

# The Bethany Letter

SUNDAY ~ JANUARY 22, 2012

VOLUME 2012

ISSUE NO. 3

Rev. Stephen Gehlert, Senior Minister

Rev. Mark Steiner, Visitation Minister

## ***Repentance... A Change ... That We Learn***

In the gospel passage from Mark's gospel for this Sunday, Jesus begins his ministry with the words, "The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe the good news." He then goes about calling disciples to follow him, become learners, students, servants, of the Kingdom of God that he is bringing to us.

These words and the actions of Jesus that follow, seem to imply that the repentance to which he calls us is something that must be learned, learned by following him. It's a process by which our thoughts are reshaped and our actions informed by a new perception of the nature of the world. The Greek word for repentance, "metanoia," literally means a change of mind about some ideal or attitude.

Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy suggests that metanoia may also be understood as "the unwillingness to continue." Transformation into God's Kingdom begins in our unwillingness to continue with things as they are. We give up our weariness with pretending to be what we are not as we admit that we are less than we imagine ourselves to be, yet also much more than we'd imagined we might become. This unwillingness to continue is an act of repentance, a change of perception, of heart and mind, and, ultimately, of behavior.

In Jesus' preaching and teaching, faith grows out of repentance, and turning to God is the beginning point of a process of transformation for one's whole being for life in God's Kingdom.

Later the Apostle Paul also understood repentance as a complete reworking of a person's nature and destiny. He describes in Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good, acceptable, and perfect."

How does this happen? How are we able not to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds? Well, if we follow the model of Jesus with his disciples, the transformation of repentance happens as we follow him. And what that's meant since his ascension and the birth of the church, is that we learn from him by being his disciples, following and serving him, through his body, the church. The original apostles called people to repentance, to be baptized, and to share in the church's life of prayer, fellowship, learning, and worship.

In the early church, those seeking to belong to the community of faith were required to participate in a period of instruction about the gospel following their initial repentance, their hearing Christ's call and turning toward him, in faith. They were introduced to the worship and mission of the congregation, but they were not permitted simply on the basis of the experience of the moment of turning to presume that they were fully incorporated in the body of Christ. Repentance was understood as a process of transformation that involved instruction in the content of the gospel, formation in the ethical responsibilities expected by Christ, and participation in the life of the community of believers.

This earliest form of Christian education tells us two things about what focus of education in the church should be today. 1. The purpose of Christian education is to enable repentance, enable the turning, the change of mind, to strengthen "the unwillingness to continue" with life as it had been. 2. Christian education is an *ongoing task* of enabling us to understand the gospel more fully and exploring the implications of what it means to turn toward God in both thought and action. Education in the church should always been seen in terms of this dual purpose of enabling an on-going process of transformation which helps us turn away from the world and toward the Kingdom of God.

Understanding repentance as a process of transformation away from the world and toward God, which is nurtured by on-going Christian education, raises important questions for every believer. 1. To what extent have I turned, changed my mind, become "unwilling to continue" in the ways of the world? 2. To what extent have I begun to turn, change my mind, and begun to take up the ways of God's kingdom? 3. How much of my time and energy am I willing to give to the learning that will nurture me in this process?

May God help us commit ourselves to that be people and to be a church that "is not conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of our minds."

With Hope for Our On-going Repentance,

*Steve*

# Youth

01/22	11:15a	Child Care/Annual Meeting
01/27	6:45p	Temple Israel Sabbath Service
02/05	8:00a	Super Bowl Sub Sale
02/12	TBA	Valentine Cookie Delivery



Happy Birthday to ...

*Helen Davis*

She will celebrate her birthday  
January 25<sup>th</sup>!

520 Meredith Lane #418  
Cuyahoga Falls, 44223

## COMMITTEE NIGHT

Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.

## BETHANY BUCKEYES

We welcome and encourage anyone 50 years and older to come and spend a fun-filled evening with dinner, cards and board games. If you have questions, call Nancy Read at 330/928-3002. **Reservations** must be made **NO LATER** than **January 27<sup>th</sup>** for the **February 3<sup>rd</sup> / 6:00 pm** gathering (330/ 923-5277).

### Items for Good Neighbors

During Epiphany, we are suggesting “Kid and Infant Items” for our Good Neighbors collection:

Jan. 29	Jam / Jelly	or	Baby Powder
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02/05	11:30a	Meal and Class
02/19	11:30a	Mentor Meal and Discussion

## Super Bowl Sub Sale

### Reviewers Agree!

Subs sold at the Super Bowl Sub Sale are  
*sensationally superior!*

And ... at only \$4.00 – a bargain!

So... Order yours Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup>  
and then ...

Pick them up Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>  
Don't Forget – Sales support our youth ministry!



## EOA HAS TALENT!

Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> 7:00  
p.m.

Trinity United Church of Christ  
3909 Blackburn Rd., NW C, Canton  
(corner of Fulton and Hills and Dales)

Come and experience great talent, great food and great fellowship, all for a great cause. Your generous donation will support the operations of the Eastern Ohio Association.

### Remember to save your

ACME receipts to help Bethany's Youth Fellowship. Just bring them to church ~ there are collection boxes at all the entrances. You will be supporting the youth's mission trip this year. **The ending date for receipts is FEBRUARY 19<sup>th</sup>.** So don't throw them away! You could mail them in too!

The Bethany Bunch  
(Children's Sunday School)



In our 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class we are discussing the meaning and importance of *The Lord's Prayer*. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade class is studying for their quiz competition with their parents. We are confident that they will prevail.

## Thank You for Viewing ~ *The Story of Stuff*

Thanks to those who came to view a challenging video about the social and environmental destructiveness and injustice of the global consumer culture and the values that drive it. One of the things mentioned briefly as a way to turn toward a new, more sustainable way of living, was to substitute sharing for shopping whenever possible. Hopefully, we can find ways to do that as a family of faith in the future.

## Thank You for the Just Peace Celebration

Thanks to everyone who shared the evening at New Trinity last Sunday – George Jensen who worked with Jeff Mosely to set up the event; Director, Beth McDevitt and the members of the Chancel, Seventh Day and Young Shepherds choirs who shared many group and individual offerings; and all who came in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and to witness the gift of friendship we share with our brothers and sisters in Christ from New Trinity. It was a blessing to share song and prayer, food and fellowship together in Christ's name!

## Would You Like to Know More about Bethany?

If you've been attending Bethany as a visitor and would like to know more about our congregation and the wider United Church faith family, please contact Pastor Steve at 330-923-5277 or [pastor@bethany.ald](mailto:pastor@bethany.ald). He'll be glad to talk to you and answer any questions you might have.

## Please extend a warm Bethany Welcome to the following who were received into membership last Sunday:

Adam and Christine Basaran	1817 Broad Blvd., Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
Kim Genung	2136 14 <sup>th</sup> Street, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
Jack and Margaret Holforty	1166 Inverness Lane, Stow, OH 44224
Frank Lid and Myrna McDougal	3242 Norwood St., Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
Jill Pinkerton	1809 Olympic Street, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
Jennifer Straley	1308 Hunters Lake Drive, West, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221

## Rosebuds on the altar are in honor of the baptisms of:

- † Audrey Ann Basaran *Audrey is the daughter of Adam and Cristina (Wolford) Basaran*
- † Jack Mathewson Keenan *Jack is the son of Scott and Nancy (Koghan) Keenan and the grandson of David and Holly Keenan.*
- † Also receiving the Sacrament of Baptism  
*Kim Genung; Jill Pinkerton; Jennifer Straley and daughter, Jady Straley*



## Bethany Needs Your Used Printer Cartridges!

Wondering how to dispose of your used printer cartridges? Bring them to Bethany! Just put them in the green printer cartridge box under the Green Team table in the social hall. We will make sure that they are recycled and earn a rebate that will help with our office supply expenses.

## Please remember in your prayers...

- † Ron Shultz, The Arbors
- † Mark Steiner, recovering from a broken ankle
- † Barbara Sunyecz, Select Specialty Hospital



## † Congratulations...

... to Dawn and Dan Filler on the birth of their twin girls, Elizabeth Rochelle and Rose Isabella, born Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>.



**Calendar - additions to ~ or ~ changes to the  
2012 monthly calendar mailed to you.  
(as of 1/19) January 23<sup>rd</sup> to February 5<sup>th</sup>**

1/23 7:00p Bell Choir Practice  
1/24 9:00a Staff Meeting  
10:00a Newsletter Deadline  
1/25 ~~Bible Study~~ canceled  
6:30p Band Rehearsal  
7:00p **Committee Night**  
1/26 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice  
1/27 6:45p YF – Temple Israel  
1/28

Names of Sunday Volunteers are published  
AHEAD OF THE SCHEDULED Sunday as a kindly  
*reminder* and early *thank you!*

If you are unable to volunteer the day you are  
scheduled, please remember to ... **and then**  
... **Find someone** to take your place  
... **Call the church office** so we may make  
the necessary changes on our schedules

**Order your SUPER BOWL SUBS  
Sunday ~ January 29<sup>th</sup>**

## Sunday, January 29, 2012

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.

### 8:30a Worship

9:15a Church School for Children and Adults

10:30a **Worship/** Children's Sunday School

11:30a Social Hour: Sr. High Class

### Volunteers for January 29<sup>th</sup>

Greeters: Sarah Scott / D. & D. Allison

Lay Reader: C. Eiber

Nursery: A. Cristino, H. Bowman, A. Keenan,  
N. Zeller, Z. Read

Special Music: TBA/ Chancel Choir

Ushers: T. Hermann, B. Charton, M. Seguin, M. Seymour,  
L. Short, K. Fratz, A. Jensen, L. Sheppard

Van Driver: C. Frederick

1/30 7:00p Bell Choir Practice  
9:00a Staff Meeting  
10:00a Newsletter Deadline

### February...

2/01 9:00a Bible Study (CE)  
6:30p Band Rehearsal  
2/02 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice  
2/03 6:00p **Bethany Buckeyes**  
2/04

## *Pick Up Your Super Bowl Subs*

## Sunday ~ February 5, 2012

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.

8:30a **Worship/** Communion

9:15a Church School for All Ages

10:30a **Worship/** Children's S.S.

11:30a Social Hour: Youth Committee & YF

11:30a Confirmation, Meal/Class

### Volunteers for February 5<sup>th</sup>

Greeters:

Lay Reader: M. Seymour

Nursery: J. Salisbury, A. Thompson, L. Rorrer,  
B. Read, M. Arnold

Special Music: Story & Song / Chancel Choir

Ushers: C. Hofmann, M. Jensen, J. Grazulis, J. Seymour,  
H. Bowman, L. Short, J. Nielson, K. Fratz

Van Driver: F. Read

*Join us for worship!*

# A Mother's Imagination

Still Speaking Daily Devotional  
January 17, 2012

## Excerpt from [John 2:1-11](#)

"Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'"

## Reflection by Lillian Daniel

You know, my mother thought I could do anything, too. She was always exaggerating my gifts. When it was time to apply to college she told me I should go to Harvard. When I explained that my grade point average was not represented anywhere in that school's statistics, she would say, "Oh, nonsense, just apply."

Once I started working, she was always giving me a promotion, telling people I was doing the work of my boss. When I tried to correct her, she would just keep talking. My churches were tripled in size; my first articles turned into books and a seat on the association's committee on ministry made me a bishop—all through the power of a mother's imagination.

Listening to my mother, you would have thought I was some kind of miracle worker, but I knew better, and so did Harvard.

So I have always delighted that the first miracle Jesus performs is the result of his mother's imagination. His mother tells him that they have run out of wine, and he says, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me?" He's as annoyed as anyone when his mother puts her enormous vision for him out there.

But Jesus actually was a miracle worker. And someone had to get him started.

Sometimes a mother's imagination is a miracle in itself.

## Prayer

*Dear God, this day, I pray for those who nag and those who brag. I pray for all the people who see possibilities in me long before I do. And I pray not to be annoyed by those people. You have put them here for a reason. Amen.*

## [The Stillspeaking Daily Devotional](#)

A short daily reflection on scripture, e-mailed every morning to subscribers. Lectionary based. Join others receiving these FREE devotionals. Each day of the week brings you a different writer.

<http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/daily-devotional>

## Scripture for Sunday January 22<sup>nd</sup> [Mark 1:14-20](#)

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." <sup>16</sup> As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea-- for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him. <sup>21</sup> They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHURCH IS ...

to establish a Christian congregation for worship,  
to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ,  
to celebrate the sacraments,  
to render loving service toward humanity,  
to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace,  
to advance the Realm of God at home and abroad.

(The Bethany Constitution)

