

The Epistle

St. John UCC; 409 Park Ave., P.O. Box 156; Bolivar, Ohio 44612

FRIENDSHIP•MISSION•SPIRITUALITY February 2017

Some thoughts about the Beatitudes

Matthew 5: 1-12 is the appointed Gospel reading for the fourth Sunday after the Epiphany. Since this is not the text that I will be citing in my sermon on that Sunday, I am taking this opportunity to share some thoughts with you about this very familiar passage.

The first thing to note is that, though this is the most familiar to us, memorized in Sunday School and read in school assemblies (some of us are of an age such as to remember those times), it is not the only one. Like the two birth narratives, the two creation stories, and the two accounts of Noah and the flood (read closely and you will see the differences), Matthew and Luke have two different interpretations of these words attributed to Jesus.

Some background for those who did not attend the Borg study group: Apart from the nativity stories, which were written independently of both Mark and each other, Matthew and Luke relied heavily on the earlier gospel of Mark for events that occurred in the life of Jesus. There are other passages, however, that do not appear in Mark, but are set down in the other two gospels. These passages, mostly quotations, are attributed to an anonymous source known to scholars simply as “Q” (for *Quelle*, the German word for “source”).

The original text of Q no longer exists, so we cannot know which of these gospel writers was the more accurate in his usage. We can speculate, though, that each had his own story that he wanted to tell, his own interpretation that he wanted to share with his readers.

I see Luke’s version as more stark, for example: “Blessed are you who are poor,” he writes, and “blessed are you who are hungry.” It’s a simpler version, more “earthy,” appropriate for a writer who has shepherds as witness to the birth of Jesus. It’s also, I believe, very much in keeping with the words he uses in Mary’s song of praise, known as “The Magnificat.” “He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.”

Matthew’s interpretation is, in places, more conditional. Not poor, for example, but “poor *in spirit*,” not physically hungry, but hungering and thirsting *for righteousness*. This is, of course, the writer who used “wise men,” educated men, evidently men of some wealth, as witness to the birth of Jesus.

The Epistle

Pastor's Page Continued:

As a child and as a young person, I always felt more comfortable with Matthew's words. Now, as we are each confronted with the harsh realities of today's world, perhaps those of Luke are more needed.

Blessings,

Pastor David+

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

New Directory Coming – Save the Date!

On May 15 and 16 Lifetouch Studio will be taking portrait pictures for our new directory. There is no charge to our church for this service. Each family or individual who makes an appointment and has pictures taken for the directory will receive a free 8x10 photograph, a free directory and a coupon for ten dollars toward the purchase of additional pictures. The picture packages offered cost \$30 and up. Friends and families in our community may also make appointments for photos even if they are not going to be in the directory. They will also receive the free 8x10. The church will receive a CD with all the directory photos for church use. We will also receive free of charge, pamphlets about our church with information and pictures about our activities and services (we design the pamphlet) and the opportunity to update the directory free of charge in the future.

This all depends on getting enough people to sign up for appointments. Please help us get new directories by having your photo taken. Watch for more information about this in the March Epistle and future bulletins.

There is no cost to the church for this service. Lifetouch earns their money through the sale of additional pictures. You are under no obligation to buy photographs.

The Epistle

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pg. 1-2	Pastor's Page, Church Directory	Pg. 6	Study Group, New Members
Pg. 3	Calendar	Pg. 6	Clothes Closet Report
Pg. 4	Birthdays, Serving in February, Thinking of You	Pg. 7-8	Consistory Minutes
Pg. 5	LOST & FOUND – Annual School Supply Project 2016	Pg. 8-9	Annual Congregational Meeting
		Pg. 10-11	Treasurer's Report

February 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Choir 6:30	2	3	4
5	6	7 Study Group 7pm	8 Bolivar Ministerial Mtg - 10am Bolivar UMC Lunch, 11:30am Choir 6:30	9	10	11
12	13 Clothes Closet/ Pastor's Pantry 9:00-noon, 5:30-7:30	14  Happy Valentine's Day	15 Choir 6:30	16 St. Paul's Community Dinner, 5- 6:30 Consistory 7pm	17	18
19	20 Ladies Lunch 11:30, Wendy's President's Day	21 Study Group 7pm	22 Epistle Items Due Choir 6:30	23	24	25
26 Last Sunday After Epiphany	27 Clothes Closet/ Pastor's Pantry 9:00-noon, 5:30-7:30	28	Notes: Communion Servers for February: Carolyn Birk and Chris Carpenter			

The Epistle



February Birthdays

Gene Mase (Feb. 8)	Noah Carpenter (Feb. 16)
Doris Hans (Feb. 10)	Jack Renner (Feb. 17)
Dick Lebold (Feb. 13)	Carolyn Birk (Feb. 21)
George Rootring (Feb. 15)	Mark Goudy (Feb. 24)

Serving in February

Liturgist

Feb. 5 Ron Gauding
Feb. 12 Arline Mase
Feb. 19 Dale Duerr
Feb. 26 Carolyn Birk

Acolyte

Feb. 5 Hallie Carpenter
Feb. 12 Deisy Felgenhauer
Feb. 19 Max McCoy
Feb. 26 Julia Felgenhauer

Coffee Hour

Feb. 5
Feb. 12 Grace & Jack Renner
Feb. 19 Arline & Gene Mase
Feb. 26 Birks & Scott

Greeters

Feb. 5 Rhonda & Deisy Felgenhauer
Feb. 12 Rob Lee & John Stucky
Feb. 19 Missy Jones & Molly Steiner
Feb. 26 Susan Henry & Shirley Holdsworth

Bell Ringer

Feb. 5 Camden & Luke McCoy
Feb. 12 Hallie Carpenter
Feb. 19 Julia Felgenhauer
Feb. 26 Max McCoy

(Please try to find a replacement if you are unable to serve.)

Esther Simon	Scotty Trambaugh
Helen Hall	Crystal Weaver
Russell Ross	Robert Vandall
Bill & Lucile Lebold	Courtney Levensgood
Clare Stevenson	Lynn Rootring
Bob & Joyclin Ely	Dick Lebold



The Epistle

LOST & FOUND – *My apologies to Cathy Fenstermaker for omitting this report from the Annual Congregation Meeting held on January 22, 2017.*

Year-end report for School Supply Project 2016

The School Supply Project, sponsored by Bolivar St. John UCC, was held on August 13, 2016, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The goal of this project is to help students in need (kindergarten through eighth grade) in the Tuscarawas Valley Local School District. This year we served 60 children from 26 families. We were able to provide supplies specific to each grade level as requested by Tusky Valley teachers. From the supplies that were left we filled two bags for each grade level. These bags were delivered to the Primary school in Mineral City, the Intermediate school in Bolivar and the Middle School for the principals to use to help students during the school year.

In addition to the many donations of supplies given for the project, our committee purchased an additional \$634.95 in supplies to have adequate inventory. Of this amount \$405 was donated in cash by individuals and churches, and \$229.95 came from funds generated by the Community Clothes Closet.

We also had many volunteers from our congregation, other area churches and the school community to help buy and set up the supplies, and distribute them on the day of the give-away.

Some donations were in cash and some were by check. The checks were deposited in the Clothes Closet bank account and used to pay for expenditures made by credit card. (See Clothes Closet report)

Donations

Congregation \$ 180.00
Others 225.00
Clothes closet + 229.95

Total Donations \$ 634.95

Expenditures

WalMart \$ 354.61
Big Lots 219.39
Dollar General + 60.95

Total Expenditures \$ 634.95

The Epistle



All are invited to join the new Study Group that will commence on **Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.** and meet the first and third Tuesday of each month.

The title of the book is *Saving Jesus from the Church* by Robin R. Meyers.

Here is a brief introduction of the book.

Countless thoughtful people are now so disgusted with the marriage of bad theology and hypocritical behavior by the church that a new Reformation is required in which the purpose of religion itself is reimagined. Meyers takes the best of biblical scholarship and recasts these core Christian concepts to exhort the church to pursue an alternative vision of the Christian life:



St. John welcomes three new members to our family - we are blessed to have John and Janet Stewart, and Pam Diehl. We, as your church family, welcome you with joy, we promise you our friendship and prayers.

Clothes Closet Report for January 2017

In January the Clothes Closet welcomed 18 customers and took in over \$45, some of it during the evening when Barb and her crew opened the doors for another two hours. Helpers included regulars Cathy, Jane, Jean, and MaryAnn. We enjoyed (as did our customers) homemade cookies from Jane and doughnuts from MaryAnn. Come and join us the next time we are open, February 13th.

The Epistle

Consistory Meeting Notes January 19, 2017

Time: 7:00 PM The January 19, 2017 Meeting Called to Order by President Barb Berens. Members Present: Barb Berens, President; Carolyn Birk, Vice President; Fred Miller, Secretary; Chris Carpenter; Chris Stevenson; Pastor David Houdeschell. Excused Birdie Witt and Mark Goudy

* Consistory recited the Lord's Prayer

* Additions to Agenda: Thank you cards were received from Jack Renner and Mary Birk for the Christmas gifts.

* Secretary Report- December 15 and 26, 2016 meetings by Secretary of Consistory Chris Stevenson approved with Chris Carpenter moving and Chris Stevenson seconding the motion. Motion Carried

* Treasurer's Report for December 2016 by Paula and Mark Goudy. Corrections: Due to financial regulations Line items 101A were raised slightly and Line Item 101B went down. The 2017 Budget will need to be changed at the February meeting to reflect those changes. Discussion on Night of Road (the name given to those who stop for assistance, coined originally by Rev. Schumaker) Gas Cards and Food Allocation Cards. Learned a letter is needed by the Bellstore and Dairy Queen before being able to use the cards. This letter is being prepared. Motion by Chris Stevenson, Seconded by Chris Carpenter to accept the December 2016 Financial Report. Motion Carried

* Pastor's Report: December 16, 2016 -January 19, 2017- Conducted Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning Services; met with five individual in my study and one off-site; served home communion to five persons in their residence; attended a community meeting to discuss activities to oppose the incoming president's administration; accompanied ten other activists in visiting local office of Rep. Renacci to discuss opposition to repeal of the ACA.

Old Business:

* Learned from Chris Carpenter is working on the emergency lights and sign lighting and Ron Gauding is working on the weather stripping. No Action Taken.

* Heard the proposal by Lifetouch with the number of people needed for sign up is 15 but they do not need to purchase pictures. The date is May 15 and 16, 2017. Cathy Fenstermaker will make a short report at the Congregational meeting.

* Discussed the possibility to clean up language in the Constitution by a committee of Five to be announced.

* Learned the sound system frequency is being changed to assist the same sound from the Pastor's microphone is the same as the open mike used by the congregation.

The Epistle

New Business:

* Received the resignation of Noah Carpenter as organist as of February 1. Carolyn Birk regrettably moved to accept the resignation with Chris Stevenson seconding without joy.

Motion Carried.

* Received the resignation of Susan Henry as of April 15th due to family commitments. Fred Miller moved the Consistory and congregation regrettably accepts Susan's resignation but with understanding. Carolyn Birk seconds. Motion carried.

* Discussed with no action – Emergency Closing Call List

* Discussed Standing Committee Organization with No Formal Action Taken.

* Pastor David closed the meeting with prayer at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Fred Miller, Secretary

Annual Congregational Meeting, January 22, 2017

Time: 12:00 PM the January 22, 2017 Congregational Meeting Called to Order by President Barb Berens. A quorum was present. Pastor David Houdeschell opened the meeting with prayer.

President Barb welcomed the members present and urged more open communication to assist the Consistory and the church members deal with concerns as they arise.

The Minutes of last year's Congregational Meeting and Annual Meeting read by Secretary Miller accepted by Ann Scott moving the minutes be approved as read with Dick Diehl seconding. Motion carried.

President Barb then called on Claudia Duerr for an update on the Accessibility Report. The committee met with the architect to develop the final plans. The committee learned the handicapped bathroom drawings on the lower level be redrawn due to inadequate flow to the sewer. The cost for the project of a wheelchair lift will be about \$125,000. The committee is looking to secure foundation funding to assist with the cost. The architect will meet with the congregation later to discuss the final plans. The plans still have an outstanding debt, which will need to be paid.

President Barb called on past president Cathy Fenstermaker to update us on the pictorial directory planned for May. The group met with representatives of Life Touch and found we need just 15 photo appointments in order to proceed. The date the photographer will be at St.

The Epistle

John will be May 15 and 16 from 2pm to 9 pm each day. If you wish a directory, you must have a scheduled photo appointment time. One free 8X10 is free. The community is going to be sent flyers to invite them to have their picture taken, if they so choose. You must call the office to arrange a time.

President Barb then explained the Standing Committees to run the church: Accessibility; Altar; Christmas 2017; Fund Raisers: Kitchen committee; Mission Committee; Pastoral Relations Committee; Building and Grounds Committee and Personnel Committee. The members received a form listing all the committees inviting them to sign up for the committee(s) of their choosing.

Arline Mase moved with Beth Carpenter seconding a motion to accept the Year End 2016 Financial Report with no voice questions or concerns. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the meeting, due to growling stomachs, presented by Beth Carpenter, and seconded by John Stewart. The shuffling of feet signaled the motion was accepted.

Pastor David closed the meeting with a parting prayer.

Respectfully submitted: Fred Miller, Secretary

The Epistle

St John United Church Of Christ ~ Treasurer's Report ~ December 2016

11/30/2016 Balance on hand - Checking Account	\$ 3,515.20		
General Fund Deposits	\$ 6,443.00	YTD \$	77,358.20
Other Deposits	\$5.00	YTD \$	5,284.02
Transfer from Money Market Acct		YTD \$	12,600.00
Fidelity Transfer		YTD \$	-
Balance and Receipts	\$ 9,963.20	YTD \$	95,242.22
Disbursements	\$ (8,567.08)	YTD \$	(94,855.59)
12/31/2016 Balance on hand - Checking Account	\$ 1,396.12		

Envelope Offering	\$ 6,337.00		
Plate Offering	\$ 106.00	Anonymous Donations	
Sunday School		Miscellaneous	\$ 5.00
Total General Fund	\$ 6,443.00	Total Other Deposits	\$ 5.00

Money Market Account Fund

Memorial Fund - Balance beginning of month:	\$ 34,732.55	
Check # 1027	(\$1,600.00)	Replaces #1026-VOID-Dollar General
Check # 1028		Replaces #1021-VOID-Gas Mission issued in Sept
Contribution	\$ 10,000.00	Anonymous Donation/Handicap Accessibility
End of month balance	\$ 43,132.55	
Funeral Lunch Donations	\$ 688.42	
Contribution/Check # 1023		
End of month balance	\$ 688.42	
Mrs.Floyd Burris Mission	\$ 750.68	
Check #		
Check #		
End of Month Balance	\$ 750.68	
Clothes Closet Fund	\$ 628.55	
Check #	\$ 125.00	
Contribution		
End of Month Balance	\$ 753.55	
Capital Fund - Balance beginning of month:	\$ 343.29	
Contribution	\$ 5.00	
End of month balance	\$ 348.29	
Savings Fund - Balance at beginning of month:	\$ 53.65	
Contribution		
Interest	\$ 9.92	
End of month balance	\$ 63.57	
The Fund - Balance at beginning of month:	\$ 40,970.29	
Fidelity - Balance of beginning of month:	\$ 78,926.72	
TOTAL MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT FUND		\$ 165,634.07

The Epistle

Financial Secretary Report 2016

	December	Year-To-Date
Pledges	\$ 6,337.00	\$ 75,515.00
Plate	\$ 106.00	\$ 1,843.20
Sunday School		
Total Offering	\$ 6,443.00	\$ 77,358.20
Special Offerings		
Initial Offering		\$ 161.00
OCWM	\$ 5.00	\$ 55.00
Food Pantry		\$ 258.70
One Hour of Sharing		\$ 130.00
Neighbors In Need		\$ 120.00
Christmas Fund		\$ 150.00
Breakfast		\$ 1,288.00
Recycling		
Rent		
School Supplies		
Donation		\$ 2,303.00
Misc:		
Boiler Inspection Refund		\$ 106.50
Funeral		\$ 450.00
Easter Flowers		\$ 140.00
Refund		\$ 121.82
Total Other Deposits	\$ 5.00	\$ 5,284.02
Total	\$ 6,448.00	\$ 82,642.22

2016 Annual Givings Range

000.00 - 200.00	5	1000.01 - 1500.00	2
200.01 - 300.00	1	1500.01 - 1800.00	2
300.01 - 500.00	4	1800.01 - 2500.00	5
500.01 - 600.00	1	2500.01 - 3800.00	6
600.01 - 700.00	4	3800.01 - 4500.00	3
700.01 - 1000.00	5	4500.01 - UP	3
		Total	41

Submitted by Financial Secretary - Paula Goudy

The Epistle
