

# Tower Times

St. John's United Church of Christ

515 East Third Street

Dayton, OH 45402

## December 2019



Dear Friends,

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Or, is it? I don't know about you, but for me, December generally requires me to brace myself, grit my teeth, and try to survive until the end of the month. This isn't a month that's entirely friendly to pastors. Every worship service in the Advent season requires a bit more -bigger and better, you might say- and we always want to make sure that Christmas Eve is a service that welcomes our once or twice a year visitors, entices them to join us more, and yet also appeals to our long time faithful as well. In addition, all of the family gatherings, darker weather, and potential financial strains tend to create something of a pastoral care maelstrom. Add to this the strains of our own family and friend obligations and, well, you can probably understand why ministers tend to grimace at the thought of Advent.

All of this is not to say that we don't find joy in the season. The Advent season, for all its insanity, is when we often get to witness so many folks truly "loving their neighbour as themselves." We get to witness reconciliations and we get to see love and care spread in ways that we generally can only wish for in the rest of the year. In a lot of ways, Advent is the time of the year that we really feel like things are "clicking." It's a season where, for all of its struggles, it is almost impossible to not see God's Spirit moving.

Perhaps, you feel a bit of the same way as we approach this holiday season? Maybe you find yourself excited to see the ways in which love and care will be spread around in new and exciting ways? Perhaps you also find yourself dreading all the baking, the juggling of the finances, and the visiting of folks you'd rather not see? This season, I encourage you, as we engage both the wonder and the craziness, to perhaps remind yourself to take a moment and step back. Take a second to look, to see where God's Spirit is moving in your own world, what God is doing and how God is working in the things -both good and bad- that you are encountering in this season.



May Your Days Be Merry and Bright!

~ALW

## **Lofty Words**

**by Rev. Jeffrey Campbell, Minister of Worship**

### **Happy New Year!**

Advent marks the start of a new Church Year. Each year we follow the life of Jesus from his birth to his ascension in our Gospel readings. The scripture readings we use in worship are in a three year cycle called “The Lectionary.” At the center is the Gospel. We are starting “Year A”, during which most of our readings will be from St. Matthew. “Year B” is a St. Mark year and “Year C” features St. Luke. St. John is used in all three years. The Epistle reading, Hebrew Scripture, and Psalm are all thematically related to the Gospel. If you come to Church every Sunday for three years you will have heard a huge chunk of the Bible! On any given Sunday the same readings are heard not only in UCC churches, but also Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches and many others. It is a wonderful thing to realize that as Christians we all follow Jesus together each year through our Scripture readings!

### **Color War?**

Due to a peaceful settlement between Rev. Adam and Rev. Jeffrey we rotate liturgical colors for Advent. This year the color is Blue. Next year it will be Purple. Blue is the color of Hope. Advent certainly is a season of Hope. Blue often represents heaven. In addition, the color for Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is blue. Mary certainly is an important figure during Advent and Christmas.

### **Traditional Themes**

There are several possibilities for themes during Advent. This year we are following one of the most traditional paths. The four Sundays will reflect the gifts Jesus brings into the world at his birth. The four are HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE. I am sure you agree that these are four things the world badly needs right now. These are four things we also pray for in our own lives.

### **What a Choir!**

I hope you are enjoying and finding inspiration from our choir. We are enjoying preparing music for the congregation. The choir is faithfully working to fulfill their mission of leading the singing in worship and sharing the Good News in song. I am proud of the progress they continue to make in part singing and energy.

Happy Thanksgiving to all! Thanksgiving Day is truly a time for special gatherings of families, relatives, friends and neighbors with variety of foods, fruits, sweets, drinks and the like. Its really a grandeur celebration where families being away for quite sometime were coming together again with some friends and neighbors around too. Sometimes we're so overwhelmed with the occasion that we forget what's really the purpose of the gathering. Let's not be oblivious that in thanksgiving the focus and recognition is not what good the Lord gave, but the essence of His goodness. We praise the Supplier and not necessarily for his supplies, the Provider and Producer of all things and not merely for his provisions and products, the Benefactor but not because we are beneficiaries and we have benefits, blessings and breaks. We can't afford not to acknowledge our Almighty God from whom all blessings flow. "For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." (Psalms 100:5). Therefore, let's us be thankful everyday.

Likewise, I want to share some thoughts that we in the PRAYER-GROUP are planning to do at the start of next year. We want to start a Prayer ministry at St. John's every Sunday, right after the Sunday worship. We can't help but to offer prayers to those who wish to be prayed for, because PRAYER is God's power in the hands of his people to be victorious in our faith journey. We do also encourage everyone to write down prayer request using the PRAYER-REQUEST card and drop it on the offering plate during the offertory. Thank you.

" Rejoice Always, PRAY without ceasing, GIVE THANKS in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

(1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)

In Christ,

Hector



Tower Times – VP Report – Dec., 2019

Fri., Dec. 13 – Dayton Foundation – “Scholarship Connect” may begin applications.

Deadline for completion (requires a certain amount of documentation.) – Fri., Mar. 6, 2020.

Sat., Dec. 14 – 8:00 – Elisabeth Von Trapp at the Human Race Theatre

Tickets are on sale, 228.3630 – Ticket Box Office

### **SAVE THE DATE!!**

Sun., Jan. 12, 2020 – Steve Boggs’ anniversary, as St. John’s “Haus Meister.”

Please be sure to join us in this celebration. More information will follow!

### **OUTSIDE PAINTING OF OUR BUILDING:**

Have you looked up at the Clock Tower? The windows that could only be painted via a bucket truck, the front & side doors? It looks beautiful! Thank you to Bill Smith & his team!!

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris van Breukelen, VP



## Budget & Finance Committee Report to Council

November 4, 2019

The Budget & Finance Committee met on Monday, November 4, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m. Present at the meeting were Patty Staley, Chair, Ron Duckson, Vice Chair, Norm Neubauer, Debbie Watts and Reverend Wirrig. Absent: Nicholas Schumacher, Secretary, Isaiah Ashba, Treasurer.

Minutes for the October meeting were reviewed and approved with one minor correction noted to be made to the Next Meeting Date which was incorreced noted as December 8 and should have read November 11.

Reverend Wirrig presented the Treasurer's Report for the period ending October 31, 2019. It was brought to attention at the September Meeting of Council that funds in the Memorial Holding Account totaling \$8,358.54 were intended to be rolled over to the Endowment account on a regular basis but this has not been happening. To correct the situation, Council directed that funds should be immediately to correct this situation and directed that this is to be done on a regular basis as was intended. The Wedding Deposit holding account is currently more than should be and will be reviewed and funds moved appropriately for those Weddings that have occurred. There remains \$1,191.23 in the ME and Vanguard Wellesley account which is not bringing any real benefit and it was recommended and Reverend Wirrig made the motion and Debbie Watts seconded that amount be moved to the GBU account. It was noted that if all the Holding Account Funds were expended, the checking account would be in dire circumstances but that we are still expecting the ESOL payment of \$4,200 and an approximate \$1,000 corrective payment from ABM for parking adjustments. While construction expenses continue with \$19,000 owed yet for painting and \$5,000 for Spire repairs, other expenses were held within or under the anticipated budgeted amounts. Based on the need to ensure continued operations through the end of the year, Ron Duckson motioned that the remaining \$15,000 granted by the Congregation at the last Annual Meeting be immediately transferred from the GBU to the General Checking Account to cover operations through the end of 2019 and start of 2020. The motion was by seconded Norm Neubauer and passed unanimously. It was also noted that while funds were coming in enough to cover the loan repayments at the beginning, those funds have started to slow down which will begin to create a shortfall for the payment amounts due on a monthly basis of \$567.79. Reverend Wirrig noted that he would make that plea in the State of the Church address on Sunday. Norm Neubauer made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and was seconded by Debbie Watts and unanimously approved.



In Old Business, it was noted that as part of the Accounting Procedures update, processes will be put in place to create a proper paper trail for all requests including check requests, reimbursements requests, vendor payments, check cutting, bill approvals, contracts and monthly bill tracking. All basic general accounting functions that will help us to be compliant with General Accepted Accounting Procedures and aids in being more prepared for official audits. This process will begin with the 2020 Fiscal Year.

Stewardship including the annual stewardship program and fundraising functions will move to the Fundraising Team for 2020 leaving the Finance Team to focus on the actual accounting and financial accountabilities of the Church.

With respect to the Credit Card Kiosk and On-line Giving, now that we have made the move to Realm for our accounting Software, Patty has requested Vanco provide updated information with respect to its services and modules for Realm as opposed to the information that was provided for Church Windows so that she and Susan Kolze can focus on getting this project off the ground. The goal is to have everything in place by the end of the month – in time for the Holiday Season and to start the new year off in a positive way.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 8, 2019 at 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Staley, Chair,  
Budget & Finance Committee



**WORSHIP   Advent   Christmas 2019**

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
Born to set thy people free,  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in thee,*

*Born thy people to deliver,  
Born a child, and yet a king!  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.*

Charles Wesley, 1744



Advent – the preparation time for celebrating Christ’s birth. God’s promises to our ancestors came true when Jesus was born. God’s promise is kept each Sunday when we worship because Christ is in our midst. Plan to worship with us on Advent Sundays 10:30 a.m. The services will center around the themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The Advent candles will be lighted each Sunday until all four surrounding the Christ candle are lit on Christmas Eve at our 7:00 p.m Service. We will have our traditional congregational candle lighting and singing of ‘Silent Night’ both in English and German. Plan to be with us.

Special dates on our church calendar for December include:

Thursday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. Stivers Choral Concert in our sanctuary. Jaelynn and Brandan will both participate.

Thursday, Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. Blue Christmas Service, a quiet, reflective service especially designed for those who may be feeling some sadness at Christmas time.

Tuesday, Dec, 24 at 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Afterglow gathering in the Fellowship Hall with refreshments and the opportunity to reunite with old friends and former members.

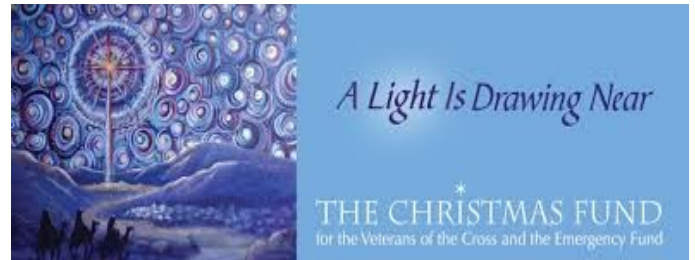
*Pat Kern*

Christian Nurture will be baking cookies on December 2nd at 10:00AM for the Christmas Eve after-glow party. Please join us. Bring a favorite cookie recipe and the needed ingredients. A fun time will be enjoyed by all who participate.



The mission for December is for The UCC's Christmas fund which benefits retired and needy clergy. It is an extremely worthy cause.

Submitted by,  
Karen Clark



Reverend Adam is asking for cookie donations again this year! Just as in years past, he hopes to make up platters for at least 10 of our local businesses and several of the surrounding apartment complexes as well. Would you please consider saving what little of his sanity remains and donating some cookies to help with this? (A good Keebler Elf he does not make!) Please try to have donations in by Sunday the 22nd of December so we can plate the cookies and have them out the week of Christmas! Thank you!!!







ANNOUNCING

**“ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAKE SALE”**

Sunday, December 8th

During  
Fellowship Hour

**SPONSORED BY THE  
WOMEN OF ST. JOHN'S**

**Donations of baked goods,  
candies, filled baskets for raffle will be  
appreciated.**



## **Women of St. John's**

The Women of St. John's will have their **ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAKE SALE** on Sunday, December 8th in the Fellowship Hall after the morning worship service.

Everyone is invited to donate any type of baked goods, candies, or anything else suitable for your sweet tooth. Please package the items ready for sale and bring them to the Fellowship Hall before church.

Please attend and support our bake sale and donate whatever you can.

Women of St. John's

Janet Neubauer

President

**Please remember: if you're giving towards the Cornerstone Repayment Fund, please mark your envelope appropriately. We will have special blue envelopes in the pews to help with this in the pews by December 8th!**



**Please remember: if you took a tag to buy a gift for a child with AGAPE for Youth, please have your gift wrapped and in by December 15th. This is also the final day to order poinsettias for Christmas Eve service!**

**Council Minutes**  
**St. John's United Church of Christ**  
**November 14, 2019**

**Present:** Douglas Goudy, Ballard Yates, Isaiah Ashba, Patty Staley, Bill Smith, Karen Clark, and Pat Kern.

**Guest(s):** Linda Murray and Ann Pepiot

The meeting was called to order by President Douglas Goudy at 06:03 p.m.

**Devotions:** Karen Clark presented the opening devotions and prayer.

**Secretary's Report:** Ballard Yates had e-mailed and distributed the minutes of the regular council meeting of October 14, 2019. As there were no additions or corrections requested for the October Minutes he asked they be approved. President Doug Goudy declared them approved.

**Financial and Treasurer's Report:**

**Financial Reporting**

Isaiah Ashba presented a financial packet which included a Balance Sheet reporting the Assets and Liabilities, as well as reports of Revenues and Expenses, both for October and on a year to date basis. Also included were a Trial Balance of the operating accounts, and a report, by vendor, of the total payments made to our vendors. He indicated that it was not a bad month, as our assets were in a favorable position and expenses were basically within budget. The only large unusual expenditures for the month were the costs related to construction of the church facilities.

Pat Kern asked for information on contributions to the Stivers program which funds the cost of the students who supplement our choir. It was reported that contributions have been down, and that this should be reported to the congregation. The same situation seems to exist with the contributions to make the monthly payments on our Cornerstone loan. These started out well, but seemed to slow recently.

On a related issue, it was reported that Patty Staley requested Vanco to provide updated information for our Credit Card Kiosk and On-line Giving now that we have moved from Church Windows to the Realm software.

Ballard Yates made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report which was seconded by Karen Clark and approved by vote of the church council.

## **Old Business**

### **Building of Committees/Teams**

This item will be an ongoing monthly item. Doug Goudy indicated there was not much to report. All teams are staffed, and only one committee is short a member. Efforts are being made to fill this vacancy.

### **Vote to approve dishwashers**

This vote had been delayed until after the meeting with the Women of St. John's on October 20, 2019. The purpose of that meeting was for council to gain a better understanding of the proposal and related items of concern. In order that this issue may be discussed, Bill Smith made a motion to finish the Dishwasher project as Proposed, funded in cooperation with the Women of St. John's. The motion was seconded by Patty Staley.

## **New Business**

### **Dishwasher Process as requested at the meeting with the Women of St. Johns on October 20, 2019.**

Linda Murray made the following observations:

This proposal would complement the church's desire to "Go Green" and be more considerate of our environment.

This proposal involves the installation of two residential dishwashers, replacing the current industrial unit which is not operating, and deemed too expensive to justify its repair.

The proposed units have a capacity of 30 full place settings, or could even just be used for cleaning silverware if desired and are capable of sanitizing the items. These units have a 28 minute cycle. Therefore while waiting for the unit to finish, this time could be used in cleaning tables etc.

Any organizations are not required to use this equipment, but doing so would reduce the waste of using paper plates and disposal of single use "silverware."

The council requested guidelines for the residential dishwashers. They are listed below.

Whoever uses the dishwasher is the primary person responsible for its use.

A committee of the Women of St, John's offers to serve as an assistant to the primary person.

Whenever possible, the dishwasher should be unloaded as soon as the washing cycle is completed.

After unloading the dishwasher the items should be replaced in the proper places.

Appropriate dishwashing soap will be available, and this is to be the only product to be used.

Doug Goudy indicated that he would have the copy furnished by Linda Murray laminated and posted at the dishwasher station.

A point of clarification was requested as to who would be responsible for these tasks. It would be the organization or individual hosting the event, not the church custodian.

For the purpose of authorizing this project, it is noted that this is not connected with the possible installation of a three section sanitary sink which the church may be required to install. This would be a separate issue.

The vote was taken on the dishwasher project, and with one abstention by Isaiah Ashba, was approved by the council vote.

### **Social Hour (Committee) who/how to proceed.**

President Doug Goudy asked the council to give this issue some thought. The congregation seems strongly in favor of this, but it seems very difficult to provide. Some questions and observations:

Many years ago, it started as only coffee after the worship service.

Gradually some snacks started to be included.

Sometimes it has been more elaborate, but can also be very simple.

We often fail to have someone, a family, or group to volunteer.

Often when we fail to have a volunteer(s) two or three people fill in, and while this is appreciated, it is not fair to them. We need a greater level of participation

The donation people leave in the plate at the table could be used to offset some of the cost, but those hosting usually just have donated the refreshments.

We need to make a distinction between just a fellowship hour, and a carry-in dinner. On occasion a fellowship hour almost seems to become a carry-in dinner



- . If such a fellowship hour is hosted by an individual, a couple, or group, it should be identified as a special event celebrating a birthday, wedding anniversary etc.

Doug would like the council to give this some thought, and make suggestions about how we can improve on this situation. One additional thought is should we have a committee or team to help organize this task? Should this team report to an existing team or be a “freestanding” one? Doug has consulted the new constitution, and is not clear where this committee or team should fit.

## **2020 Staffing Contracts**

Doug has these contracts and will be reviewing them. After review he may make some minor changes.

## **Building Damage (Update)**

Bill Smith reported that during the painting project, the painters damaged lights on the concrete peak and spire as well as the peak and spire itself. This should be the Eco Renovations’ responsibility, and both the contractor’s insurance as well as our insurance carrier have been contacted. He has a meeting scheduled with the adjuster. Bill Smith is working with Evans Electric and Midwest Maintenance on repairs.

## **Committee Reports Received**

The following Individuals and Committees submitted written reports: Vice President, Budget and Finance, Building and Property, Worship, and the Lead Minister.

## **Items for the Good of the Order:**

We continue in our efforts to secure transportation for Jan Zahn to attend our worship service. Nothing new to report

AED Defibrillator/Security. Doug Goudy has left two voice mails for Steve Carroll.

On Thursday December 12, there will be a Stivers Choral Concert here at St. John’s at 7:00 p.m. Rev. Jeff Campbell has asked for volunteers to greet and direct those attending.

Pat Kern reported that subsequent to her distribution of the Worship Committee report that Rev. Jeff Campbell indicated he would like to do a nativity program involving children on December 22th. He is asking the congregation to check with family, friends and neighbors to see if they have children who would like to participate. See Rev. Jeff or Pat Kern for more information.

The giving tree for disadvantaged children will contain 30 names this year. The gifts should be brought in by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Adjournment**

Patty Staley made a motion that the meeting be adjourned which was seconded by Karen Clark and approved by vote of the council.

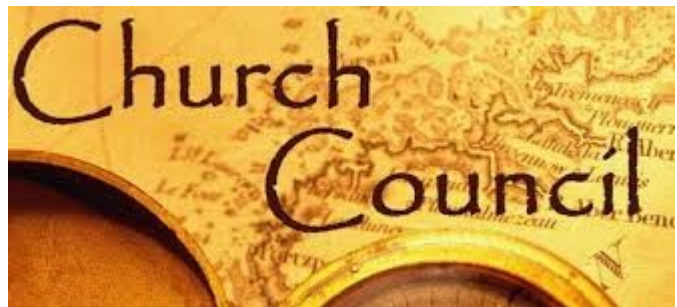
### **Closing**

The meeting was closed with all praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ballard Yates, Council Secretary

Next regular meeting Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. Devotions and opening prayer by Rev. Dr. Adam Wirrig.



## **Happening Around St. John's!**

**Another successful food drive for Good Neighbor House!**



Local youth, Abriella Ruby, put together a project to support the homeless in the area. What started out as something small turned into a project with \$20,000 worth of donations! Because of our presence in the community and our reputation of welcome and care, St. John's was asked to be the host venue for the assembling and distributing of these resources! On November 24th, many local volunteers and even some St. John's folk gathered to make this magic happen! Truly, it was an honor to be involved in something so great!







**Thank you to all who helped  
decorate for the Advent and  
Christmas season! It looks  
great around here at St.  
John's!**



## December Birthdays

Norm Neubauer	01
Suzanne Gorischek	02
Helen Staab	04
Nadia Carroll	06
Philomene King	07
Leonard LaPoma	07
Patsy Goin	11
Anne Morrissey	15
Pat Kern	17
Judy Thompson	17
Nicholas Schumacher	24

**Memorial Contributions were made this month:** In memory of Dr. Byron G. Epley by Anonymous.

## Flowers & Fellowship

### Flowers

12/1—Doug and Pat Goudy

12/8—Steve Boggs

12/15—Tony Morrissey

12/22—Poinsettias

12/29—Patty Staley

### Fellowship Hours

12/1—Ethel Burns

12/8—WOSJ Bake Sale

12/15—Fellowship Committee


12/22—Still Available

12/24—Afterglow by Christian Nurture and Worship Committees

12/29—Jill Johnson and Diane Peters



# December 2019

SUN Dec 1	MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6	SAT 7
<div></div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Worship Service</li><li>4pm Spirit(s) Bar Church</li></ul></div>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7pm Prayer Service @ Holy Trinity</li></ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11am Staff Meeting</li></ul>	
<div>8</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Building and Property</li><li>10:30am Worship Service</li></ul></div>	<div>9</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6:30pm Budget and Finance</li></ul></div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Church Council</li></ul></div>	<div>12</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7pm Stivers High School Concert</li></ul></div>	<div>13</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11am Staff Meeting</li></ul></div>	<div>14</div>
<div>15</div> <div><div>AGAPE gifts Due In</div><div>Poinsettia Orders Due</div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Worship Service</li></ul></div>	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div>	<div>18</div>	<div>19</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7pm Blue Christmas Worship</li></ul></div>	<div>20</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11am Staff Meeting</li></ul></div>	<div>21</div>
<div>22</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Worship Service</li></ul></div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7pm Christmas Eve Worship</li></ul></div>	<div>25</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div>
<div>29</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Worship Service</li></ul></div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div>	<div>Jan 1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>	<div>4</div>