

THE BEACON

Published monthly in the interest of
St. Paul United Church of Christ
New Bremen, Ohio

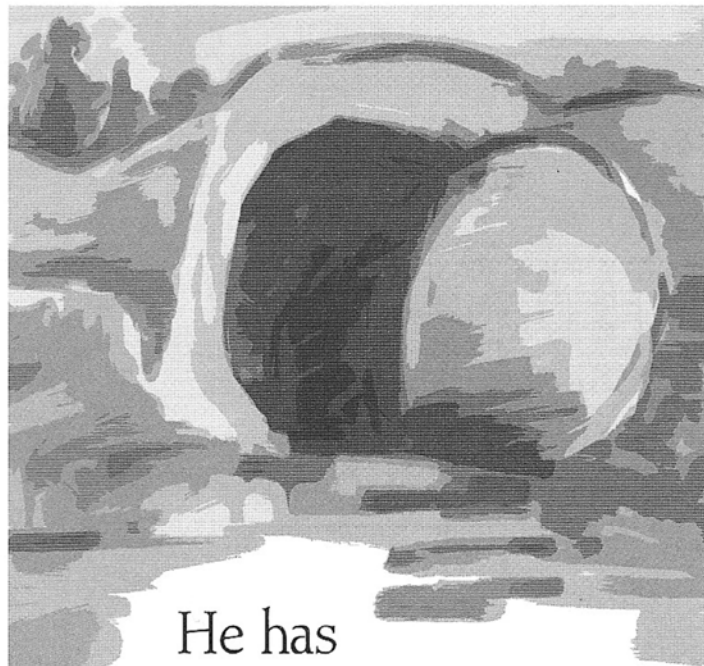
“Empowered Christians Serving God’s People”

VOL. 65, No. 4



Rev. Rebecca Erb Strang, Pastor

April, 2014



He has
given us a new
birth into a living hope
through the resurrection
of Jesus Christ
from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, NRSV

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Youth

Serving St. Paul Church

Staff

Rev. Becky Erb Strang Pastor
 Katie Jackson Director of Youth Ministries
 Dot Koeper Church Office Secretary
 Anna Hoelscher Lay Minister of Visitation
 Dick Hudson Organist
 Jim Strang Music Director
 Connie O'Neill Saturday Night Choir Director
 Janet Eilerman Financial Secretary
 Barbara Holdren Bookkeeper
 Dennis & Linda Hainline Ed. Building Custodian
 Greg Hainline Sanctuary Custodian
 Ralph Plattner Groundskeeper
 John Mohrman Building Maintenance Technician
 Kathy Topp Beacon/Web Page Editor

2014 Church Council (meets 2nd Tue)

(Transacts routine business of the church)

John Voress President
 Mike Holdren Vice President
 Kathy Topp 1st yr. Recording Secretary
 Randy Clark 2nd yr. Treasurer
 Tim May Sr. Elder
 Brenda Haynes Jr. Elder
 John Mohrman 3rd yr. Trustee
 Allen Bushman 2nd yr. Trustee
 TBA 1st yr. Trustee
 Mark Dicke 2nd yr. Deacon
 Myra Hanenkraft 2nd yr. Deacon
 Ragan Miller 2nd yr. Deacon
 Bill Tostrick 2nd yr. Deacon
 George Voress 2nd yr. Head. Deacon
 Carol Wilson 2nd yr. Deacon
 Lisa Davidson 1st yr. Deacon
 Jeff Dicke 1st yr. Deacon
 Nelson Erb 1st yr. Deacon
 Phil Hemmelgarn 1st yr. Deacon
 Dee Schroer 1st yr. Deacon
 Gene Topp 1st yr. Deacon

Board of Christian Education (meets 3rd Tue)

(Partnering with Families, the St. Paul UCC Board of Christian Education strives to guide our children through weekly educational opportunities and ongoing mission outreach)

Shelly Smart Sunday school Supt.
 Brook Schmitmeyer Asst. Sunday school Supt.
 Lisa Weigandt Representative
 Terri Mullins Representative
 Linda Tinsley Representative
 Kristi Voisard Representative

Pastoral Relations Committee

Tom Thieman Chairman
 Jan Fiser Member
 Amy Barhorst Member

Membership Committee

(Promotes/encourages membership and participation in St. Paul activities; church publicity; confirmation reunion)

Tom Braun Bev Poppe
 Dennis Dicke Rev. Becky Erb Strang
 Rebekkah Fry Sandy Thieman
 John Gilberg, Vice Chr. John Voress
 Cindy Newman, Chr. Dick Watcke

Stewardship Board

(Secures pledges; promotes stewardship programs)

Ann Kuhn 3rd yr.
 Sally Wissman 3rd yr.
 Kim Quellhorst 2nd yr.
 Deb Hirschfeld 1st yr.
 Gary Wiedeman 1st yr., Chr.

Mission Team

(Raises awareness/promotes mission programs)

Art & Cathy Barnes Bev Poppe
 Sharon Fiely Amy Scheer
 John & Joyce Gilberg Dee Schroer
 Marta Hoelscher Jenn Snider
 Larry & Ann Kuhn Kristi Voisard
 Dot Ouwerkerk Gary Wehmeyer, Chr.

Worship Committee (meets bi-monthly)

Tim May Sr. Elder, Chairman
 Rev. Becky Erb Strang Pastor
 Dick Hudson Organist
 Jim Strang Music Director
 George Voress Head Deacon

Budget Committee (meets in August)

(Prepares church budget for following year)

John Voress Church Council President
 Mike Holdren Church Council Vice President
 Kathy Topp Church Council Secretary
 Randy Clark Church Council Treasurer
 Tim May Church Council Sr. Elder
 John Mohrman Church Council Sr. Trustee
 Gary Wiedeman Chairman, Stewardship Board

Board of Controls (meets Mar-Jun-Oct)

(Administers St. Paul Memorial Fund)

John Voress Church Council President
 Mike Holdren Church Council Vice President
 John Mohrman Church Council Sr. Trustee
 Terry Wissman 3rd yr.
 Don Scheer 2nd yr.
 Burt Fiser 2nd yr.

Financial Advisory Committee

(Consults with bookkeeper regarding church investments)

Don Scheer Member
 Bob Wierwille Member
 John Wierwille Member



FROM OUR PASTOR

This holy season, I share with you a poem by Ann Weems in Reaching for Rainbows.

*I think on Easter morning we should throw confetti in church!
No?
What about a little fanfare?*

*A deafening drum roll?
A three-minute standing ovation?
What? Have we had the drums beaten out of us
That we in the celebrative community can't really
Get excited
About God's aliveness?
About God's love given to us unconditionally?
Have we given Easter to the lily bearers, the bunny rabbits, the patent leather shoes?
Let's face it:
We live as if we don't believe in Easter.*

*We're the crowd—
Easily swayed,
Easily scared,
Easily calling for blood.
We're the good church people
Who can't believe Jesus meant love one another—
Not all the one anothers,
Not drug addicts and criminals.
We hate injustice when it's injustice toward us;
We love mercy when it's mercy for us;
We walk humbly with our God when it's convenient.
We're Babe Believers who resist the resurrection;
We're Christmas Christians who are very good at
Celebrating Christ's birth.
We can cling to the Baby.
We're even Crucifixion Christians,
Agonizing, sympathizing,
Relating to the Hero on the Cross.
We can rock a Baby;
We can weep for a Dead Man;
But what can we do with a 33-year-old who won't let
the story end?*

*Easter scares us
Because we're the people who can't believe
That God gives us abundant Life;
We think we have to earn it.
In our pull-yourself-up-by-your-own-bootstraps society
It's hard to remember that God doesn't buy the self-made man.
So we in the church spend our lives showing God
What good people we are,
What achievers we are,
How much we deserve God's love.
We want to pay our own way,
But Easter says it's already been paid!
Easter says, no matter how prodigal,
We can go home again!
Let's celebrate that amazing grace*

*That in Christ's resurrection
We are still loved even at our most outrageous.
The Lord has given us the music;
All we need do is dance it!
Come to the Easter party.*

Peace,
Pastor Becky

HOLY WEEK OBSERVANCES		
Apr 13 Palm Sun	Worship w/Rite of Confirmation	10:15 a.m.
Apr 17 Maundy Thu	Fish fry Sponsored by Mission Team	5:00-7:00 p.m.
Apr 17 Maundy Thu	Healing Service w/communion	7:30 p.m.
Apr 18 Good Fri	Ecumenical worship at St. Peter's Church	7:00 p.m.
Apr 19	NO Saturday worship service	
Apr 20 Easter	Sunrise service w/communion	7:00 a.m.
Apr 20 Easter	Pancake breakfast Sponsored by youth	8:00-9:45 a.m.
Apr 20 Easter	Worship w/communion	10:15 a.m.
Apr 20 Easter	Worship at Elmwood Assisted Living	2:00 p.m.

CONFIRMATION FAITH STATEMENTS SHARED

You are invited to the Assembly Room/Chapel on Wednesday, April 9, at 7:00 p.m. to hear our 14 youth and young adults share their Faith Statements. The Church Council will host a reception following this event. Youth will be confirmed the following Sunday, April 13, at 10:15 a.m.

HERITAGE MANOR AND ELMWOOD COMMUNITY WORSHIP SERVICES

You are invited to worship with our neighbors at Heritage Manor in Minster on Thursday, April 3, at 10:15 a.m.

You are also invited to worship with our friends at Elmwood Community on Easter afternoon, April 20, at 2:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

NORTHWEST OHIO ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

You are invited to attend the Northwest Ohio Association Spring Meeting on Saturday, April 26, at St. Paul's UCC/St. Marys. If you would like to register, please see Pastor Becky.

**THE SPIRIT OF CREATIVITY:
A HANDS-ON BIBLE STUDY**

On the remaining April Thursdays in Lent, Pastor Becky and Katie Jackson will lead a hands-on Bible study in the craft room from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Each evening we will explore a different biblical text before embarking on a creative/artistic journey.

This Bible study is open to youth sixth grade and up and to adults of all ages. No artistic skills are needed or required—just an open heart and a willingness to explore your spirituality.

BLESSING OF ANIMALS: APRIL 27

Animals and pets are welcome (along with their owners) for a Blessing of Animals on the lawn between the Parsonage and Sanctuary on Sunday, April 27, at 3:30 in the afternoon. Following the brief worship service and blessings, treats for humans and critters will be provided and enjoyed. Questions? See Pastor Becky.

HOLY HUMOR WEEKEND

For centuries, Christians the world over have celebrated Holy Humor Weekend—the weekend immediately following Easter as a reminder that God played a joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. Saturday and Sunday worship services April 26 and 27 will be filled with laughter, knock-knock jokes, and fun. All are welcome!

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS!

If St. Paul UCC/New Bremen has become your spiritual home, you are invited to consider taking the step of becoming of member of our faith family. A New Member Orientation Session will be held on Sunday, April 27, at 11:30 a.m. Members will be received into the life of the congregations during worship services on May 3 and 4.

Questions? Contact Cindy Newman, Membership Team Chair, or Pastor Becky.

MAUNDY THURSDAY HEALING SERVICE

Traditionally, Maundy Thursday service is for remembering Christ's Last Supper and the foot washing of the disciples. All are invited to worship on April 17 at 7:30 for Holy Communion and Healing: lighting of candles, washing of hands, and healing prayers. This service will be led by the Called to Care Team, the Chancel Choir, the Elders, and Pastor Becky.

ECUMENICAL GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

All are invited to St. Peter's Church for an ecumenical Good Friday worship on April 18 at 7:00 p.m.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for celebrating the twentieth anniversary of my ordination last month! A glorious time was had by all! Thank you also for the New Bremen throw and the Massage Clinic certificates! You are the best!

Blessings,
Becky

Mission

HUMAN TRAFFICKING – MISSION FOR APRIL

The monthly mission, for April, is human trafficking. Many of us may not be aware that across the world millions of people, mostly women and children, are being kept against their will and are forced to work as laborers or in the sex trade industry. This issue is estimated to be a \$36 billion-a-year industry, globally.

In most third world and developing countries, woman and children are not respected, especially if they are lower class. They may be lured in to this life or sold by their own flesh and blood, and governments may turn the other way or even be participants in these crimes. Few victims are able to escape this existence alive.

We are very fortunate to live in a country with equal rights for all. Our laws are meant to protect us whether we are rich or poor, male or female, black or white. However, the U.S. is not immune to these incredibly heinous acts against humanity. Human trafficking is happening in our own society on a daily basis and is a \$10 billion industry in the United States alone. Sadly, it is everywhere to a degree. In fact, the hub for all human trafficking here in the U.S. is Atlanta, Georgia, where politicians and businessmen fly in everyday for meetings and conferences.

This modern day slavery is the human rights obstacle we must overcome this century, through prevention, education, advocacy and legislation. Thankfully, there are organizations in place to assist in freeing and counseling these victims. Polaris Project, an organization based out of Washington D.C., is a leader in the fight to end modern-day slavery. Polaris Project is transforming the way communities respond to human trafficking in the U.S. and globally. Polaris Project operates the 24-hour National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline, advocates for strong laws to help victims and prosecute traffickers, provides lifesaving services to survivors, and is a respected source for training and information.

During the month of April, money collected for our church's Human Trafficking mission will be sent to Polaris Project to aid in the continuation of transforming the way communities and governments respond to human trafficking in the U.S. and globally, as well as, to assist victims in their freedom and recovery.

Jenn Snider, The Mission Team

DISASTER KITS NEEDED

The month of April is again the time for us to help those who have been through a disaster experience this past year by filling CLEAN UP BUCKETS AND ASSEMBLING PERSONAL CARE KITS.

Please see the list of items needed for both. Buckets will be provided by members of the Mission Team.

Thank you again for your generosity.

The Mission Team

**REVIVAL OF MAUNDY THURSDAY FISH FRY
APRIL 17th**

It has been many years since our last Maundy Thursday Fish Fry and it is time to renew that old tradition. Yes, the Mission Team will be preparing pollack fish starting at 5:00 p.m. and serving until 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday services will be held in the sanctuary at 7:30 p.m.

The menu will include fish, cole slaw, applesauce, rye bread, and homemade desserts. Coffee, water, and milk will also be served, all for a free-will offering for the benefit of the Project of the Year (Lutheran church clinic in El Salvador).

Come and enjoy the food and the fellowship before the worship service at 7:30.

The Mission Team

**TEN WAYS TO CELEBRATE
EARTH DAY THIS MONTH**

1. Shop the community garage sales.
2. Donate or sell items you don't want or need anymore.
3. Spend more time outdoors - walk, ride a bike, or sit and read.
4. Start a compost pile for yard and food waste.
5. Plant a tree.
6. Open blinds and curtains for natural light instead of turning on lights.
7. Borrow a book from the library instead of buying new.
8. Make or buy a rain barrel for your garden or indoor plants.
9. Recycle away from home (Many people do not recycle outside of their household).
10. Buy fresh foods and use homemade recipes when possible. It's much better than buying over-processed and packaged goods.

The Mission Team

News & Events

BUSY TWELVE NEEDS HELP

We are having difficulty having enough tops for our quilts. This involves sewing quilt blocks together. The quilt blocks are cut and designed in place. All we need is someone to assemble them. If you have any interest in doing this or finding out more about the project, please contact Edith Wissman at 419-629-2513. We do not want to discontinue this project of giving a quilt to each newborn in our congregation, but we do need some help. Please consider this, as you could do it at home and at your convenience.

Thank you for your support in the past.

The Busy Twelve

**AUGLAIZE COUNTY CRISIS CENTER
REQUESTS HELP**

A large box has been placed on the stage marked "Crisis Center" in response to this request:

The Auglaize County Crisis Center is a family violence program that provides shelter as one component of their programs. While residing at the shelter, families receive food, shelter, case management, legal advocacy and programs that assist them in moving forward toward an independent self-directed life. All of this is provided at no charge to the residents. The average number of residents housed at the shelter is 3-4. The year 2013 saw those numbers far exceed the average. At one time, the shelter housed seven families all at the same time! Because of the increased numbers, we find the supply cupboards almost bare. We hope this to be a short-term problem until another Day of Caring can be held, but, until then, we are asking for your help in restocking our supplies. Following is a "needs" list that might be helpful when you are doing your shopping. Please consider adding an item or two for the Crisis Center:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Dishwasher soap | Peanut Butter |
| Kleenex | Canned Fruit |
| Laundry Soap | Boxed Potatoes |
| Dryer Sheets | Cereal |
| Kleenex | Box Dinners |
| Baby Shampoo | Spaghetti |
| Children's toothpaste | Spaghetti Sauce |
| Children's toothbrushes | Raisins |
| Bath Soap | Cake Mixes |
| Razors | Brownie Mixes |
| Toilet Paper | Frosting |
| | Pudding |

The Crisis Center thanks you for your consideration in assisting with the needs of the agency and the families it serves.

Sandy Thieman

Please join us at the **BENEFIT AUCTION FOR THE AUGLAIZE COUNTY CRISIS CENTER**
A family violence program that offers: a window of hope!
Thursday, April 24, 2014 – 5:00 p.m.
Jr. Fair Building, Wapakoneta Fairgrounds.
All new items, gift certificates, getaway weekends, sports tickets, autographed items & more!
By Myers Auction Service.
Lunch stand by American Legion Post 330.
A United Way participating agency.

SENIOR/RETIREE LUNCHEON

The March senior/retiree luncheon treated those who attended to a delicious meal that included Lake Erie perch, compliments of Tom & Sandy Thieman. The April luncheon will be held on **April 10**. Come – find out what's cookin'. Please call the church office (419-629-2502) to let us know you'll be there!

Senior Luncheon Committee

MMM—MMM GOOD!

On **April 10-11-12**, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., during New Bremen's Community Garage Sales, the Women's Service Group will be holding a **PLANT, PIE AND BAKED GOODS SALE** in the auditorium at St. Paul Church. All proceeds will be given for local aid.

Come and shop at the youths' Rummage Sale with bargains galore, then take home some delicious pies, plants and other homemade baked items.

Ann Hudson and Ann Kuhn, Co-Chairwomen
Women's Service Group

PAGE TURNERS

When Carolyn and Sean Savage learned that their fertility doctor had transferred the wrong embryo into Carolyn's body and that she was now pregnant with another couple's child, they embarked on a journey unlike any other. Inconceivable, by Carolyn and Sean Savage, is a riveting story of sacrifice, love and the meaning of motherhood. Join the Page Turners, Monday, **April 21**, at 1:00 p.m. in the Library for a discussion of this true story.

The selection for May will be Loving Frank, a novel by Nancy Horan, about Frank Lloyd Wright. Books chosen for Page Turners are available at the local library.

Sandy Thieman

CONFIRMATION REUNION

The final confirmation reunion is set for Sunday, **May 4**, 2014, after the morning worship service. Everyone is welcome to attend! Please call the church office by April 28, 2014, to make a reservation to attend.

Cindy Newman
Membership Committee

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Mark your calendars! Vacation Bible School will be held **July 7-11** at Holy Redeemer Church from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Weirid Animals "Where Jesus' love is one-of-a-kind" is this year's theme. Stay tuned for more information.

Lisa Weigandt

Meetings

MEN'S CLUB

The Men's Club will meet on Saturday, **April 5**, at 8:00 a.m. at Speedway Lanes.

John Voress

MISSION TEAM

There will be a meeting of the Mission Team on Sunday, **April 6**, 2014, in the Library after worship. We are always looking for new people and new ideas to serve the church in this capacity. Feel free to join us.

Gary Wehmeyer

Thank You

Thank you, to all of you who came to the soup and sandwich luncheon on Sunday, March 16, after church services. We hope everyone enjoyed the fellowship and delicious soup and sandwiches and all of the many variety of desserts. Over \$400 was raised for the Mission Project of the Year. Thank you to the ladies who prepared the food, to the youth who traveled to El Salvador in the past, the clean-up crew, and those who donated desserts or helped in any way. Again, thanks for your generosity.

The Mission Team

UGH – SNOW!

We speak for many, many St. Paul members as we thank our wonderful "snow crew." What an amazing job they did keeping the sidewalks and driveways clear. Our members were able to attend church and other activities without the danger of slippery snow and ice.

The Dan Voress family, John Voress and Gene Topp are to be commended for being so dedicated and committed to removing the snow over and over and over again this winter.

Thank you! Thank you!

Larry and Ann Kuhn

Thanks to Rev. Becky Strang and Anna Hoelscher for their many visits and prayers for Charles Waesch.

Thanks to the Busy Twelve and members of St. Paul Church for all their prayers, cards and visits over the years while Charles was a resident of The Golden Valley Nursing Home. Charles and his family greatly appreciate all the support and remembrances from your wonderful church family.

Thanks again.

James and Judy Waesch
David and Laura Einstein and family
Tim and Julia Gottschalk and family
Russell and Carol Mogen and family
Tony and Brenda Jones and family

Hello Friends,

Thank you for the beautiful flower arrangement for Mom's celebration. They added a wonderful glow to this special service.

The family of Sue [Mrs. Ralph] Quellhorst

Dear Rev. Becky Strang & UCC congregation:

Thank you to Rev. Becky for her hospital visits and prayers. They were very much appreciated and welcome.

Also a big thank you for all the cards and prayers from the choir, women's group and the congregation. Your support and prayers have meant a lot.

Blessing to all,
Ann Hudson

APRIL GREETERS

Apr 6

East Kim Hemmelgarn family
North Lance & Deb Lear
South Bill & Barbara Tostrick

Apr 13 Palm Sunday

East Robert & Linda Rump
North Keith May & Steven Meyer
South Roland Dicke & grandchild

Apr 20 Easter (7:00 a.m.)

South Lloyd Schroer & family

Apr 20 Easter (10:15 a.m.)

East Tom & Sandy Thieman
North James & Diane Gilberg
South Tom & Becky Quellhorst

Apr 27

East Bev Poppe & Deb Gibson
North Greg & Lisa Thobe
South Donna & Kelli Schmitmeyer

SATURDAY ACCOMPANISTS

Apr 5 Sharon Chaney
Apr 12 Connie O'Neill & Sat. Evening Chorus
Apr 19 (No Saturday evening worship)
Apr 26 Ethel Mesloh

APRIL WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 3 Mark & Kelly Dicke
Apr 4 Michael & Judy Dammeyer
Apr 4 Duane & Alice Hartwig
Apr 4 Bill & Barbara Tostrick
Apr 6 Jim & Terri Mullins
Apr 8 Rodney & Abigail Suchland
Apr 10 Anthony & Cresta Ritter
Apr 15 Mark & Lori Winner
Apr 17 Rob & Nina Meyer
Apr 17 Brad & Kim Waterman
Apr 18 Michael & Myra Hanenkratt
Apr 18 John & Shelly Zeller
Apr 21 Duane & Alice Hegemier

RECORD BOOK

Called home:

Barbara A. Schmidt died on March 25, 2014, at the age of 87 years. A memorial service as held on March 28, 2014, and burial followed at German Protestant Cemetery, New Bremen, OH.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Change of address:

Brandi Schwable, 106-1/2 N. Main St., Minster, OH 45865-1120

Jessica Blair, 216 W. Spring St., New Knoxville, OH 45871-9752

Kerry Loney, 131 Franklin St., Sidney, OH 45365-2713

Tony Tontrup, 3112 Dorf Dr., Dayton, OH 45439-7705

Name Change:

Beverly Fark to Beverly Hickerson (address and phone number remain unchanged)

Remove:

Alan Topp – transfer

Jack & BJ Hansbrough – transfer

Barbara A. Schmidt – deceased

This 'n That

THE ANT AND THE CONTACT LENS

Brenda was almost halfway to the top of the tremendous granite cliff. She was standing on a ledge where she was taking a breather during this, her first rock climb. As she rested there, the safety rope snapped against her eye and knocked out her contact lens. 'Great', she thought. 'Here I am on a rock ledge, hundreds of feet from the bottom and hundreds of feet to the top of this cliff, and now my sight is blurry.' She looked and looked, hoping that somehow it had landed on the ledge. But it just wasn't there.

She felt the panic rising in her, so she began praying. She prayed for calm, and she prayed that she may find her contact lens.

When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but it was not to be found. Although she was calm now that she was at the top, she was saddened because she could not clearly see across the range of mountains. She thought of the bible verse 'The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth.'

She thought, 'Lord, You can see all these mountains. You know every stone and leaf, and You know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me.'

Later, when they had hiked down the trail to the bottom of the cliff they met another party of climbers just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out, 'Hey, you guys! Anybody lose a contact lens?'

Well, that would be startling enough, but you know why the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across a twig on the face of the rock, carrying it!

The story doesn't end there. Brenda's father is a cartoonist. When she told him the incredible story of the ant, the prayer, and the contact lens, he drew a cartoon of an ant lugging that contact lens with the caption, 'Lord, I don't know why You want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it, and it's awfully heavy. But if this is what You want me to do, I'll carry it for You.'

I think it would do all of us some good to say, 'God, I don't know why You want me to carry this load. I can see no good in it and it's awfully heavy. But, if You want me to carry it, I will.'

God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

Yes, I do love GOD. He is my source of existence and my Savior. He keeps me functioning each and every day. Without Him, I am nothing, but with Him... 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' (Phil. 4:13)

OLD GUY AND A BUCKET OF SHRIMP

This is a true story. It happened every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembled a giant orange and was starting to dip into the blue ocean.

Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favorite pier. Clutched in his bony hand was a bucket of shrimp. Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now. Everybody's gone, except for a few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts...and his bucket of shrimp. Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier. Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, 'Thank you. Thank you.' In a few short minutes, the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place. When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away. And old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home. If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like 'a funny old duck,' as my dad used to say. Or, 'a guy who's a sandwich shy of a picnic,' as my kids might say. To onlookers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp. To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant...maybe even a lot of nonsense. Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Busters. Most of them would probably write Old Ed off, down there in Florida. That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better. His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous hero back in World War II. On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft. Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger. By the eighth day, their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were. They needed a miracle. That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle. They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his

nose. Time dragged. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft. Suddenly, Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull! Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal -- a very slight meal for eight men -- of it. Then, they used the intestines for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait...and the cycle continued. With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued (after 24 days at sea). Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first life-saving seagull. And he never stopped saying, 'Thank you.' That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.

[Reference: Max Lucado, "In the Eye of the Storm"]

YELLOW LIGHT, WITH ATTITUDE!

The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection. The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects. He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally... I assumed you had stolen the car!"





Pastoral Care is very important. Please call the church office when you or a family member or friend enter a hospital or care facility so the pastor and church friends can be supportive.

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

ELMWOOD ASSISTED LIVING

711 S. Walnut St., New Bremen, OH 45869

Wilbert Gruebmeier
Victor Maurer
Helen Wissman

HERITAGE MANOR

24 N. Hamilton St., Minster, OH 45865

Gloria Goodwin
Thomas Goodwin
Doris Howe
Jill May
Alice Waterman
Jean Waterman

THE GARDENS-CELINA

1301 Myers Rd, Celina, OH 45822

Ethel Sudman

THE GARDENS-WAPAKONETA

505 Walnut St., Wapakoneta, OH 45895

Louise Kettler (Room 222)

ST. MARYS LIVING CENTER

1209 Indiana Ave., St. Marys, OH 45885

Eldine Blumhorst
Marcella Thomas

OTTERBEIN-ST. MARYS

11300 Circle Dr., St. Marys, OH 45885

John & LaRue Dicke (11323 Bobwhite Lane)
Dorothy Feltman (11313 Bobwhite Lane)
Harry Ingram (11310 Bobwhite Lane)
Leota Kellermeyer (11300 Circle Dr.)
Betty Kettler (Room 326)
Carolyn Pape
June Wiehe

BRIARWOOD MANOR

100 Don Desch Dr., Coldwater, OH 45828

William (Bill) Jackson

AUGLAIZE ACRES

13093 Infirmary Rd., Wapakoneta, OH 45895

Luella Poppe (send mail c/o David Poppe,
06700 Lock Two Rd., New Bremen, OH 45869)

SWISS VILLAGE

1350 W. Main St., P. O. Box 284, Berne, IN 46711

Mary Lou Campbell, Room 658

Happy Birthday

May God bless all of you birthday people on your special day.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Irene Jarvis, Ned Sudman
- 2 Kaye Anderson, Brett Imwalle, Dominik Maurer, Jennifer Quellhorst
- 3 Mary Finke, René Hammond, Brett Wierwille
- 4 John Altman, Eldine Blumhorst, Adrian Egbert, Robert Finke, Duane Hegemier, Jacob Miller, Cara Schemmel, Justin Schott, Joshua Schwable, Regina Sudman
- 5 Layla Dietrich, Nancy McMaster, Ray McMaster, Michelle Vires
- 6 Mark Barhorst, Darrin Hays, Jenine Humphries, Ruth Luelleman
- 7 Kent Henschen, June Oaks, Will Suchland, Rebecca Waterman
- 8 Joseph Dicke, Karen Tostrick
- 9 Robert Fontanini, Jenna Wagner
- 10 Stephanie Alig, Lisa Davidson, Owen Rindler
- 11 Stanley Kuenning, John Nelson
- 12 Jeff Barlage, Gertrude Bushman, Julie Vogel, Jay Waterman
- 13 Addison Kaylor, Becky Kettler, Jerry Maxson, Amy Scheer, Aaron Thieman
- 14 Doris Blanke, Nikolay Buettner, Troy Dammeyer, Norman Jacoby, Destiney Lockhart, Kendall Willrath
- 15 Larry Busse, Mitchell Hays, Allyson Pape, Nicole Tontrup
- 16 Joyce Holdren, Sarah Koenig,
- 17 Jackson Suchland, Lydia Blanchard
- 18 Earl Dicke, Stan Flederjohn, Marylee Hespe, Bryan Hirschfeld, Taylor Sudman, Zachary Wiedeman
- 19 Karen Kuck, Samantha Lee, Marcella Thomas
- 20 Megan Hanenkratt, Robert Weinberg, III
- 21 Nicholas Kramer, Kristy Miller, Ralph Plattner
- 22 Steven Meyers
- 23 Monica Bushman, Keith Dicke, Daniel Wigginton
- 24 Nancy Conradi, Darlene Gilberg, Lexa Holdren, Michael Hosterman, Emmitt Maurer, Kathy Naylor, Kylie Naylor, Shirley Tontrup
- 25 Dennis Hainline, Sally Meckstroth, Greg Paul, Dale Quellhorst
- 26 Louise Dicke, Rianna Paul
- 27 Ryan Scheib, Hayden Snider, Maxwell Whitten
- 28 LaRue Dicke, Edward Garcia, III, Kimberly Hemmelgarn, Victor Maurer, June Wiehe
- 29 Elsie Ahlers, Tyler Hirschfeld, Blake Knueve, Christopher Pape
- 30 Ashley Grevenkamp, Emily Mueller, Zachery Nelson, Amy Sayers

**St. Paul U.C.C. Council Meeting
March 11, 2014**

The meeting was called to order by President John Voress with 17 attendees including: Allen Bushman, Lisa Davidson, Nelson Erb, Myra Hanenkraft; Brenda Haynes, Barb Holdren, Mike Holdren, Katie Jackson, John Mohrman, Dee Schroer, Pastor Becky Strang, Gene Topp, Kathy Topp; Bill Tostrick George Voress, and Carol Wilson. Lisa Davidson provided the meditation.

Secretary's Report: The secretary's report for the February 11, 2014, council meeting was reviewed. Myra Hanenkraft made a motion to approve; Carol Wilson seconded; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report as of February 28, 2014, was reviewed. It was noted that income was down, attributed to lower attendance due to recent severe winter weather. The ytd balance, income vs. expenses, shows a deficit of (\$4522.23). John Mohrman made a motion to approve; Dee Schroer seconded; motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership: Meeting scheduled for March 23. Two previous meetings were cancelled due to weather issues.

Mission: Dee Schroer reported that the mission for March will be One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS); for April, human trafficking.

Worship: No meeting. Schedule has been set through May.

OTHER REPORTS

Board of Christian Education: No report.

Deacons: George Voress reported that he is finalizing the deacon schedule for the Easter services.

Elders: Brenda Haynes indicated that attendance for the Ash Wednesday service was up considerably this year. With that in mind, next year, thought should be given to ways to speed up the distribution of communion and imposition of ashes.

Trustees: John Mohrman reported that recent heating issues have been resolved; the steeple clocks have been reset.

Rev. Strang's Report

•Worship:

>Ash Wednesday attendance:

2011: 118

2012: 107

2013: 115

2014: 157

>March 15 & 16: Rev. Phil Hart preaching.

>Mar 29 & 30: Hymn Sing weekend.

>Apr 3: Worship at Heritage Manor.

>Apr 5 & 6: Austin Hemmelgarn faith testimony.

>Apr 13 (Palm Sunday): Rite of Confirmation.

>Apr 17: Maundy Thursday Healing & Communion Service -- 7: 30 p.m.

>Apr 18: Good Friday worship at St. Peter's Church.

>Apr 20: (Easter Sunday): Worship at 7:00 & 10:15 a.m. with communion; Elmwood worship at 2:00 p.m.

•Ordination celebration: Thank you very much for the 20th ordination anniversary celebration this past Sunday. Thank you also for the New Bremen throw and massage gift certificates.

•Katie and I will be leading a hands-on Bible study March 20, 27, April 3, 10.

•Three applicants for SALT so far. Deadline for application is Friday, March 14. Interviews soon.

•My sabbatical is from June 1-August 31. Rev. Darrin Harvey will be here from May 16-September 12.

•Confirmation classes: Work on faith statements begins March 12. Faith testimonies will be shared Wednesday, April 9, at 7:00 p.m. followed by a council-sponsored reception.

•Upcoming vacation time:

>Apr 22-25: Eden Theological Seminary Spring Convocation.

>May 15-18: Jimmy's graduation weekend from Miami.

>Sometime in October: Ben's graduation from boot camp.

•Pastoral care: February 11- March 11, 2014:

>Hospital visits: 13

>Nursing home visits: 25

>Phone calls: 2

>Funerals: 2

>Office visits: 4

Katie Jackson's Report:

•SPLASH: The kids have continued to look at Jesus' early life and ministry. They sent out Valentine's care packages to our college students who are away from home and made gifts for our nursing home residents. There are 29 students enrolled.

•JH: The JH/Confirmation class has decided to do a 30-Hour Famine, to be held April 4-5, as their service project this year. The students have been talking about Jesus' early life and ministry. They also attended the Ash Wednesday service last week.

•HS: The HS students have been talking about Jesus' life and his interactions with people, including his disciples and Zaccheus. They will continue to discuss more of Jesus' story for the remainder of the year.

•5-6-7: We have continued through the NT lessons we started a while ago, and will keep going until the summer.

•School events attended:

>1 Roller hockey game.

>2 HS boys' games.

>HS band and choir concert.

•Other events:

>I have been asked to be a worship consultant at MADD Camp, June 14-21, and will be directing a confirmation camp/retreat July 3-August 3. There is a possibility that I will be asked to direct a 6-8th grade camp in July as well.

>March 6-10: I attended the Simply Youth Ministry Conference in Columbus and took several workshops including "Reimagining Your Youth Ministry from the Ground Up" and "The 10 Biggest Mistakes Youth Ministries Make." I also participated in two peer panels.

- I start my 3-year term in April as part of the NWOA Faith Formation Team. They meet monthly and have a focus on Christian education for all ages.

- EL Salvador: Eight students are signed up to go to El Salvador June 2-9. Fundraisers include collecting aluminum cans and selling Tupperware.

- Easter breakfast: The youth will sponsor a breakfast on Easter Sunday.

- Youth room: Due to the need for more space, the youth room has moved into the Tribal Hut room at the southwest corner of the Educational Building. Thank you to Austin Reed and Kaelen Hemmelgarn for helping with the move.

- "Sample Night" – April 27: A "Sample Night" will be held to give recent confirmands an opportunity to experience the activities of the HS Youth Group.

OLD BUSINESS

- Project of the Year (El Salvador): \$675 has been donated so far for the project.

- Educational Building roof: A spring start date has been confirmed for the new roof.

- Parsonage fence: After review and discussion of a few quotes for a new fence, council's consensus was to install a 5-foot chain link fence to replace the present white vinyl fence. George Voress made a motion accordingly, and to have Sidney Lawn & Landscape install the fence at a cost of \$1642; John Mohrman seconded; motion carried.

- Audio system-sanctuary: A committee consisting of Mike Holdren, Jim Strang and George Voress will look into the cost to upgrade the present system.

NEW BUSINESS

- Thank yous were read from:

- >Melanie Werner, an Eden Theological Seminary student, who received a donation from the Ernst & Frances Kuck Scholarship fund.

- >Cardinal Music Boosters for our recent donation.

- >Agape for the Thankoffering donation.

- Fee schedule: Discussion was held concerning a raise in custodial, clergy and rental fees for weddings, etc. Current fees have been in place for quite some time and should be reviewed.

- Air conditioning for the financial secretary/bookkeeper/music director/maintenance technician office: There is no air conditioning in this room. Consideration will be given as to how to provide cooling for this area without full-scale air conditioning.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next meeting: April 8, 2014; devotions, Carol Wilson.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and closed with all saying the Lord's Prayer.

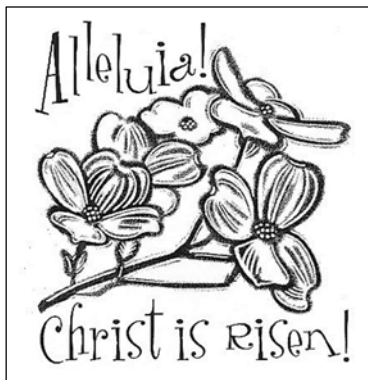
Kathy Topp, Secretary

John Voress, President

WISH LIST	
What is the Wish List? It's a list (in no particular order) that the church council has developed that will help direct attention to items that families or groups may want to consider purchasing for the church. This list is for reference only. Other ideas are welcome.	
Item	Guesstimate d cost
New flooring in auditorium	\$8000
New lighting for auditorium	?
Additional playground equipment	\$2500
Fellowship area & handicapped accessible restroom at rear of sanctuary	?
New carpeting, Assembly Room & Chapel	?
TV screen – sanctuary	\$14,000
New clock faces on steeple	?

April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		11:30 Busy Twelve 7:00 Saturday evening chorus	3:00 SPLASH 7:00 JH Youth Group 7:00 Confirmation 8:00 Chancel choir	10:15 Worship at Heritage Manor 7:00 Hands-on Bible Study		8:00 Men's Club 5:00 Worship w/Holy Communion
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship w/Holy Communion 11:30 Mission Team 6:00 El Salvador mtg. – HS Youth 7:00 HS Youth Group		7:00 Church Council 7:00 Saturday evening chorus	3:00 SPLASH 7:00 Confirmands' Faith Statements 8:00 Chancel choir	12:00 Senior/Retiree Luncheon 7:00 Hands-on Bible Study	Rummage sale – starts 9:00 a.m. Women's Service Group – Plant, pie, bake sale	
Palm Sunday 13	14	15	16	Maunder Thu 17	Good Fri 18	19
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship w/Rite of Confirmation 7:00 HS Youth Group		7:00 Saturday evening chorus	(No youth programming) 8:00 Chancel choir	5-7:00 Fish Fry 7:30 Healing Service w/communion	7:00 Ecumenical worship service at St. Peter's Church	NO Saturday worship
Easter 20	21	22	23	24	25	26
7:00 Sunrise service w/communion 8:00 Pancake brkfst 9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship w/communion 2:00 Worship at Elmwood	1:00 Page Turners Beacon articles due	7:00 Saturday evening chorus	3:00 SPLASH 7:00 JH Youth Group 8:00 Chancel choir			5:00 Worship NWOA Annual Meeting at St. Paul UCC/St. Marys
27	28	29	30			
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship 11:30 New Member Orientation 3:30 Blessing of Animals 7:00 HS Youth Group		7:00 Saturday evening chorus	3:00 SPLASH 7:00 JH Youth Group 8:00 Chancel choir			



SPECIAL DATES:

(See page 3 for Holy Week schedule)

Apr 10 – Senior/Retiree luncheon (note week-earlier date)

Apr 10-11-12 – Women's Service Group plant, pie & baked goods sale

Apr 10-11-12 – Rummage Sale, proceeds to El Salvador youth trip

Apr 12 – Confirmation rehearsal, 10:00 a.m.

Apr 26 – NWOA annual meeting at St. Paul's Church, St. Marys

Apr 27 – New member orientation

Apr 27 – Blessing of Animals, 3:30 p.m.

April

- 3: Creative Bible Study-7pm
- 5-6: Austin Hemmelgarn shares his faith testimony during the weekend's services
- 6: El Salvador meeting-6pm, HS Youth
- 9: Splash, JH Youth, Rummage Sale Set-Up (7pm), Confirmation Faith Statement sharing (7pm)
- 10-12: Rummage Sale 9-3pm on T+F, 9-12pm Saturday.
- 13: HS Youth
- 16: NO PROGRAMS--EASTER BREAK
- 20: Easter Breakfast 8-10am
- 23: Splash, JH Youth
- 27: HS Youth Sampler Night 7-9pm
- 30: Splash, JH Youth

May

- 4: Confirmation Reunion, HS Youth
- 7: Splash, JH Youth
- 11: Senior Sunday, Last HS Youth
- 14: Last Splash, Last JH Youth
- 27-28: 30 Hour Famine 5pm-4pm

Summer 2014

- June 2-9th: El Salvador Mission Trip
- June 15-21: MMADD Camp (Katie at Pilgrim Hills)
- July 31-August 3: Confirmation Camp
- August 9: Mom to Mom Sale

Easter Breakfast April 20th

Our students will host the breakfast 8-10am. Pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee will be served. Donations will benefit our El Salvador Mission Trip. If you'd like to help with the breakfast, please arrive at 7am. Thank you!



**Rummage Sale
April 10-12th**
Proceeds benefit
the El Salvador
Mission Trip
Donations may be
placed on the stage
starting April 1st.



St. Paul United Church of Christ
P. O. Box 6
New Bremen, OH 45869-0006

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
New Bremen, OH 45869
Permit No. 18

Phone: 419/629-2502
Fax: 419/629-3207
E-mail: stpaulnb@nktelco.net
Web site: www.stpaulnb.org
Facebook.com: St. Paul United Church of Christ – New Bremen, Ohio



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

