

Our United Church of Christ Connection – Why It Matters

Next Sunday we'll be welcoming Carol Barth, Interim Association Minister of the Eastern Ohio Association of the United Church of Christ (how's that for a title?) as our guest preacher. Carol will not only be preaching but during the Sunday School hour will share with us about the work of the United Church of Christ here in Northeast Ohio. To which you might respond, "why?" Even if she's a great preacher, why do we need to invite someone to share with us about the wider work of our denomination?

Over the years I have served and continue to serve on a number of committees of the Eastern Ohio Association (EOA). Other Bethany members have as well. To which you might also respond, "why?" Why would a busy pastor and equally busy members get involved in our denomination's work in our area?

Over the years Bethany has been a leader in financial support for the EOA and the wider UCC, committing ourselves to give \$37,500 this year (10.7% of our total budget or 12% of our local operating budget) to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). To which you might again respond, "why?" Why would we, with all of our needs, in this difficult economy, be so generous year after year in our support of the work of our denomination?

Here are a few answers to the "why?" question which I hope will be helpful (I'm indebted to Richard Hamm for the broad categories).

The United Church of Christ helps us do what can only be done, or can best be done, together.

Not many congregations are as blessed as Bethany in being able to provide a summer camp experience for our children and youth; they need to draw on the resources of a wider circle to provide such an experience (which will be blessed in having participants from a wider circle – ask Zack Read). Individual congregations can't create their own accredited graduate level theological schools, which are essential for Christians who value an educated clergy. Few congregations can develop a domestic and overseas mission program that truly fulfills Christ's mandate to "go into all the world."

The United Church of Christ nurtures a precious ethos of working for justice, peace, and Christian unity.

"Ethos" refers to the way we do things as a church: what we think is most important and what we think is less important, how we worship, how we govern ourselves, our characteristic attitudes. Being part of a wider faith family which goes back to the Protestant reformers and their emphasis on salvation by faith, to Congregational leaders who struggled to assert that ultimate authority for local church life rested in the members of that family of faith, seeking to discern God's will through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to abolitionists who spoke out against slavery and for racial justice, to suffragists who demanded full equality for women, to those who more recently have sought justice, peace, and unity with other Christians in a host of challenging settings.

The United Church of Christ provides for mutual accountability.

Just as individuals need to be personally accountable to someone, so do congregations. By offering us connections to the wider church and world, the UCC helps us to do more than just live for ourselves. It also offers us perspectives, insights, and wisdom that can enrich our understanding of Christ, the church, and what it means to be a Christian in today's world. Finally, the denomination provides ways of dealing with unhealthy members, pastors, and congregations, so that they do not become destructive.

So, why do we maintain this connection, serve so readily, and give so generously? Because, as Richard Hamm says, no congregation can be the body of Christ alone. The United Church of Christ helps us be who we're called to be. So, with gratitude for the work we share in Christ's name, I invite you to join me in welcoming Carol Barth next Sunday.

With Gratitude and Hope,

Steve



2011 / 2012

Oct. 15	5:00p	Prepare Family Promise Meal
Oct. 16	11:30a	Mentor Meal/Meeting
Oct. 23	10:30a	Lead Family Sunday Liturgy

Good Neighbors...

October 16	Can of Corn
October 23	Muffin or Corn Bread Mix
October 30	Box of Stuffing Mix



10/16	6:30p	Halloween Planning
10/23	5:30p	Halloween Planning / Oktoberfest
10/30	2:00 p	Set Up and Host Halloween Party

Bethany Kitchen



Bethany Kitchen's next meal will be served on Saturday, October 15th

Bethany Kitchen provides a free luncheon for those in the community who need a meal from 11:30a to 1:00p.

☞ As always the Kitchen needs volunteers from 10:30a to 12:00p for setting up and from 1:30 to 2:00p for cleaning up. If you can stay for the full time, your presence will be appreciated.

All are welcome!

Welcome Rev. Carol Barth

Combined Adult Class – October 16

Carol Barth is interim Association Minister of the Eastern Ohio Association of the UCC. As our guest adult class speaker and preacher she'll be sharing about the tremendous challenges facing the church in the 21st century and the role of the Association and churches like Bethany in seeking to be faithful in the midst of them. Please come and welcome Carol at 9:30 in the Social Hall.

FINANCE COMMITTEE Challenge

Have you been out to dinner lately? Filled your gas tank? Or done any grocery shopping? Bethany will make a profit of about 4% on the card purchase. Currently our profit from gift cards is \$1015.00. Each Sunday at the Social Hour someone from the Finance Committee will have cards available for purchase or order.

→ **On Sunday, Oct. 16**, the Finance Committee challenges you to purchase or order cards. An anonymous donor will tithes the total of cards purchased or ordered for that day. What a great way to support Bethany. *The Finance Committee*

Esperanza Mission Trip Meeting

The next informational meeting on the Esperanza Mission Trip will be **Sunday, October 16th** after 10:30 worship; meet in the Adult Library. We celebrate the growing participation of Bethany members in this life-changing experience. The next trip is scheduled for February 18 – 25th, 2012. Questions, call Mr. Bill Leas at 330-673-3389.

Men's Volunteer Breakfast

It is a great time for men of the church to get together to share faith, food, and fellowship together; as well as a few chores with which the custodians could use some help. The men gather the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. (Next breakfast **October 19th**) You can help make this time possible by providing breakfast for 8-10 men once during the year. If you'd like to help in this way call Nancy Read at 330-928-3002.



Bethany Oktoberfest

October 23, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

For the Joy is our Stewardship theme this year, so the committee thought it would be good to invite the Bethany family to gather, simply *for the joy* of being together. We'll have Jack Scott's *Der Doppeladler* German band and some great German food – brats, sauerkraut, potato salad, and dessert. We'll share – very briefly – about our *For the Joy* theme but the focus will be on having a good time together. Hope to see you there (brat in hand), for a very special Sunday night.

P.S. – We're looking for some lederhosen to borrow; if you have some to lend, please contact the office.

EOA Annual Fall Business Meeting

All are invited to the EOA Meeting on **Saturday October 29th**. The beautiful gothic sanctuary of First United Church of Christ, 201 Fair Ave., NW, New Philadelphia will be the location of "Renewing in the Spirit." Keynote Speaker: Rev. Jim Oates. Registration deadline is Thursday, October 20; \$15 per person (includes a buffet breakfast). Child care will be provided if needed but only to those who request it on the registration form by the deadline. (The Bethany office has registration forms and more information if needed. Please call.)

Halloween Party

October 30, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Octagon Shelter, Truxell Road, CVNP

Last year's party at the rustic Octagon Shelter in beautiful Cuyahoga Valley National Park was received with such enthusiasm that the Youth Committee decided to have it there again this year. We'll have lots of fun and games and great treats to share. Mark the date on your calendar and plan to come. Parents, your welcome to stay at the party or go for a hike in the park and return later.

"FOUND & FORGIVEN"

A Musical by Sharon Alberson

Based on the Story of the Prodigal Son

Sunday, November 5th 3:00 & 7:00 PM
Trinity United Church of Christ

A spaghetti dinner will be served between shows, 4:30-6:30 p.m. The Market Path, a fair trade store supported by First Grace UCC, will offer items for sale and Williard UCC will offer a basket auction. Tickets for the performance and dinner are available through the EOA/WRA Support Center or at faithmusicals@gmail.com. All proceeds from the day will benefit Akron Urban United Churches of Christ: East Market Street, Miller Ave., Williard and Trinity.

The Stephen Series ...

...is a complete system for training and organizing lay people to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around our congregation. For more information, contact Bethany's Stephen Leader-Tammy Jensen.

Mission News: On October 16th we will provide envelopes for The UCC's Special Mission offering "*Neighbors in Need*". The *Neighbors in Need* offering supports works of justice and compassion to plant seeds in congregations and organizations for programs that creatively address systemic issues of injustice on the local, regional, national, or international level.

For more information on Neighbors in Need visit: www.ucc.org/nin/

Mission: 1 – That They May All Be One

Mission: 1 is one united church on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food related injustice. Mission: 1 is an opportunity to make real Jesus' prayer for his disciples: "That they may all be one." It is also an opportunity to live out our faith—in unity—by offering the worship that God most desires from us: loosening the bonds of injustice and sharing our bread with the hungry.

For the first 11 days of November (11.1.11-11.11.11), United Church of Christ congregations, colleges, seminaries, and health and human service agencies, will join together in a collective mission campaign to collect more than 1 million food items for local food banks, raise \$111,111 in online donations for Neighbors in Need and \$111,111 for East Africa famine relief, and write 11,111 letters to Congress (in support of Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters campaign) asking that U.S. foreign assistance be reformed to be more effectively serve the world's poorest people.

We're asking for your help in meeting two goals. First, please continue to bring items for Good Neighbors so we can achieve the donation goal of 1, 111 items. Second, please send a letter to Congress. Sample letters are available on the table in the social hall. Please take one and write your representatives so that we can meet the goal of sending 111 letters.

There is a video at www.eoaucc.org and more detailed information at <http://www.ucc.org/mission1>.

The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-A-Thon

The Incredible Good Neighbors Stock-A-thon is formally at an end. Of course the need never ends and so we'll continue to donate whatever is collected.

Thank you so much for the items you donated. Over the last six months we have collected and donated over 1,000 items: food, school supplies, toiletries and baby items. Your generosity and the way you stayed with it for such a long time is greatly appreciated.

Blessing of the Animals – Thanks!

The weather was wet and chilly, so we had to move inside, but that didn't seem to dampen the spirits of the various creatures who gathered (human and otherwise) for this special service. Thanks to Youth Fellowship for setting up and hosting and to all who assisted with leading the worship and the music. But most of all, thanks to the many who brought your beautiful pets to share with your faith family and in the time of blessing.

Remember in your prayers...

- † Don Hafliger, home
- † Ron Shultz, home
- † Olive Devine, Haven Homes



† “Special Thoughts” to Bethany members who are unable to worship with us Sunday mornings. Please keep them in your prayers and keep in touch with a call or a card!

Congratulations to Kirk & Melissa Fenn on the birth of their daughter, Kayla Anne. She was born September 30th and joins big sister Isabel in the Fenn family.

Altar Flowers...

Thank you to everyone who chooses to honor or remember loved ones by selecting a date to place flowers on the altar on Sunday mornings. This not only graces our service but often provides a bit of cheer to a shut in. Please remember to complete the pink slip so information can be included bulletin.

The Bethany Bunch

(Children's Sunday School)

Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Sunday School Class

After we prepared our altar and collected the offering, it was time for our class's puppet friends Butterfly Flower (turtle) and Priscilla (kitten) to join us. They were arguing and fighting when they came out of their basket! We talked about how important it is to get along with each other and to follow rules. God gave Moses ten rules for people to follow. We reinforced our counting skills and number recognition and made our own ten commandment slates. Next week we greet. You can find us at the North door before the 10:30 service.

News from the Fifth & Sixth Grade SS Class:

God is working in our class in a Powerful way as we continue our discussions about how to apply what Jesus taught us to our everyday lives. The students are working on the lessons from the first five Books of the Old Testament or the Torah for the four weeks of October. We began with the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments and had a very lively discussion about Rules and God's Guidelines for behavior. The way we treat one another is one of our favorite topics for discussion so this lesson was “right up our alley”. The Class was given bookmarks with the Ten Commandments on them and they decided that we would come up with another list to go on the back...a list of how we want to be treated and how we should treat others. Kim and I were impressed with the class and their ready desire to work on such a noble task.

The Christmas Pageant is next up on our things to do list and it promises to be another good one. We are always looking for projects to work on; completing our Kite Building for Pentecost in May. After the Holidays we are looking forward to building our Burnt Matchstick Crosses. Thanks for sending your students to our class; Kim and I are having a great time with them!

George Jensen

2011 Special Opportunities: Worship, Education, Service, & Fellowship

The original Greek word for church was *Ecclesia*, meaning “the gathered people,” those Christ had gathered to do God’s work in the world. Bethany does that work in many ways: giving God thanks and praise in worship, learning and growing in faith, serving others, and sharing in fellowship. Everyone matters; everyone is needed. Here’s a list of opportunities from now until Advent.

Where is Jesus calling you to get involved?

October 16, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 am – Association Minister Carol Barth

In worship and adult class Carol will share about challenges facing today’s church.

October 16, 11:30 am – Celebrate 20 Years of Bethany Kitchen!

Celebrate this special mission anniversary and thank our many faithful volunteers!

October 23, 6:30 pm – October/Steward Fest

The Stewardship Committee offers great brats, music, and reasons for gratitude.

October 30, 9:30 am – Mission Committee 5th Sunday Brunch

Come for brunch and learn more about an important mission.

October 30, 5:00 pm – Halloween Party at Octagon Shelter

The Youth Fellowship hosts a gathering for Bethany children in a beautiful setting.

November 13, 8:30 & 10:30 am – Dedication Sunday

Rev. Rich Plant preaches on our theme For the Joy: brunch follows worship.

November 18, evening – Mission Spaghetti Dinner/Dessert Auction

Help support Bethany’s many missions by sharing a great meal and dessert.

November 19, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm – Bethany Kitchen

Help welcome our guests to this time of food and fellowship.

November 20, 9:30 am – Adult Class – Fair Trade Shopping

Fair Trade products and baked goods from our Chancel Choir for sale during Social Hour

November 23, 7:30 pm – Thanksgiving Eve Communion

Remember and give thanks to God, the true source of all we have and are!

**Calendar - additions to ~ or ~ changes to the
2011 monthly calendar mailed to you.**
(as of Sept. 29) **October 3rd to October 16th**

10/10 9:30a Prayer Shawl Ministry
6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)
7:00p Bell Choir Practice
7:00p 2nd year Mentor Meeting
10/11 9:00a Staff Meeting
10:00a Newsletter Deadline
6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)
7:15p Finance Committee Mtg.
10/12 9:00a Bible Study (CE)
6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)
7:30p Consistory
10/13 6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)
7:15p Chancel Choir Practice
10/14 6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)
10/15 11:30a Bethany Kitchen
5:00p Confirmands to prepare meal for F.P.
6:00p F.P. Meal (SH)

Sunday ~ October 16, 2011

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.
† Rev. Carol Barth, guest preacher

8:00a 7th Day Meets
8:30a Worship
9:15a Church School for Children/ Combined Adult
Class w/ Rev. Barth, EOA
10:30a Worship/ Children's Sunday School
11:30a Social Hour: *Bethany Kitchen Celebration!*
11:30a Confirmand/ Mentor, Meal/Class
11:30a Esperanza Meeting (Adult Libr.)
6:00p Youth Committee Meeting
6:30p YF – Halloween Planning

10/17 7:00p Bell Choir Practice
10/18 9:00a Staff Meeting
10:00a Newsletter Deadline
7:30p Kerygma
10/19 8:00a Men's Breakfast
10:00a Bible Study (CE)
10/20 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice
10/21
10/22 (SH) Rsrvd. All day

Sunday ~ October 23, 2011

† Nursery Available 9:15 to 11:30 a.m.
† Family Sunday – Children remain in worship

8:00a Bell Choir Practice
8:30a Worship
9:15a Church School for Children and Adults
10:30a Worship
11:30a Social Hour Host: S. Roach Class
11:30a 7thDay Practice
5:30p YF Halloween Planning
6:30p Octoberfest/Stewardship

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

Volunteers for October 16th

Greeters: T.&S. Ocepek / R.&P. Haft
Lay Reader: H. Cool
Nursery: Jackie Salsbury, Hilda Bowman, Beth Lees,
Eddie Frederick, Dominique Bridges
Special Music: 7thDay / Chancel Choir
Ushers: C. Hofmann, F. Read, S. Truby, S. Ward,
H. Bowman, K. Fratz, A. Jensen, R. Berie
Van Driver: L. Goodwin

Volunteers for October 23rd

Greeters: H & D Koudela / R & J Lovell
Nursery: L. Weiss, A. Thompson, S. Keenan,
H. Bedillion, J. Nielsen
Special Music: Bells, Son Singers, Young Shepherds
Ushers: R. Holle, H. Walker, M & R Bowmaster,
M. Spring, N. Buck, S. Holle
Van Driver: B. Read

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