

# 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)



## 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 118: *Searchers Class*  
Room 115: *ReachOut*  
Room 113: *Calvary*

## **Celebrating Three Years of Ministry At Christ UMC**

- We were able to pay-off the \$234,000 mortgage on the church building as a result of a large donor gift of \$100,000, a debt reduction campaign and \$50,000 from the proceeds of the sale of the parsonage. Praise be to God!
- The church had approximately 13 classrooms in the lower level that had been empty and not in the best condition. We asked the Administrative Team for permission to seek out potential rentals for the space. We needed to quickly turn that quantity of space from liability to asset. We brought in Northstar Classical School that currently serves 48 students in grades Jr.-K to 4th grade. They intend to add a new grade annually through the culmination of 8th grade. Northstar has renovated six classrooms and updated another space which is being used for a teachers' lounge. We are currently charging them \$1,200/month for utilities since they have invested a lot of money updating their class space. It is a wonderful sound hearing little voices in the building on a weekly basis while I am upstairs in my study. Praise be to God!
- We rented another office space to Deona Bethart for her business at a cost of \$135 monthly.
- The carpet in the pastor's study as well as the outer church office was badly worn and replaced in 2019. All carpet on the first floor, including the New Life Center, was also cleaned and freshened.
- At the start of Covid-19 in 2020, we were determined to keep worship services going and took our Sunday morning services to the parking lot where members and friends could sit in their cars and listen to me preach from the back of a truck on their FM radio station as the service was live-streamed on Facebook. We had about 400 viewers from around the world including Australia and Africa. Neighbors stopped walking their dogs and sat under the tree to hear the Word of God. Praise be to God!
- A listener from Atlanta sent us a \$500 offering which we used, in part, to subscribe to the "One Call" system that allows the church to send out weekly telephone messages of hope and encouragement. The members look forward to hearing from me weekly. With a congregation where the average age is 70 and above, not many are on the internet so the "good old phone" still works.

(Continued on page 3)

# Letter from the Pastor



My beloved Parishioners,

As I write my last pastoral letter to you, my heart is filled with mixed feelings as I reflect on these past three years of ministry at Christ UMC. It has been an educational experience to see what God can do if you trust Him and learn more about cross-racial appointments. Thank you for your love and support during this time.

I hope and pray that you will welcome your new pastoral family as you did me. He/she will do things differently because his/her gifts will be different. Paul said it best when he wrote these words to the church of Corinth, *"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow."* (1 Cor.3:6)

June will be my last month at Christ Church. I can't believe that three years have gone by so fast. I will continue to keep you in my prayers and pray that the Spirit of God continues to work within your lives and that you will continue to grow spiritually. I hope I have been faithful in fulfilling the ministry of preaching, administering the sacraments, visiting the sick, and comforting those who hurt or mourn. The question that I wrestle with the most is, has God been satisfied with the services rendered over these years?

My love for music came out when I began to ponder what to write for this last newsletter article as pastor. I remembered these words from a jazz song, *"Everything must change. Nothing stays the same."* Yes, everything must change. Nothing stays the same but the promises and love of God. Even that changes as we mature in our understanding of God's unfailing love. As a result, we become more loving, trusting and begin to live with more power.

Our growth in the understanding of God's love and power is what will remain the constant. Wynlita and I will cherish the memories of Christ UMC and the friends and family we have come to love and serve. You have been a great part of our lives; accepting and supporting us in our work, leisure and spiritual life. Time and space will never break the bond we have developed, and change will continue as we seek a new relationship from the parsonage family, to just friends and family.

Change is a part of life. Christ UMC will change as time has changed, from a small community of loving persons in a small frame church into a larger loving community in a large brick church. The loving ministry will change as God provides new opportunities to serve Him and others through the tradition started so many years ago when Christ Church was established.

When the Israelites were on the threshold of possessing the promised land, Moses sent twelve men to Canaan to spy on the land and bring back a report. Ten of the men returned with a report of fear, frustration, apprehension, negativism and woe. The remaining two men, Caleb and Joshua, presented a totally opposite view. They said *"... and the Lord is with us, fear them not."* Instead of fear and hopelessness they displayed courage and faith which resulted in life in the promised land.

We are all aware of the transformation, challenges, and tough times that Christ UMC and the Methodist denomination is going through. The answer is that the church needs to return to God's Holy Word. Whatever we do as a denomination or as a local church must be intended to introduce people to the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ. We need to get away from the gimmicks and doctrines for growing churches and return to the waves of the Holy Spirit.

Our belief in Jesus Christ is why we are the church. Let us then open ourselves up to what God is calling us to do. God's mission for Christians is not a matter of individual opinion. Therefore, we need to focus on our purpose as a church and not limit ourselves to simply trying to fulfill the expectations of everyone's individual opinions of what we should be doing. When we divide ourselves between goals, priorities and purposes, not only are we losing sight of our God-given directive, but our efforts and resources are spread too thin to be effective at anything.

Finally, my friends, life and death are in the power of our tongue. We can stand up and prophesy our future with words of faith and victory, or we can simply prepare for death by continuing to speak nothing but words of failure and defeat. I challenge you to change your world by changing your word. When we join forces with each other and the power of the Holy Spirit, nothing or no one is going to stop us from being successful at our mission to win souls for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The late John Lewis said it best, ***"We may not have chosen the time, but the time has chosen us."*** I close with these words from Dr. Charles Stanley, ***"Always obey God and leave the consequences to Him."***

Thank you Christ Church. God loves you and so do we.

Have a blessed Mother's Day,

*Pastor Dixon*

## Celebrating Three Years of Ministry at Christ UMC *(Continued from Page 1)*

- Financially, we have been able to pay all of our bills yearly. However, Conference apportionments have not been paid in the last five years. We were blessed to receive \$30,000 from the PPP government grant program which allowed us to break even at the end of 2020.
- A new Apple computer was donated by a family in the church to improve of our worship experience.
- The church parking lot was resurfaced and restriped.
- All light bulbs in the sanctuary were replaced with LED light bulbs as a result of a \$500 private donation.
- A new Apple iPad was purchased for live streaming our worship services.

Having mentioned all of this, the greatest joy of my ministry at Christ Church has been the response of the congregation to the preached Word of God. Six months after I was appointed here, one of my parishioners said this to me: *"Pastor, I have nothing against intellectual sermons, but your sermons are more spirit filled and it feeds my soul."* Hallelujah! God has used me to teach His word and bless His people.

In 2019, we were introduced to J. Anthony Mosley, M.A., LPCC, NCC, DAPA, CRS, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and Parish Consultant, and it was recommended that we hire him to work with us. We paid \$5,000 for his services. It is my prayer that the church will revisit his report and do a self-examination of its ministry and purpose. I have lifted from his report two sections that relate to what has transpired at Christ UMC in the last six months.

### THOSE INTERVIEWED

Over a period of three and a half days, I conducted 61 interviews that included individuals and couples. I also had conversations with three clergy and District Superintendent Dr. Todd Anderson. Over 90% of the interviewees were over the age of 60. About half of those I interviewed have been members for over twenty years. Nine individuals identified themselves as non-members. Many of those I spoke to reported having family members who attend or have attended in the past.

### HISTORY OF CONFLICT

A number of past and recent controversies have had a significant impact on relationships at Christ United Methodist Church. Although a number of people referenced more recent events, I heard a number of comments that mentioned concerns going back over twenty-five years. The topics I heard about repeatedly were a previous pastor's infidelity, a previous youth leader leaving and starting a new church, the leasing of solar panels, the combining of two worship services, the renting of the church to Northstar School, and most recently conflict surrounding pastoral and lay leadership. The following comments are what I heard repeatedly from individuals in one form or another.

*"There has been a divide for a long time." "We've been through conflicts before." "We didn't heal from the pastor's affair in the past." "There is a correlated decline each time a pastor leaves." "Going to one service was a mistake." "We're hard on pastors." "There is a refusal to mediate issues and seek resolution." "Recent conflicts started when changes were being made." "There was a lot of controversy over Northstar School." "There were a lot of issues going on before Pastor Dixon came." "We never rebounded from controversy over a youth leader leaving." "People are butting heads over the solar panels." "It was a big mistake the conference didn't step in a long time ago." "There is a lot of ego centered attitudes." "Recent conflicts have become more and more hurtful." "When a popular pastor left it went downhill from there."*

### PASTORAL AND LAY LEADERSHIP

As I listened to people speak about the ministry of Pastor Wynston, there were varying opinions about how they viewed his work at Christ UMC. By far, most people were very complimentary about his preaching, the handling of conflict and stated numerous times really liking him. On the other end of the spectrum some mentioned concerns about his responses to conflict. Following are a number of comments I heard, many of them repeatedly.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## Celebrating Three Years of Ministry at Christ UMC *(Continued from Page 3)*

*"I respect him highly, he is a wonderful man of God." "The way he addresses concerns with the board is a concern." "I've seen him in so many situations and never heard a negative thing." "He is a great preacher." (most stated positive) "He could have handled things better." (most stated negative) "He wants to be in charge of little things." "His passion for God is wonderful." "He could say things more tactfully." "His messages have stirred people." "He is making things happen." "He didn't ask enough questions about our current structure." "He has brought transparency in his leadership." "We really like him." "I've seen people change since he's been here." "I am growing under his leadership." "He questions things; it's healthy." "He is definitely a change in leadership style."*

Finally, my beloved, the solar panels have become the elephant in the room for this church. From all of the reports that I have received from the Leadership Team's investigation of the panels, it is a fact that we have 2 contracts on these panels. One for \$650,000 and another for \$1.2 million. The current balance on this \$1.2 million contract is about \$850,000. This is the balance on the signed contract. I don't understand why the District allowed a church this size to go into such a large debt, but my advice to you is to ask your Leadership Team never to put the church in such large debt without the approval of 90% of the congregation. The Leadership Team has brought in professionals in the last six months. They have documented that the cost for these panels in 2010 with installation should have been about the \$650,000 figure. In all actuality, with this figure the church should only have a balance of \$450,000 and not \$850,000. If this matter is not handled properly and resolved, it will have a great impact on the future of the church. I wish the Leadership Team the best as they pursue this matter.

God has a future for you if the church will submit to the Holy Spirit's direction and not our own.

---

## Proposals Approved at Charge Conference

For the past several months, the CUMC Administrative Board, Finance Committee and Financial Task Force have met to study the church's finances. We have looked at all expenditures and all projected income over recent years as well as 2021 and into the future. Dee Sellers, Chairperson of Finance, and Dave Sauter, Interim Treasurer, have worked with the groups to identify areas where we could make cuts to impact the budget.

The Administrative Board has approved reductions in spending, salary cuts, and service contracts that have lead to a savings of \$19,617 over the 2021 budget year. However, these cuts will not bring our spending in line with our income, and we will still have a projected deficit of \$18,000 plus unpaid apportionments of \$28,000 for a total deficit of \$46,000 for the year 2021.

At the same time, the Administrative Board decided that the church must have a plan for expanding ministries as the pandemic becomes more manageable. To that end the Board voted to set aside the money received from the sale of the van (\$17,500) to be used to expand family and children's ministries. All of this information has been sent previously either via email or USPS mail to members of the congregation.

After careful review, the Administrative Board voted to call for a Charge Conference to present the following two proposals to the members:

**PROPOSAL 1:** To decrease the pastoral position package by \$46,481, from \$106,481 to \$60,000, effective July 1, 2021 which will likely result in a less than full-time pastor. Obviously this will be a huge step in balancing our budget.

**PROPOSAL 2:** Christ United Methodist Church will employ at an hourly rate a Family and Children's Services leader to develop and implement programming for family and children's ministries.

The Charge Conference met on March 25, 2021 with the Rev. Dr. Todd Anderson presiding. After presentations by members of the Administrative Board and a question and answer period, Charge Conference members voted to accept the two proposals from the Administrative Board. The Administrative Board will be reacting to these proposals with planning our next steps forward.

We are excited about the work of the Focus Group for Family and Children's Ministry, and believe our plan to move forward is a good one.

Sally Williamson  
Chair, Administrative Board



## Focus Group for Family and Children's Ministries

*(Judy Crump, Chair of Focus Group)*

The focus group has been busy researching many options as to how we can minister to children and youth. Currently under consideration is joining with other churches for a combined youth group, creating a Sunday morning children's church ministry, and having a monthly program in the evening for single parents and their children. In addition, the focus group is hoping to include Northstar School in some programs beginning next Fall. Each of these options are still in the planning stages, and we will need the help and support of each of you for this ministry to succeed. Please be in prayer for both a leader and this new program ministry. Thank you.



As part of Christ Church's family and children's ministry initiative, Gail Rose has agreed to help connect us to Northstar. While conversations begin to identify the details, Northstar continues to expand by adding a fifth grade class beginning Fall 2021 as well as steadily increasing enrollment and co-curricular offerings. Dave Sauter will continue in his role assisting as liaison for issues such as building needs and contracts. We are indeed blessed by the sounds of young Christian voices!

## Finance Update

At the end of the first quarter, we have received \$77,567 in income which includes all Sunday giving (envelope, loose change, etc.), rents, Ameriprise dividends, PPP grant monies (\$10,000) and Atrium grant monies (\$8,250). Expenses for the first quarter totaled \$67,504. We have received 25% of our projected budgeted income and have spent 30% of our projected budgeted expenses. While we are making progress toward a balanced budget, we are still not there. The janitorial, insurance and staff reductions went into effect in March 2021. However, the pastoral reduction will not go into effect until July 1, 2021.

The Administrative Team would like to thank you for your prayers, services and stewardship, and will continue to look for ways to increase our income and lower our expenses. May God continue to bless you and our church family.

*Dr. Dee Sellers, Finance Chair*  
*Dave Sauter, Interim Treasurer*

## Volunteers Utilized for Building Maintenance

There are many repair items that appear frequently at Christ Church that are handled by volunteers rather than by an outside repair service. Following is a partial list of repairs completed during the last few months by our dedicated and skilled volunteers.

- Remove and replace outside faucet on Holly Street side, re-grout and mortar in.
- Install a water line including shut off and drain valves to the outside faucet near the south west corner of the NLC.
- Run an outside line with a hose faucet to outside of solar panel fence.
- Replace broken ceiling tiles.
- Install new light fixtures in restrooms near elevator in lower level.
- Install sink in lower kitchen including necessary plumbing.
- Repair clogged condensation lines on two air handlers in NLC.
- Repair leak from condensation line in NW end of NLC.
- Installed two new fill valves in women's restroom on west end of NLC.
- Installed new toilet in men's restroom on west end of NLC.
- Repaired two leaking faucets in ladies restroom in Narthex area.
- Install new lights for stained glass picture of Jesus in Narthex.
- Replace ceiling tiles in Pastor's office and ladies restroom in NLC.
- Clean pilot lights on stove in kitchen.
- Repair damaged podium in Narthex.
- Scrape, seal, patch and paint numerous areas on the block walls downstairs from water damage.
- Repair cracks in block wall in Narthex and front entrance foyer then paint them.
- Repair soffit on south side of building and grease conduit to keep critters out.
- Install two new fill valves in girl's restroom near choir room. Adjust flow in urinals at west end of NLC.
- Mulch and weed prayer garden.
- Patch pothole in lot entrance off Holly Street.
- All mowing of CUMC grounds.
- All outside landscaping.

## Pastor Dixon's Tribute to the Christ UMC Staff

It is with gratitude to the Lord that I express my appreciation for having had the pleasure of serving with one of the most dedicated group of staff members ever assembled. They have given so much to Christ UMC and without a doubt, much will continue to be required as the church faces the changes that lie ahead. It is my prayer that the time taken to reflect on the past will strengthen your ability to not only embrace the future, but to help shape it for generations to come.

The four staff members that I have had the opportunity to work most closely with over the past three years are Deb Alexander, Betsy Balger, Julie Coleman and Donna Pruett. It has been a great pleasure and an inspiration for me to have served with you. While their contributions to Christ UMC are too numerous to individually mention, they each have given much more than their share of time, talent and service to the operation, maintenance and ministries of this church. Although my contact with some of the staff was limited, I was provided with many opportunities to observe their commitment, dedication and love they provide to the ministry of this church. To each of you, I offer my deepest appreciation for your loyalty and service.

Deb, our worship leader, brings such a divine anointing to the music ministry of Christ Church. She has given 150% of herself in serving Christ Church over the past 33 years. She has such a passion for worshiping the Almighty God in Spirit and Truth and building enthusiasm for others to follow. I would also like to thank Deb for sharing her gift of music at several funeral services over which I have officiated these past three years. Bereaved family members have often taken the time to express to me their deep appreciation for her singing and how they were blessed and comforted by her special music.

Betsy, our organist/pianist, is a gifted musician who has demonstrated such enthusiasm and talent in the area of our music ministry for the last 34 years. May God continue to richly bless the service of Betsy as she continues to develop and share her gifts with Christ UMC and beyond.

Julie has been so much more than a church secretary. I see her role as being that of Christ UMC's office administrator. In her 7 years of service, she not only handles the secretarial responsibilities of our church, but she also schedules rentals, opens and locks up the building when needed, coordinates church meetings and activities, schedules the pastor's hospital and nursing home visits as well as visits with shut-ins, and has the unique responsibility of acting as a sounding board for anyone and everyone who contacts the church. She is very efficient at what she does and very attentive to details.

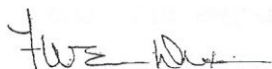
Donna, who had been our custodian for 8 years, was so much more than a janitor. She was the super handy woman at Christ UMC who not only did a wonderful job with her assigned custodial responsibilities, but was constantly going above and beyond doing anything and everything she was asked to do by the members and staff of both the church and school. The quality of her work was consistently reflected in the thoroughness of her results.

And even though Jane Tipton is not a staff member of the church, as our Lay Leader she has gone beyond her call of duty to support me and the ministries at Christ Church. Jane has filled many positions in the 3 years she has served as Lay Leader. Her many gifts and abilities have led me to see her more as a Ministry Coordinator, and I appreciate that she has allowed me to utilize her as such. In addition to fulfilling the needs of her multiple positions, she plans, develops, and coordinates most of the church's ministry programs and events including Vacation Bible School and the church nursery. Her leadership and vision play a vital role in the life of this church. I'd also like to thank her for sharing her discovered gift of technology. She live streams our weekly worship and other services as needed. She posts information about the ministry daily on Facebook and keeps our page updated.

My most profound thanks and deep appreciation are extended to this wonderful group of committed staff members who have given so much of themselves despite the circumstances that Christ UMC continues to face. I hope all the members of this congregation know and understand just how very blessed they are to have you all working on their behalf.

Much love to all of you, and may God's blessings follow you and continue to bless the works of your hands and the dedication of labors.

With humble gratitude,



Pastor Dixon



# Thank You

Christ Church Family,

Just a note to say thank you for the thoughts, prayers and cards during my recent surgery. It's nice to be a part of such a caring group.

*Bob Baber*

Dear Christ Church Family,

Thank you for your prayers, concerns, calls and cards for the family of Denise Davis. We also thank all of those who helped Denise in the past year in her home as well as those who took her to doctors appointments, Bible Study and church, and those who visited and called her. Your love and support for Denise was very much appreciated by her family and especially me. Thank you to Pastor Dixon for the lovely funeral service. Your expressions of love for Denise and your kind words to her family warms our hearts.

*In God's love,  
Kay Ellison and the Family of Denise Davis*

Your thoughtfulness is a beautiful reminder of God's goodness. Thank you for lifting our spirits with your kindness. We would like to thank Pastor Dixon for his kind words, everyone for their prayers, cards and flowers as they meant so very much. We would like to also thank the wonderful ladies at the church for providing lunch.

*With love,  
The Gibbs Family*

To My Christ Church Family . . . I deeply appreciate all the well wishes that remind me that we are always in God's thoughts, always embraced by His love, and always pleasing to His heart. Walking in an air boot and healing well.

*Nancy Karnes*

Dear Friends of Christ Church United Methodist,

Psalm 54:4 - "God is my helper; the Lord is the sustainer of my life." Tom and I lived a marriage of 63 years with the active truth of this Psalm so vividly reflecting to others because we sought and received His help for support through the worship, fellowship and serving - the Christian Education programs, West Ohio Conference Lay Delegate, and Administrative Board/Council on Ministries Committees of Christ Church United Methodist.

Your supportive reach out of love and caring continues as Tom has joined his Eternal Living. I have chosen to share the beauty of the fresh altar flowers representing springtime and glorifying our God as I extend my appreciation for the sincerity of your continued expressions of giving our family strength and adjustments necessary for accepting our loss of a wonderful man whom many of you loved as we love.

Many of you have shared our lives both before and after Alzheimer's health - throughout those year we were filled with blessings from Christ Church folks. "Thanks Be to God" Everlasting.

*In Christian Love,  
Diane Hayes*



# Thank You

*(Continued from Page 7)*

Dear Friends,

As beautiful as the flowers of spring was the marvelous gift we received from you. The "Baby Bottle Crusade" brought us wonderful blessings and we appreciate such love. God Bless you and thank you.

*The Staff and Volunteers of the Middletown  
Community Pregnancy Center*

To the Members of Christ Church,

Thank you for the kindness and love you showed during the celebration of life for Mom. She truly loved her church family. While we grieve her loss here on earth, she is now in Jesus' arms and reunited with all who love her.

*Hugs and Prayers,  
The Family of Barb Langworthy*

## With Heartfelt Sympathy

Diane Hayes and family upon the death of Thomas Hayes on January 27.

Donald Langworthy and Lori Fell and family upon the death of their mother, Barbara Langworthy, on March 20.

## May Anniversaries

- 1 Dick and Pam Cole
- 26 Greg and Jeanne Siewny
- 29 Robert and Mary Alice Gast
- 31 Ray and Joan Peterson

## May Birthdays

- 1 Tom Tipton
- 11 Norma Meece
- 13 Gertie Schweitzer  
Sally Williamson
- 16 Clark Record
- 17 Beth Greider
- 20 Joy Michael  
Lanise Weidle
- 21 Don Dean
- 23 Patty Mendenhall  
Emma Siewny
- 24 Larry Banks  
Philip Young
- 25 Shirley Heismann  
Lucy Kemble
- 30 Carl Heismann



# LOVE PACKAGES

## THE STORY BEHIND LOVE PACKAGES...

Stephen J. Schmidt and his wife started **Love Packages** in the summer of 1975 in their basement in Butler, Illinois. "God spoke to me as clearly as could be." That summer, God showed him the abundance of Christian literature that he had at his disposal and the tremendous lack of literature in third world nations. Not realizing that everyone was as wasteful as he was, Schmidt began to send excess literature overseas. In the first year, they shipped 60 boxes of literature to missionaries in 4 countries. Soon the word spread, and friends began bringing their excess literature to them as well for shipment overseas. And then they began receiving literature by mail from all over the United States. In their second year (1976) they shipped 3.5 tons.

Statistics indicate that every piece of literature will be read by an average of 20 people. Each container has at least 1 million pieces so each shipment of literature has the potential to reach 20 million people every time **Love Packages** sends a container. **Love Packages** sends 20-foot ocean-going containers to port cities around the world. These locations act as distribution points and have the capability to distribute these materials to thousands of churches overseas.

**Love Packages** is a non-profit organization and has facilities in Butler, Illinois and Decatur, Alabama. The sorting and packing is all done by volunteers at both locations. **Love Packages** depends upon private donations to cover shipping costs.

Christ Church has been actively involved in **Love Packages** since 2014. From 2014 until the end of 2020, Christ Church has collected 1,279.2 pounds of materials. We collect religious material, new and used, and it is picked up by **Love Packages** volunteers from New Freedom Church in Lebanon, Ohio.

Please leave your materials for **Love Packages** in the marked "Love Packages" container (on the floor near the bookcases) in the library. There is no monetary involvement for Christ Church for this mission of spreading God's word throughout the world.

For more information about the **Love Packages** organization, visit their website at [www.lovepackages.org](http://www.lovepackages.org) or their Facebook page.

## Matthew 25 Ministries

Matthew 25 Ministries is an international relief ministry based in Cincinnati. Its mission is to fulfill Matthew 25:34-40 by providing food to the hungry, clean water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, affordable shelter to the homeless, medical care to the ill and humanitarian supplies to those in need.

Christ Church collects empty plastic pill bottles (over-the counter included) for Matthew 25. Any color of plastic bottles is accepted. Matthew 25 Ministries recycles the bottles to provide financial support for their work.

Since 2012 Christ Church has collected a total of **16,834** pill bottles for Matthew 25 with **3,639** of these pill bottles collected in the year 2020. We are awaiting a pick-up of 600 pill bottles collected so far in 2021. Volunteers from New Freedom Church in Lebanon, Ohio pick up our pill bottles and deliver them to Matthew 25 in Cincinnati.

In 2020 Matthew 25 shipped more than 930 truck-loads of aid - the most they have ever shipped in a single year; helped over 23 million people - the most they ever helped in a single year.

Matthew 25 distributed more than 18.5 million pounds of desperately-needed supplies, including over 6 million pounds of COVID-19 relief supplies.

We can continue to help Matthew 25 with our collection of empty pill bottles (no glass, please.)

**Please leave your pill bottles in the red container marked "pill bottles" on top of the file cabinet in the library.**

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

### 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.



We wish to extend to Jeff and Jane Berns and the Berns Landscaping and Garden Center our heartfelt **THANK YOU** for the removal of the overgrown bushes in the front of the church and the planting of boxwood shrubs in front of the church sign near the flag pole. Thank you also for regrading and laying down rock to help with drainage issues where the bushes were once planted. We are so deeply appreciative for this tremendous labor of love. God bless.



**Thursday, May 20**  
**10:00 am**  
**Room 115**

Program speaker will be  
Author Tim Callahan

*All are invited.*

#### Looking Ahead:

**Thursday, June 17** - Lunch at Stonehouse Tavern in Waynesville

**Thursday, July 15** - Viewing the murals in downtown Middletown by car followed by lunch at The Squire Restaurant on Main Street

**Thursday, August 19** - Assembling containers for Hope House and preparing for the UMW Banquet in September