

May 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

“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

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

Sunday, May 19
11:45 am in the Sanctuary

**Purpose: To Vote on the Sale of the Church
Parsonage**

*(Please be mindful that only “members” of Christ
Church will be permitted to vote.)*

Fellowship Friends

As a body of believers at Christ Church, we each try to nurture one another and to help others grow in their faith. In an effort to help all feel welcomed and become assimilated, we would like to start assigning a *Fellowship Friend* to those who have visited Christ Church at least three or more times to answer any questions they may have and to become their friend.

Please pray about volunteering to become a part of this exciting new ministry. Remember, you will not be working alone but rather will become a part of the team.

If you interested and feeling led to become a *Fellowship Friend*, please contact the church office (513-422-7364), Bobette Owen (513-424-5650) or Nancy Brown (513-267-4107). We look forward to hearing from you!

Letter from the Pastor



My beloved Parishioners,

One of the tragedies of our modern life is our loss of the sense of the sacred. We have lost the sense of sacred time and sacred places. We have lost that sense of “holy otherness” towards the Divine and those places and times when and where the Divine is encountered in unique and transforming ways. Our modern world, when approaching God at all, wants to reduce God to our best buddy or hold God off at some untouchable distance. Gone is the sense of awe that the Bible sometimes calls the “fear of God.” We have lost that sense that in encountering God we are meeting both power and mystery.

The senseless attacks of bombings, burnings and killings in places of worship today is alarming. When innocent worshippers are now becoming targets of hatred and bigotry, we have truly lost our sense of sacredness.

This sense of the sacred is captured in Exodus 3:2-6 when Moses encounters God’s presence in the burning bush on Mt. Horeb. When Moses draws close to the burning bush, the voice of God tells Moses to remove his sandals. When Moses realizes who it is he is meeting, we are told: “*And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*” Exodus describes God as both intimate (God speaks directly to Moses several times) and as the “holy other.” It is difficult for us to wrap our minds around a God who is both, yet that is the mysterious nature of God. To deny one or the other aspect of God is to miss who God is.

In Jesus Christ we encounter the “*Word became flesh . . .*” (John 1:14) That which we cannot see and touch became in the person of Christ “*. . . what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands . . .*” (1 John 1:1)

A week after our Lord’s resurrection the disciples were gathered in a locked and shuttered room when the risen Lord appeared to them. When Thomas realizes the reality of the resurrection when he sees the nail prints in Jesus’ palms exclaims, “*My Lord and my God!*” His proclamation of belief is also an expression of encounter with the sacred. Suddenly the ordinary locked room became a sacred place with the presence of the risen Lord.

Early Christians seeking to recognize the uniqueness of Christ’s resurrection made the first day of the week (our Sunday) into a weekly celebration of the Lord’s rising from the tomb which they called the Lord’s Day (Revelation 1:10). The first Christians observed the seventh day of the week as their Sabbath, the same as the Jewish community, (see Acts 17:1-2 and 18:4) but over time as Christians increasingly became aware that their movement was something different than Judaism from which it had originally sprung, they adopted the first day of the week, or the Lord’s

Day as they called it, our Sunday as their weekly Sabbath. As Christianity moved into a New Testament faith and away from Old Testament religion, it still maintained a sense of the sacredness of time.

Christians need to recapture a sense of the sacred. The day popularly called “Easter” ought to invoke feelings of both God’s closeness to us as well as fear and awe. To witness one who was crucified yet who now lives is not only miraculous but also terrifying.

The Gospel of Mark captures a sense of the awe, power, and mystery of the empty tomb experience when, in its original ending, we find the women who have come to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body encountering the “*man in white*” who tells them that “*. . . He has been raised.*” (Mark 16:6) and their response is: “*And they went out quickly and fled from the sepulcher, for they trembled and were amazed. Neither said anything to any man, for they were afraid.*” (Mark 16:8)

Unfortunately, modern Christians have largely forgotten the sense of the sacred. We have transformed a living and dynamic faith with a sense of reverence and awe into something of a mechanical religion. We go to church. We attend committee meetings. We work for the institution, and we somehow miss connecting with God as a living, powerful, and often terrifying presence. We have lost the sense of mystery and wonder.

No wonder the world outside the church watches us going through the motions and wonders what it is all about. However, there is still time to recover the sacred in time for this season. It will require many of us to lay aside our desire to gratify our biggest idols — our egos — and to set aside the time we worship as sacred time. Most of the trappings of Easter can be laid aside as we approach God with humility. That will also mean listening to the story of Christ’s resurrection with fresh ears, and to imagine ourselves in that sacred place where the first disciples found themselves awed, baffled, and transformed.

Finally, as we celebrate Mother Day’s this month, take the time to thank your mother and let her know how much you love her. Mothers are God’s special gifts to all of us. Cherish her, love her, respect her and honor her simply because she brought you and me into the world. Don’t let her down; she brought you up. Happy Mother’s Day.

Love you,

Pastor Dixon

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY . . .

A new church pictorial directory is going to be done, and we are still looking for a person(s) to be oversee and coordinate this project. The directory will be done by Universal Church Directories and pictures for the directory are scheduled to be taken on September 6 & 7, 2019. Please see Pastor Dixon as soon as possible if you would like volunteer. Our Universal Directories representative would like to schedule the first meeting for the directory in early July.



Box Tops for Education

Thank you for your support of **Red Bird Mission** in Kentucky through your donations of *Box Top Labels for Education*. Labels totaling 106 points were sent to Red Bird Mission in April bringing our point total for 2019 to 174 points. Please continue to donate these labels!

**B
A
K
E
D

G
O
O
D
S**

We are looking for volunteers to provide baked goods for the Coffee Hour on Sunday morning. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Sherrie Robertson at (513) 433-1090.



WHIZ KIDS SITE LEADER

Thank you to Dottie Wasem who has served as our site leader for **Whiz Kids** since the start of this ministry at Christ Church. Many young lives have been impacted and blessed by Dottie through this ministry. Dottie has decided to step away as our site leader beginning with the 2019-2020 school year so we are now looking for someone to step into this leadership position. If you are interested in serving as the new site leader beginning this Fall, please contact Pastor Dixon.



Thank you for your gifts totaling \$206 and generous outpouring of love on **UMCOR Sunday**. We hope that your congregation feels more connected to the important impact UMCOR has within communities in need. And gifts to **UMCOR Sunday** can continue to be received all year either in the offering plate or online at UMCgiving.org/UMCOR.

It can be exhausting to keep up with the humanitarian crises and natural disasters in the US and around the world. But UMCOR is there, responding to large and small situations that threaten to overwhelm communities. They are there on your behalf and on behalf of our global denomination.

The generosity of United Methodists like those in your congregation makes it possible for UMCOR to save lives and offer hope around the world in the midst of disaster. Thank you for being part of it.

*Thomas Kemper
General Secretary
General Board of Global Ministries*



**West Ohio Annual Conference
Lakeside, Ohio
June 2-6, 2019**

Please keep Pastor Dixon and all clergy and lay delegates to Annual Conference in your prayers.

Donations for Maintenance of Church Grounds

While not everyone is able to physically help with the upkeep of the church grounds, donations of Berns gift cards purchased from the United Methodist Women would not only help support the UMW but would also help with the upkeep of the church grounds through the spring, summer and fall months. Donations of Berns *Bonus Bucks* would also be appreciated.

The Berns cards and/or Bucks will be used for the purchase of various weed and grass killer, plant food/fertilizer, mulch, additional flowers, etc. The excessive rain this spring has resulted in a late start with the landscaping but most of the flower beds have been weeded, Preen has been applied and they are now ready for planting/mulching.

Additionally, donations of weed and grass killer, plant food/fertilizer, black mulch (all brands accepted) and vinegar would be appreciated and can be left in the library.

If you would like to make a cash donation, you can do so by placing your donation in a pew envelope and marking it "Landscaping." Thank you.



2019 Graduates



If you have someone graduating this year from either high school or college, please contact the church office at 422-7364 or by email at office@christum.com to let us know. We would like to be able to recognize all of our 2019 graduates.



The United Methodist Women will meet on Thursday, May 16, at 10:00 am in Room 113

Program speaker will be Pastor Dixon

All are invited!

RUMMAGE
SALE

Friday, June 28
and
Saturday, June 29

Mark Your Calendar . . . The annual church rummage sale will be happening in June in the NLC. Items can be put in Room 118B or, if necessary, in Room 117. For those donating any type of electronic equipment, e.g., printers, DVD players, etc., please put a note on the equipment indicating whether it works or not.

(Note: Televisions and clothing are not being accepted.)

BERNS GIFT CARDS

The United Methodist Women are selling gift cards from Berns Garden Center and Landscaping. The cards are \$25 with \$5 from each card sold going back to the United Methodist Women. The UMW will be selling these gift cards in the lobby on Sunday morning or you may contact Pam Cole at 422-2989 to purchase your cards.

Thank you.



Thank You

Thank you Christ Church family for your candy and monetary donations for our annual Easter Egg Hunt! Additionally, we would like to thank Kim Swiger for bringing her real bunny for the children to pet; John O'Hara for providing the Easter Bunny costume; Liza and Caty O'Hara, Alyssa Cooksey and Audrey Lairson for filling all the eggs; Krispy Kreme for the donation of donuts; Sue Hezlep for leading the children in the Easter story; and all who donated their time to make this event another great success! There were 62 people in attendance and a lot of happy children who had baskets filled with eggs and candy. Because of your generous support, the cost of this event was under \$200. What a blessing. We especially wish to thank God for giving us the opportunity to serve His people and be His hands and feet in our community.

Blessings,
ReachOut Sunday School Class



Have you seen our prayer garden this spring? Winter has disappeared and spring has arrived in the prayer garden.

Thank you to Steve Johnson for the maintenance and up-keep of the garden.

Dear Christ Church Family,

We hope you were with us and enjoyed Christ Church's beautiful celebrations during Holy Week. We heard from many that you liked the posted ads we put on Facebook with an invitation to visit Christ Church. Thank you to those who shared those ads with their Facebook friends. We had some new faces in the pews during this Holy Season. God is good!

Palm Sunday was a glorious day with worship in the morning, followed at 4:00 pm with a musical cantata and catered dinner for more than 135 people in attendance. The Worship Team is so grateful to all who devoted their time, resources, and talents to making this such a special Palm Sunday. Musicians, singers, readers, organizers, servers, Berns Garden Center for providing pots of pansies and Jimmie Hendricks from Bethel AME for doing the cooking all contributed to make it a meaningful day! And a special "thank you" to all our church family who brought neighbors, friends and family to join the celebration at Christ Church.

"Celebrate! He is Risen Indeed!" Easter Sunday provided us with many reasons to celebrate. We had 145 in attendance. Praise Him! We welcomed back some of our snowbirds and those who have recovered after long illnesses. We praise God for your safe return! We also celebrated our youth as they served us communion. And our Choir and Praise Team lifted their voices in beautiful song as they helped lead us in worship. God blessed us all this Easter!

The Worship Team is grateful to continue its work to serve Him and the Christ Church family. See you in church on Sundays! Blessings to you!

The Worship Team



Let's Help and Make a Difference!

Our "Fill the Playpen" Drive to benefit the Middletown Community Pregnancy Center is still ongoing. The Center provides counseling to those in need as well as needed baby items. Current baby needs of the Pregnancy Center include: diapers (newborn to size 6), baby wipes, baby wash, baby lotion, bottles and formula, clothing (size 2T-4T), boys' receiving blankets, sippy cups, diaper bags, car seats, and Pack 'n Plays. Donations can be placed in the playpen located in the lobby. Once filled, the playpen and baby items will be taken to the Center to fulfill the needs of families in Middletown.

May Birthdays

- 1 Matthew Minor
Tom Tipton
- 4 Sarah Dean
- 6 Denise Davis
- 10 John O'Hara
- 11 Norma Meece
- 13 Gertie Schweitzer
Sally Williamson
- 16 Clark Record
- 17 Kathy Alexander
Beth Greider
- 20 Joy Michael
Lanise Weidle
- 21 Don Dean
- 22 Joann Kersh
- 23 Kathy Hodel
Patty Mendenhall
Emma Siewny
- 24 Larry Banks
Phillip Young
- 25 Shirley Heismann
Lucy Kemble
- 28 Carli (Davis) Martin
- 30 Carl Heismann

May Anniversaries

- 1 Dick and Pam Cole
- 2 Tom and Paula Mehl
- 8 Marcus and Jen Grams
- 26 Greg and Jeanne Siewny
- 29 Robert and Mary Alice Gast
- 31 Ray and Joan Peterson

With Sympathy

Michael and Teresa Banks upon the death of their niece, Katie Banks

Betsy Balger upon the death of her cousin, Lea Teager, on April 13

Congratulations

Brooke & Johnny McGuire
on the birth of their son

William Thomas McGuire
born
April 4, 2019

Congratulations also to:

Tom and Jane Tipton, Grandparents
Mike and Marge Forrester,
Great-Grandparents

Handbell Choir

First Rehearsal - Tuesday, September 3
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Room 113

Need 6 to 8 people for a Two Octave Bell Choir
Practices will be weekly (3rd, 4th & 5th weeks of the month) on Tuesdays
Substitutes are needed (for those who cannot commit to a weekly practice schedule)

If interested, please contact:
Betsy Balger at: bjbalger1@aol.com
or by phone at: 513.423.6907 (home) or
513.320.1046 (cell)

May

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|
| 5/1 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113
12:30 pm NAMI, Library
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 | 5/16 | 10:00 am United Methodist Women, 113
4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby |
| 5/2 | 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby | 5/18 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library |
| 5/4 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library | 5/19 | 11:45 am Church Conference, Sanctuary |
| 5/7 | 12:00 pm Yoga, 24 | 5/21 | 12:00 pm Yoga, 24 |
| 5/8 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113
12:30 pm NAMI, Library
6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary
6:30 pm Bible Study, Library
7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary | 5/22 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113
12:30 pm NAMI, Library
6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary
6:30 pm Bible Study, Library
7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary |
| 5/9 | 1:30 pm Membership Care, Library
4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby | 5/23 | 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby |
| 5/10 | 4:30 pm Girl Scout Service Unit 342
Dance/Overnight, NLC | 5/25 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library |
| 5/11 | 8:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library | 5/26 | 6:30 pm Girl Scouts, Youth Lounge |
| 5/14 | 12:00 pm Yoga, 24
6:00 pm Admin Team Meeting, 113 | 5/27 | OFFICE CLOSED - MEMORIAL DAY |
| 5/15 | 10:00 am Bible Study, 113
12:30 pm NAMI, Library
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 | 5/28 | 9:30 am Kneeler Cushion Project, NLC
12:00 pm Yoga, 24 |
| | | 5/29 | 12:30 pm NAMI, Library
6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary
6:30 pm Bible Study, Library
7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary |
| | | 5/30 | 4:00 pm Yoga, Lobby |

Financial Update . . .

Cash Receipts through 4/28/19: \$75,523.50

Account Balances as of 3/31/19:

General:	\$27,859.98
Various Accounts:	\$52,805.31
Building:	\$ 4,782.74
Connectional:	\$ 440.00

2019 Apportionments:

Conference:	\$25,364 (\$0 paid to date as a result of Admin Team decision)
District:	\$4,649 (\$4,197 paid as of March; Remaining \$452 to be paid in April)

Total Budget for 2019: \$315,600

New iMac Computer Purchased

A new iMac computer was recently purchased for the church sanctuary after our old iMac of 11 years *died* on Good Friday. The purchase was made possible by a family in our congregation who donated the necessary funds anonymously. A very special "thank you" to this family for their generous

In Case of Emergency . . .

If you find yourself faced with an emergency and need to reach Pastor Dixon, especially after office hours or during the weekend, Pastor Dixon's cell number is: **(419) 973-5695**

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



Earth Day

May 11

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Middletown High School Community Room
601 N. Breiel Blvd.**

Registration begins at 8:00 am

OR

Register online at: www.keepmiddletownbeautiful.org

“Keep Middletown Beautiful” has been in existence at least 20 years and has grown in its service to the community by cleaning up parks and other public areas in Middletown. On May 11, KMB will supply hand held “pickers” to collect trash, gloves and garbage bags to volunteers for this citywide clean-up. Safety precautions will also be shared with volunteers including what to do with used needles if found. Refreshments will be served at 11:30 am at the high school.

If you have any questions, please contact KMB member Sally Williamson at (513) 465-7832 or at wwilliamson@cinci.rr.com.