

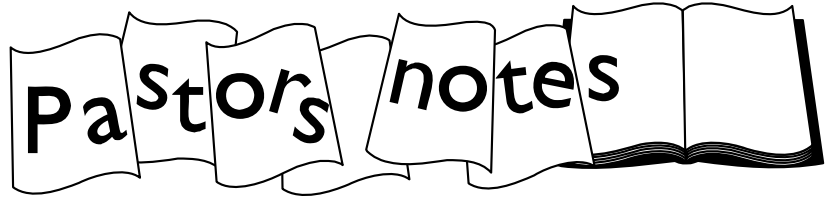


Christ United Methodist Church

MARCH/APRIL 2007
NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

By now you have all heard about Natural Church Development (NCD for short) if you have been in



worship at Christ United Methodist Church in the last six months. In short, it is an exciting process that I believe will help us move to a new level of ministry. I have gathered some interested people together and formed a strategy team around this Natural Church Development process. A survey will be taken soon (within the next 1-1/2 months) which will give us a reading of our congregational health. It does so by measuring eight quality characteristics: 1) Empowering Leadership, 2) Gift-based Ministry, 3) Passionate Spirituality, 4) Effective Structures, 5) Inspiring Worship Service, 6) Holistic Small Groups, 7) Need-oriented Evangelism, and 8) Loving Relationships.

To help us understand better this whole process I will take each of these quality characteristics and explain them in a bit more detail. In this way we may have a much stronger grasp of how healthy congregations display these characteristics.

We begin with Empowering Leadership. The guiding biblical text on this is Ephesians 4:11-13 where it talks about the gifts Christ gave to the church "that some would be apostles, some prophets...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..."

Empowering leadership is not about one special leader who has a great vision and needs volunteers to help them turn it into reality. That would be an "empowered" leader. We're not looking for gurus or superstars in this quality. The role here is one of empowering others, to equip, support, motivate and mentor others to become what God is calling them to be or become. The three essential ingredients of empowering leadership is explanation, motivation and liberation. If just one of these three is missing, the whole church will suffer.

The ingredient of "explanation" is essential. The ability to explain complicated, confusing, difficult realities to people through sermons, studies, teaching is really important. Motivating people is also very important. It is not enough to just explain something. Motivating people encourages them in their own discovery and journey. Liberation involves setting people free to fulfill their own God-given visions.

So this is empowering leadership. If a church is going to be at maximum health, ready and willing to equip the saints, build up the body of Christ and pave the way for the kingdom of God to grow; then we must develop this quality characteristic within and among the leadership of our church Next newsletter: Gift-based Ministry

In Christ,

Bruce

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP NEWS

I want to take a few lines to lift up an exciting group of people right here in our midst at Christ United Methodist Church.

Since I began working with them this Fall, they have given me renewed energy in ministry with young people. They range from Seventh Graders to High Schoolers. They are the following:

Kelsey Allen
Kristen Allen
Alden Carney
Alex Carney

Aaron Cramer
Steve Deutschman
Sarah Ducat
Travis Ducat

Jamie Instone
Natalie Loera
Allan McDaniel
Dillon McDonald

We have thus far just begun to get to know each other. We've had some meetings where we studied issues, others where we've lived out the issue on the streets and still other meetings where we just had fun playing. We've planned for and pulled off a very successful Valentine's Dinner.

Ahead for the group is:

- 1) Planning for and leading Easter Sunrise Service
- 2) Participating with two other Youth Fellowship groups, a 30-hour famine
- 3) Planning for a Summer Mission Project

So keep your eyes and ears open - the Portage UMC Youth Fellowship Group is on the move!

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE

March 25	6:30 p.m.
April 1	6:30 p.m.
April 15	6:30 p.m.
April 29	6:30 p.m.

KIDS' NIGHT SCHEDULE (March through May)

March 29	Lent Event.....	6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
April 12	New Life.....	6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
April 26	New Life (Native Americans)	6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
May 10		6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
May 24		6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Women have resumed their meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. They will be meeting Wednesday, April 11, at 7:00 p.m. The devotions will be given by Nancy Shrider; the "Response" Moment will be given by Millie Broka; Reverend Bruce McDaniel will present an Easter program; and the hostess will be Elie Krassow. All women are invited and encouraged to come.

FESTIVAL OF SHARING HEALTH KITS

The United Methodist Women are beginning to collect items for the Health Kit for the 2007 Festival of Sharing. Each kit contains the following:

1 Hand Towel	1 bar soap (bath size)
1 wash cloth	1 toothbrush
1 comb	1 toothpaste (4-7 oz)
1 nail file (metal) or nail clipper	6 bandaids

STEAK DINNER

The United Methodist Women are again sponsoring a steak dinner on Sunday, March 25, 2007, at 12:00 noon. The cost per person is: \$7.00 for adults; \$3.50 for children. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. You will enjoy!

YOU ARE INVITED

"You are invited to an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Andrew B. Cramer, Troop 345, Sunday, March 18, 2007, at 3:00 p.m., at Christ United Methodist Church, 301 W. Main Street, Portage. Refreshments will be served following the ceremony." RSVP: Vickicramer@earthlink.net or 419-686-7675.

WORLD VISION 30-HOUR FAMINE

On Friday, March 16th - Saturday, March 17th, the Christ United Methodist Church Youth Fellowship will be joining the Youth Fellowships of both First and Trinity United Methodist Churches in an event to raise both money and awareness around world hunger.

World Vision is a Christian relief and development organization dedicated to helping children and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the

causes of poverty. They've been doing this in the United States since 1992, and last year alone 600,000 students joined the movement.

What is it? It is a time of fasting for 30 straight hours. The time we are together is filled with fun, fellowship, study, and juice breaks - then we break the fast on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. with a meal together. I hope you will want to support our youth as they learn about and experience a bit of hunger.

AN EASTER OPPORTUNITY

In the midst of this Lenten Season where not only do we recall and remind ourselves of Jesus' ministry of reconciling the lives of people through healing, teaching and challenging them, but we also remember that He died in part because of those same things.

Yet there is Easter, calling out to us in a loud voice to say that Death does not have the last word. New life springs forth out of dying and brings new energy forth into the world.

You can contribute to the new life emerging from within the walls and through the ministries of those who call themselves **Christ United Methodist Church** by your generous contribution to the Easter offering. I hope you will prayerfully consider this opportunity and may you continue to have a challenging Lent and a joyous Easter!



Pastor Bruce

MAUNDAY THURSDAY

I hope you will want to be a part of a special Maunday Thursday event on April 5th. We are going to have a modified Last Supper. You are asked to bring a dish or two for a grand potluck feast, as well as your whole family. We will all sit together in candlelight and recall the last night Jesus spent with his disciples. Our evening will end with a meditative time in the sanctuary. You won't want to miss this special event.

GOOD FRIDAY

At 7:00 p.m. on April 6th, there will be a Good Friday Tenebrae Service of Lights at Christ United Methodist Church. This will be a Service of Remembrance and retelling of the fateful events leading to Jesus' crucifixion. It will prove to be a very moving service.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE AND BREAKFAST



On Easter Sunday, April 8th, the Youth Fellowship of Christ United Methodist Church will lead the early morning Sunrise Service beginning at 7:00 a.m. Following the service, a breakfast will be served. Please let us know if you plan to attend so that we might prepare the correct amount of food.

JACKSON AREA MINISTRY

The United Methodist Women are again collecting vegetable seeds for the Green Thumb Gardening Project for the Jackson Area Ministry. There is a collection box in the narthex. Monetary donations are also accepted.



A MISSION OPPORTUNITY

George "Tater" Jensen is looking for people from the Bowling Green area for help with a mission ministry in our district. Greenline, Inc., is a good supplier to the Society of St. Andrew's mission to feed the hungry. Greenline is located at 12700 South Dixie Highway, Bowling Green.

This is what it takes to help:

- Be available for the day. Greenline calls anytime. Sometimes we have a day's notice; sometimes it's the same day.
- Need to be able to drive the District men's truck (5-speed with 2-speed gear); no CDL needed.
- Always have one or two people with you to help.
- Get your name on our insurance; call Don Overmeyer at Helm's Insurance (419-833-2892);
- call "Tater" (419-833-33250 and let him know you have a team in place "to do good works."

IN APPRECIATION

"Thank you" to all who helped with the Valentine's Dinner! It was a delicious dinner and an enjoyable time.

IN SYMPATHY

The funeral service for Guadalupe Romero, a resident of the Portage Group Homes, was conducted on February 20, 2007. Our condolences to her family and friends.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Laurella and Ted Keys celebrated **SEVENTY** years of marriage in February.



In the hospital, now home: Karen Glassford, Marjorie Maidment, Hugh Sheline

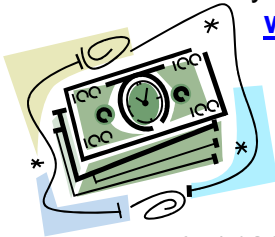
Emergency Room: Kathy Bame, Ruth Troxell

EARN FREE MONEY FOR CHRIST UM CHURCH

If you shop at Kroger or Meijer (even if only occasionally), you can earn free money for the church.

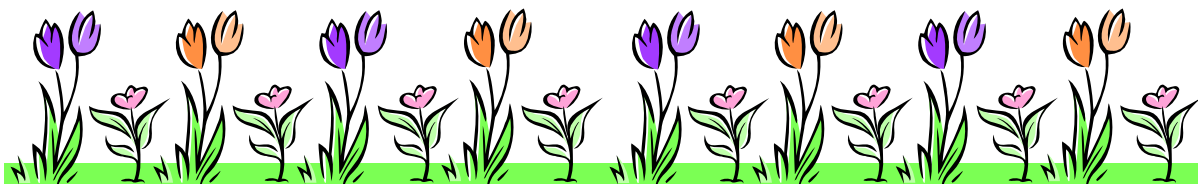
Meijer has a Community Rewards program that gives a percentage of your spending to the charity of your choice. You just need to have your Rewards Card swiped before you finalize your purchase. The church's number is **564469**. You can sign up at

www.meijer.com/rewards or pick up a form in the office.



The Kroger program is a gift card you must purchase from the church. All cards have a preloaded balance of \$5.00. Simply "load" your card at Kroger, using cash, check, or your favorite credit card. Then use that card to pay for your purchases. Each time you load your card you earn 5% for the church. The card can be used at the fuel station and the pharmacy, also. As long as there is a balance on the card, it is good. Cards that have had a zero balance for 90 days are deactivated.

Both programs are good anywhere in the country.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND DATES TO REMEMBER:

Sunday, March 18	3:00 p.m.	Andy Cramer – Eagle Scout Court of Honor
Monday, March 19.....	9:00 a.m.	Sermon Shaping
.....	7:00 p.m.	Pastor-Parish Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 20.....	7:00 p.m.	Lenten Study
Wednesday, March 21	7:15 pm.....	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, March 24	2:00 p.m.	Heines/Andricks Wedding
Sunday, Maarch 25	12 noon	Steak Dinner
Thursday, April 5	6:30 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Meal
Friday, April 6	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Service of Lights
Sunday, April 8.....	7:00 a.m.	Easter Sunrise Service & Breakfast

SERMON SHAPING SCHEDULE CHANGE

Monday, March 17.....	9:00 a.m.	Meet @ CUMC
Monday, March 26.....	9:00 a.m.	Meet @ Linda Allen's home, 12703 Mermill Road
