount of olive oil and applied to the forehead of each worshipper. The smudge mark made by the dirty ashes is a powerful reminder that we are going to die because death is the penalty for our depraved natures and sins of thought, word, and deed. The fact that the ashes are placed on our foreheads in the sign of the cross directs us to Jesus Christ as the only way to forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life in heaven.

### WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?

The last week of Lent is known as [Holy Week](#). During this holiest time of the liturgical year, the church relives the final week of our Lord's life. The high points of this week are [Palm Sunday](#), [Maundy Thursday](#), [Good Friday](#), and the [Great Vigil](#).

### WHAT IS THE LITURGICAL COLOR FOR LENT?

[Purple](#), the color of royalty, repentance, and self-discipline, is the traditional color for the season of Lent. [Black](#), the somber color of mourning and sorrow for sin, is reserved for [Good Friday](#) and Ash Wednesday. For the period from [Palm Sunday](#) through [Maundy Thursday](#), some churches use scarlet, an intense variant of purple and red that symbolizes the life-giving blood of Christ.

### WHAT IS THE SEASON OF LENT REALLY ABOUT?

For many Christians, the season of Lent typically includes some kind of fasting. These fasts usually take the form of abstaining from all food throughout a given 24-hour period or certain kinds of food for the duration of the forty-day season. In place of a food fast, some Christians commit to give up a pleasurable activity or dedicate themselves to charitable giving. Focus on prayer and devotions are also especially emphasized during Lent. But even though our Lord recommends and comments on the Lenten disciplines of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer in His Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 6:1-18](#)), these practices can easily become legalistic rituals that are centered inwardly on self rather than outwardly on Christ. If during Lent Christians choose to give up something or rededicate themselves to helping those in need as a way to proclaim the salvation Christ has won for all by His suffering and death, then such activities are sacrifices that glorify God. However, it is essential to remember that nothing we do through self-denial or good works can ever earn the Lord's forgiveness or repay Him for what He accomplished for us. Lent is not about our giving up something to please God. Lent is about what Jesus Christ gave up to pay the penalty for the sins of the world -- His holy and innocent life.



**Financial Update . . .**

	<u>Month of January</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$16,117</b>	<b>\$ 16,117</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>(\$24,842)</b>	<b>(\$ 24,842)</b>
<b>Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>(\$ 8,725)</b>	<b>(\$ 8,725)</b>

Note: The extreme cold and snowy weather in January impacted attendance for two Sundays which resulted in extremely low giving. Our mortgage payment was made in full in January. During the January Admin Team meeting, it was decided to attempt to pay the district only portion of our connectional expenses pending cash availability and so we did make a payment in January. However, connectional giving and expenses are not reflected in the numbers above.

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



**FerVent 2.0** featuring brother and sister Anthony Evans and Priscilla Shirer will take place at Tri-County Assembly of God in Fairfield on Tuesday, October 29, at 7:00 pm. Priscilla’s messages will be inspired by her new film “Overcomer” and music will be from Anthony’s upcoming worship album. Tickets for Preferred Seating are \$35 and General Admission is \$20. Tickets for this event are on sale now at **iTickets** and will likely sell out. For more information, contact Bobette Owen at 513-424-5650.



**Training for New Hospice Volunteers  
Thursday, March 21  
9:30 am - 3:30 pm**

Training for new hospice volunteers will take place at the Hospice Care of Middletown office located at 3909 Central Avenue. Candidates must be 18 years of age, undergo a criminal background check and complete this one day training event. An application must also be completed prior to the day of training and include three references. If interested, please contact Judy Vincent, LSW, Volunteer Coordinator, at (513) 424-2273. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided the day of training.

**SAVE THE DATE . . .**  
**Easter Egg Hunt**  
**Saturday, April 20**

**Do you know which comes first . . . the candy or the egg?**

**Donations of individually wrapped candies are needed to fill the eggs for the egg hunt. Candy donations can be left in Room 108.**

**CAPITAL  
CAMPAIGN**

**FAITH--Let’s Build on It!**

**Update . . .** The “Faith-Let’s Build on It!” capital campaign has successfully raised an additional \$50,030 to add to the most generous gift of \$99,700 received from the family of Carol and Paul Hoskins. Of the \$50,030 raised by our congregation, \$39,190 has been paid in full with the remaining \$10,840 pledged through July 2020. The combined total of the Hoskins gift and congregation’s paid gifts is just shy of \$139,000!

**Our loan advisor at Lebanon Citizens National Bank has informed us that ALL prepayment penalties will be WAIVED and that they will re-amortize our new balance at the same interest rate. On Monday, March 4, we will round up our lump sum payment to \$140,000 and apply this total to our outstanding mortgage balance. As a result, our remaining outstanding balance will drop to approximately \$84,000 reducing our monthly mortgage payment from just about \$2,000 to a little more than \$700!**

**All honor and glory to God! We are so grateful and thankful for His grace, His mercy and His gifts!**



The United Methodist Women will meet on  
Thursday, March 21, at 10:00 am in Room 113

Program speaker will be from the  
Beekeepers Association

All are invited!

## LOVE PACKAGES

**Love Packages** supplied 300 Bibles, books and other Christian materials in the Atwea Mountains in Ghana. These materials already impacted the churches in which these pastors serve. According to the pastors' own testimonies, "More souls have been won, and they are now able to do good teachings with the materials."

To date, **Love Packages** has shipped 160 tons (11,615 packages) to the countries of Ghana, Guatemala, India, South Africa and Thailand.

Please continue to support this non-profit organization with your donation of used and new Bibles and Christian literature (adult and children). Your donations may be placed in the red container in the library marked "**Love Packages.**"

### United Methodist Women's Spring Retreat

Hueston Woods  
May 19-21, 2019

Cost: \$185 (Meals Not Included)  
\$50 deposit due April 7 with payment  
in full due May 5

Theme: "Color Your World . . ."  
(Based on Genesis 1 & 2)

#### Retreat Schedule

May 19

Arrive at Hueston Woods at 3:00 pm  
Worship Service/Holy Communion

May 20

Morning Session - Art lesson with Sarah  
Hellman

Afternoon Session - Color analysis by  
Lynnae Bussell (*What color is best for  
your personality and emotions?*)

Evening Session - Deona Bethart singing;  
Creating postcards for shut-ins

May 21

Breakfast together and depart for home

### Easter Lilies

Easter Lilies can be ordered beginning  
Sunday, March 3 through  
Sunday, April 7

Order envelopes can be obtained  
from the ushers on Sunday morning. Payment  
is due at the time of ordering.

**Cost: \$11**

Orders can also be placed by calling the  
church office at 422-7346.

**RUMMAGE**  
**SALE**

**Friday, June 28  
and  
Saturday, June 29**

It is not too early to start saving all your unwanted clutter and treasures for the church rummage sale in June. Drop-off dates and times will be announced in late spring.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**



# March Birthdays

2	Tim O'Connor
3	Larry Crump
6	John Sauter
7	Fred Ward
8	Tom Mehl
11	Mary Alice Gast Thomas Hayes
12	Janet Sauter Gerri Teeters
15	Connie Young
17	Sandy Beck
18	Dick Cole
23	George Mullin
25	Cherri Carpenter
26	Sandy Smith
27	Steve Johnson
28	Minniealta Watt
29	Barb Martin Nancy Stillwell
30	Helen Mann
31	Ray Bailey

# March Anniversaries

16	Tim and Carol O'Connor
23	Robert and Bergit Clark Don and Suzanne Hawkins

## Hospice Care of Middletown, Inc.

*is sponsoring*

### **"Healing a Heart"**

*(A six-week Grief Support Group for people who have lost a loved one)*

#### **Group Dates and Location:**

Tuesdays beginning March 19 - April 23  
Afternoons from 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm  
*or*  
Evenings from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Groups meet at the Hospice office building located at 3909 Central Avenue, Middletown (*behind Central Connections*)

"Healing a Heart" support groups focus on peer support, grief education and the development of coping skills.

#### **Pre-Registration is Required**

**To register: Call (513) 424-2273/Care**

*(There is no charge to attend a "Healing a Heart" grief support group.)*

*With Sympathy*

Nancy Karnes and family upon the death of Nancy's aunt, Hilda M. Lucas, on February 5

Lani Weidle and family upon the death of Lani's cousin, Oma Colleen Grose, on February 17

Rhonda Crider, Tonia Caudle and Emily Caudle upon the death of Beulah Crider on February 24. Mrs. Crider was a grandmother and great-grandmother to Tonia and Emily and Rhonda's mother-in-law.

# March

- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| 3/1  | 9:00 am Miami Valley Woodcarvers, 113   | 3/17 | 6:00 pm Easter Cantata Rehearsal, Sanctuary<br>7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC   |
| 3/2  | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Kitchenette<br>10:00 am Miami Valley Woodcarvers, NLC   | 3/19 | 3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117<br>7:00 pm Bible Study, Library   |
| 3/3  | 12:30 pm Miami Valley Woodcarvers, NLC  | 3/20 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113<br>12:30 pm NAMI, Library<br>3:30 pm Yoga, 118<br>5:00 pm Men's Choir, Sanctuary<br>6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary<br>6:30 pm Bible Study, Library<br>7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary |
| 3/5  | 3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117<br>6:30 pm Link's University, 115<br>7:00 pm Bible Study, Library  | 3/21 | 10:00 am United Methodist Women, 113<br>4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby  |
| 3/6  | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113<br>12:30 pm NAMI, Library<br>3:30 pm Yoga, 118<br>5:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary<br>6:00 pm ASH WEDNESDAYSERVICE, Sanctuary<br>6:30 pm Bible Study, Library<br>7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary | 3/23 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library  |
| 3/7  | 8:00 am Life-Line Screening, NLC<br>4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby   | 3/24 | 6:00 pm Easter Cantata Rehearsal, Sanctuary<br>7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC   |
| 3/9  | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library   | 3/26 | 3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117<br>6:30 pm Link's University, 115<br>7:00 pm Bible Study, Library   |
| 3/10 | 6:00 pm Easter Cantata Rehearsal, Sanctuary<br>7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC  | 3/27 | 10:00 am Bible Study, Library<br>12:30 pm NAMI, Library<br>3:30 pm Yoga, 118<br>6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary<br>6:30 pm Bible Study, Library<br>7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary                               |
| 3/12 | 3:30 pm Whiz Kids, 117<br>6:00 pm Admin Team, 113<br>7:00 pm Bible Study, Library   | 3/28 | 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby  |
| 3/13 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113<br>12:30 pm NAMI, Library<br>3:30 pm Yoga, 118<br>6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary<br>6:30 pm Bible Study, Library<br>7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary  | 3/30 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library  |
| 3/14 | 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby   | 3/31 | 6:00 pm Easter Cantata Rehearsal, Sanctuary<br>7:00 pm Men's Basketball, NLC   |
| 3/16 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library   |      |  |

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