

December 2017

Pastor: Barbara Schnecker

937-372-7601 office@fcum.org www.fcum.org

Sunday Worship

9:00-10:00 Sunday School

10:00-10:30 Fellowship Time

10:30-11:30-Worship in Sanctuary

Worship Notes

Dec. 3: Holy Communion by intinction; Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Mark 13:24-37

Christmas Hymn Sing -
5:30-7:30 pm

Church Choir

Children's Choir & Play

Illustration of the Upside
Down Christmas Tree (for
children) by Beth Gully

Singing Hymns & Fellowship
with Food After

Dec. 10: Lighting of the
Advent Wreath-Mark 1:1-8

Infant Baptism; Bell Choir

Dec. 17: Lighting of Advent
Wreath - John 1:6-8, 19-28

Children's Choir

**December 24: Christmas
Eve,** Music at 8:30 pm; Light-
ing of Advent Wreath

Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20

December 31: Mary

Shumard

Luke 2:22-40

Sunday Participation

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>S.S.</u>
Oct. 22	133	74
Oct. 29	100	60
Nov. 5	162	64
Nov. 12	130	92

Pastor Barb Schnecker

What is Your Hope?

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of

great joy for all the people.”
Luke 2:8-10

During the season of Advent, we prepare and wait for the coming of Christ as a child, even though we know that Christ was born over 2,000 years ago. Advent is a time of great anticipation and hope!

There are times in our lives, when like our Jewish friends, we wonder and even cry out in confusion about Jesus Christ the Messiah. Many times we find ourselves in a waiting pattern of “not yet,” which doesn’t help us gain clarity or vision for our future.

As Jesus enters our lives and the picture as a baby, we see him grow into a child of great spiritual depth and eventually grow into a countercultural adult teacher and leader. It becomes quite clear that Jesus didn’t just happen; Jesus was sent with a purpose, God’s purpose.

Jesus was sent with the purpose of reconciliation, to set us free, to dwell among us and in us, to bring us new life, and to change the status quo and be change agents all to build God’s kingdom here on earth. Soon we understand that we too are here for a purpose and we can and are part of

those same reasons in which Jesus was sent.

Often, I ask myself throughout the day, and

especially in the evening as my day winds down...What new places did I see God today? Where has God been with me? How am I bringing God’s presence to others?

In what or whom do you place your hope this season? May our hope begin at the manger this year as we humbly come and experience Jesus in new and reconciling ways. Our hope is in Jesus the Christ! O come let us adore him, Jesus Christ the King!

Merry Christmas from
Pastor Barb!



Stephen Ministries

There is a Light

There is a light in the world, a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter.

We sometimes lose sight of this force, when there is so much suffering, too much pain.

Then suddenly, this spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who care

and answer in extraordinary ways.

These words of Mother Theresa's quoted in *Journeying through Grief* have relevance for many of us whether we are grieving the death of a loved one, other losses, or just going through a difficult time. If you or someone you know would like to have an ordinary person who cares and who is committed to walking along with you for as long as you need them, consider asking about Stephen Ministry. To find out more about this confidential, one-on-one Christian care and support option, call Becky Cultice, 937-376-5747.

Don't forget Blue Christmas Service of Healing and Hope at Faith Community December 6 at 6:30 p.m.

Join with us to hear scripture, offer prayers for healing and wholeness, and to hear song that acknowledges that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who grieve, for those who struggle. God's Word comes to shine light in our darkness.

The Fallacy of Joy

My growing up years were filled with temporary moments of happiness mixed with moments of confusion and disappointment. As a child we moved several times and making new friends was not always easy. I was glad to have my six brothers and sister to play with. Being the oldest girl in the family they became a constant source of both frustration and silliness. I was their babysitter, often their only means of transportation, and to some extent their mother when mom went off to the hospital to have more babies. They were my family and no matter how many times we moved they were always there. It was very comforting to me.

Married life and motherhood brought about yet another series of ups and downs and family took on a whole new meaning for me. Life was now filled with not only my own sense of happiness and disappointment but I often internalized my children's happiness and disappointments. As a mom you can't help but be protective knowing full well

that you must give your children the chance to make their own mistakes and feel their own pain all the while feeling it right along with them.

So, what does all of this have to do with JOY? I tell you these things to say that life has taught me the difference between JOY and HAPPINESS. Happiness is a fleeting emotion. It is a good emotion and causes us to feel joyful, but true JOY comes from within. It does not fluctuate with current or passing situations. It does not change when life throws you a curve ball. True JOY is based on our identity as a Christ-follower and our relationship to Christ.

Psalm 83 says, “They concoct crafty plans against your own people, they plot against the people you favor.” This reminds us that we are God’s treasure and that we are cherished. Ephesians 1 says, “We have been ransomed through his Son’s blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding.” And, 1 John 1:7 says, “But if we live in the light in the same way as he is in the light, we have

fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from every sin.” This is the reason for our JOY!

Jesus was born in the small town of Bethlehem and his family moved before his second birthday. He went from Bethlehem to Egypt and back to Jerusalem. He spent his adult ministry moving from place to place and He died so that we might have the abundant life we need so that we are free to move about spreading the good news of the gospel.

The facts of the Bible never change. The truth about who we are in Christ never changes. It was never Christ’s desire that we be happy because He knew that happiness is fleeting and dependent upon the situations and the people around us. Happiness is an earthly goal. Christ’s desire was that we would find JOY in the very word of God, the truth of scripture and the abiding of the Holy Spirit within us.

We are His children, the chosen ones of God. We are holy and blameless in His sight. We live our lives with eternity in mind, not in survival mode, but with the

hope that comes through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter says that “on account of his vast mercy, he has given us new birth. You have been born anew into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. You have a pure and enduring inheritance that cannot perish – an inheritance that is presently kept safe in heaven for you.”

This is true JOY – living with the knowledge that someday we will move right into our eternal hope with Christ. This same Christ who was born in a manger on Christmas morn will welcome us with open arms as He escorts us into the mansion He has waiting for us.

Celebrate this Advent with JOY in your hearts knowing that the situations and the circumstances that you are facing are wrapped with the JOY of the Lord! He is your strength and your Redeemer.

Blessings

Mary Shumard

United Methodist Women

A GREAT BIG THANKS to all those who helped with the breakfast and luncheon for the West Ohio United Methodist Women's Annual Conference. Many women gave of their time and talents to make the event a success. To those who planned the menu, organized the workers, purchased the food, brought cookies, gave of their time in advance of the day and their Saturday to help with the many chores, pitched in wherever they were needed and then cleaned up the area, did dishes, pans, etc. Also, thanks to Tammy (our custodian) who is a great help. Thanks to everyone from Faith Community UMW.

CIRCLES

Lydia – Wednesday, December 13, 7 pm-Parlor

Priscilla – Monday, December 18, 7 pm-Parlor

Dorcas - Tuesday, December 19, 1 pm - Parlor



It is time to order poinsettias for the Christmas services. Order forms will be included in the bulletins and in the church office through December 8. The cost this year will be 11.00. Please return order forms and payment to the church office by December 8.

Thank you.

Dolores Strous

United Methodist Men
CALLING ALL MEN ! The Men of Faith will be meeting on the third Monday of each month in 2017. All men in Greene County are invited and welcome to join our group. The December 18th meeting will be held in room #6. Start time will be 6:30 PM and a meal will be served. The program will start at 7:00 PM with the election and installation of officers for 2018. We will then sing Christmas Carols followed by communion in the Chapel. Come at 7:00 PM if you want to attend just the program.

Thank You Notes

My personal thanks to Ann Ledbetter, Betsy Murray, Joyce Smith and Bonnie Weimer for all the planning and time spent on all the recent United Methodist Women's projects. Also, thanks to everyone else who pitched in to help.
~~Marlene Gifford

Just wanted to thank all of you who posted prayers and condolences on the passing of my mother Sybil Wolfe. I found this poem that expresses how we feel, much better than I could....

Perhaps you sent a lovely card or sat quietly in a chair. Perhaps you sent a floral piece if so, we saw it there. Perhaps you said the kindest words as any friend would say. Perhaps you were not there at all, just thought of us that day. Whatever you did to console our hearts, we thank you so much

*whatever the part
~~Kathy Keller & family*

Thank you to all who put together and participated in the Fall Bazaar. It was a huge success because of your support and the community support. The silent auction alone made over \$1,000.00, which will be used to reach out to those serving at the FISH Food Pantry, feeding those who are hungry. The rest of the proceeds will fund mission/outreach through Faith Community.

Dear Friends in Mission:

Thank you for your support of UMCOR. Through your gift, you are helping to provide assistance for survivors of human trafficking, health and development projects that alleviate hunger and poverty. This is just a sampling of the good works that gifts like yours make possible. This gift will bring hope

to those who need it most.

*Russell Pierce,
General Board of
Global Ministries*

Passings

Prayers and Sympathy of our church family are extended to the family and friends of **Eileen Luttrell;**

to Ann Ledbetter on the death of her niece **Phyllis Knisley;**

to Kathy (Bob) Keller on the death of her mother, **Sybil Wolfe;**

to Tami (Brad) Montgomery on the death of Tami's mother, **Virginia Blair;**

and to Priscilla Avery and family on the death of her husband, **Charlie Avery.**

Blood Donors

On Monday October 16, 2017, Faith Community hosted its 37th blood drive. We started hosting drives, conducted by Community Blood Center, in the sum-

mer of 2005. At this latest drive, we registered 42 applicants, drew 378 units of blood (13% of our goal). Each donation can help save as many as three lives. Each donor is a hero to someone in our community. Thank you to all who participated in this most recent drive:

Richard Baker, Betty Bouzeos, Christopher Bradley, Mark Bryan, Erin Cline, Alison Corry, Melody Dawson, Lynn Dell, Laura Dempsey, Susan Fellie, Alyssa Gant, Lorraine Greene, John Hames, Luan Heit, Randall Hoskins, Kevin Hyde, Lu Irwin, Jacob Jones, Cecilia Jones, Rachel Kelsey, Elizabeth Klinc, Ann Laughner, Megan Lewis, Kayla Livers, Laura Long, William Mallernee, Carol Milam, Barbara Mills, Helen Petry, Mark Pierce, Jaclyn Pierce, Jodi Pitzer, Catherine Ream, Cherie Sheets, Nathan Sheridan, Alan Stock, John Tatman, Adrienne Traxler, Patrick Vandermolen, Thomas Wallman, Frederick Whitan, Forest Wilson.

Next drive is Monday, February 19, 2018, 2-6 pm. If you would like to help or have questions, call or contact John Ford at 372-6641 or jford9@woh.rr.com



FISH Food Pantry needs your non-perishable food items to help feed the needy in our community, not just during the holidays but year-round. You may drop off your items in the container in the narthex. Thanks for being a blessing those in need.

**Deadline for January
2018 Faith Links:**

Friday, December 15



Come and Join us
December 24th at
10:30 am for
Worship &
8:30 pm as
Music ushers in the Candle Light
Christmas Eve Service at 9:00 pm