

BEACON NEWSLETTER

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A Multi-racial, Multi-cultural, Open and Affirming Congregation

JANUARY 2009

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the Year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way."

— Minnie Louise Haskins, 1908

Grace and peace and the blessings of the New Year to you!

What a lot of things we have on our "to do" list for this year: so many new paths to explore, so many new situations to encounter and work through and beyond, so many new people to meet. Probably first on the church's docket will be to call a Search Committee for the called pastor. I hesitate to say "permanent" pastor, as opposed to interim pastor because there is little in these days of shifting sands that we can say is permanent.

However, the move is forward, the time is a New Time and this is a New Day: 2009 offers us many opportunities to grow up in the faith. Thanks be to God!

One of the first tasks of the interim time, after some time of "settling down" is the task of Coming to Terms with Your History. Yes, all in caps. What, specifically does this mean for us?

In the same way that your soul has a personal history, the church also has a "soul" history as well. One thing I continue to observe about EACC, UCC is all the different groups that comprise the whole body of Christ. There even seem to be "clumpings" around previous pastoral leadership. For example, I am aware that Judith Vasile had a following, as did Randy Hyvonen, as did Roger Knight, etc.

In each of these pastorates, as well as others, there are stories to tell, stories of success and failure, stories of joy and grief. Usually when a congregation comes together to celebrate an anniversary, stories of joy and success are told. Appropriately, at those times of celebration, stories of grief and loss are not told. The interim time is the opportunity to tell stories of both joy and grief.

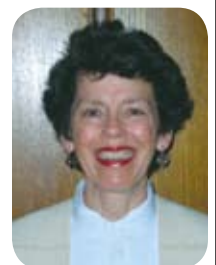
Not to discourage you! Not to make you depressed! But because failure to tell these stories, both joy and grief, does not permit a congregation to move into the future with confidence. It is unwise to call a new pastor without working through the past--and then trying to waltz through the call process and either find a clone of your favorite pastor or find his/her exact opposite.

We have planned a morning in January, Saturday, January 17th, from 9-11:30 to talk about your history. We'll create a "Time Line" and work together to get events/stories/changes/joys/losses up on paper. Once we have on paper as much as we can remember, we'll leave it up so that others can add events, personalities that have been significant in the life of this congregation. Sound like fun? It is!

Then in February, again another Saturday, TBA, the Rev. Charlotte Still Noble will return and do a morning session with us on the different pastoral leadership styles you have had in your remembered past. How does Randy Hyvonen's style, for instance, compare with Roger Knight's? What does the church need for leadership in this time and this day? Who would best serve all the different constituencies this church has for the future?

Louise Haskins' words inspire us to "put our hand into God's hand and tread safely into the unknown." I hope and trust you will take that step with me.

With the most fervent wishes for all good things to all of us in 2009, a year of unlimited growth and celebration, your friend and Interim Pastor, Terri



- Interim Minister**
Rev. Terri Young
- Director of Music**
Timothy Robson
- Director of Gospel Choir**
Joan Bacon
- Christian Education Director**
Marcy Molmen
- Financial Manager**
John Peterson
- Church Secretary**
Diana Reid
- Custodian**
Ernie Clark
- Director, Saturday Fun**
Cheryl Wacasey
- Beacon Editors**
Kathy Baker
Mary Sherry
- Design Editor**
Cyndi Henderson
- Photographer**
Kathie Buckner

Sunday Schedule

8:45 a.m.

Adult Bible Study

10:00 a.m.

**Celebrative Worship
Service &
Church School**

Following worship
**Fellowship and
Refreshments**

Bus transportation
available to/from church

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 4
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

Preacher: Rev. Terri Young
Scripture Readings:
Jer 31: 7-14 or Sir 24: 1-12
Ps 147: 12-20 or Wis of Sol 10: 15-21
Eph 1: 3-14
John 1: (1-9) 10-18
Worship Theme: Another Road

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 11
THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST**

Preacher: Rev. Terri Young
Scripture Readings:
Gen 1: 1-5
Ps 29
Acts 19: 1-7
Mark 1: 4-11
Worship Theme: Defining Moments

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 18
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

Preacher: Rev. Terri Young
Scripture Readings:
1 Sam 3: 1-10 (11-20)
Ps 139: 1-6, 13-18
1 Cor 6: 12-20
John 1: 43-51
Worship Theme: Known and Loved
Ecumenical Sunday
Week of prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18-25

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

Preacher: Rev. Terri Young
Scripture Readings:
Jonah 3: 1-5, 10
Ps 62: 5-12
1 Cor 7: 29-31
Mark 1: 14-20
Worship Theme: Follow Me
Health and Human Service Sunday

HEALING SERVICES

Healing Services, held every Wednesday from 12 noon to 12:30 in our sanctuary, will continue into 2009. More and more patients, family, and staff from Cleveland Clinic have been attending these services. Our own members of course are encouraged to attend and bring forward prayers for ourselves and for the world.

MEN'S COUNCIL

Thanks to Men's Council, the men who live in the homeless shelter at 2100 Lakeside have 40 brand new blankets. These were purchased and delivered during one of those brutally cold days in December, and were received with great enthusiasm.

ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 25

After worship on Sunday, January 25, members of the congregation will have lunch together in the dining room and then hold the annual meeting of the congregation. As in past years, we will present the annual reports of our various ministries, recognize members who have achieved significant plateaus of longevity, pause to remember members who died the previous year, and elect new officers for the coming year. All members are urged to attend. Child care will be provided.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Bible Study group that meets in the Conference Room every Sunday morning at 8:45AM will be reading and discussing the following Scripture readings and topics in January:

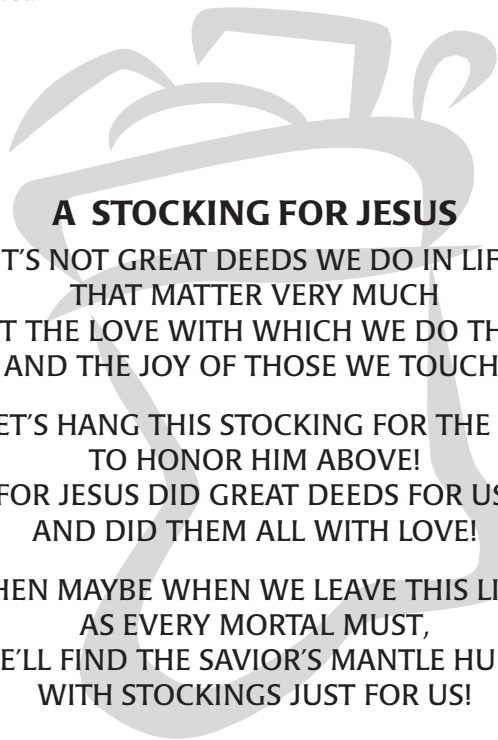


- Jan 4 - Midwives Serve GodExodus 1:8-21
- Jan 11 - Rahab Helps Israel.Joshua 2;1-4, 12-14, 6:22-25
- Jan 18 - Joshua Leads Israel Joshua 3: 1-13
- Jan 25 - Samson's Mother Prepares for His Birth. . . . Judges 13:1-13 , 24



SATURDAY FUN

- In December Saturday Fun held its annual Christmas party, attended by
- 36 kids ages 2-16 and 12 helpful adults. Special thanks go to Eleanore
- Dees and Johnnie Mitchell. After several games, the group sat in a circle
- and one by one talked about the meaning of Christmas. Then gifts for
- all were distributed and a delicious lunch was served. Those who would
- like to be a part of Saturday Fun in January can be looking forward to:
- January 10 – sledding
- January 24 – craft day
- Please call Cheryl Wacasey at 216-513-8006 by the Wednesday before
- the Saturday the group meets if you would like to reserve a spot for you
- or your child. Refreshments are always served!
- Saturday Fun also gave as Christmas gifts the following poem, framed
- and decorated:



A STOCKING FOR JESUS

IT'S NOT GREAT DEEDS WE DO IN LIFE
 THAT MATTER VERY MUCH
 BUT THE LOVE WITH WHICH WE DO THEM
 AND THE JOY OF THOSE WE TOUCH.

SO LET'S HANG THIS STOCKING FOR THE LORD
 TO HONOR HIM ABOVE!
 FOR JESUS DID GREAT DEEDS FOR US,
 AND DID THEM ALL WITH LOVE!

THEN MAYBE WHEN WE LEAVE THIS LIFE,
 AS EVERY MORTAL MUST,
 WE'LL FIND THE SAVIOR'S MANTLE HUNG
 WITH STOCKINGS JUST FOR US!



Would You Hire This Man?

A certain church found itself suddenly without a pastor, and a search committee was formed. In due course it received a letter from a man applying for the vacant position. The Pastoral Search Committee chairman read:

"I am considered to be a good preacher, and I have been a leader in most of the places I have served. I have also done some writing on the side.

"I am over 50 years old, and while my health is not the best, I still manage to get enough work done to please any parish.

"As for references, I am somewhat handicapped. I have never preached anywhere for more than three years. And most of the churches I have preached in have been small, even though they were located in rather large cities. I had to leave some places because my ministry caused riots and disturbances. Even where I stayed, I did not get along too well with other religious leaders, which may influence the kind of references these places will supply. I have also been threatened and physically attacked. I have even gone to jail several times for my preaching.

"I am not particularly good at keeping records. I have to admit I don't even remember all those whom I've baptized. However, if you can use me, I should be pleased to be considered. I feel sure I can bring vitality to your church."

When the chairman finished reading the letter, the committee members were aghast. "The Nerve!" said Ms. Righteous Indignation. "Who does he think he is?" bellowed Mr. Tradition. "Lead our church?! Sounds like he should be in a jail somewhere!" echoed Mrs. Myway-or-noway.

How could anyone think that a church like theirs would consider a man who was nothing but a troublemaking, absentminded, ex-jailbird? What was his name, they all asked. "Well," said the chairman, "the letter is signed 'Paul'."

Blessings and Greetings to you, my church family. As we all know, we are in many ways a church in transition. One of the things we have on our plate for 2009 is the empowering of a Pastoral Search Committee. For the past few months we have posted a sign-up sheet to allow those interested saints among us to declare by signing their names, their commitment to helping our beloved Church through the actual search process. We now have over ten persons that have expressed an interest by signing up as a volunteer to potentially be part of the actual final Pastoral Search committee.

By signing up we are saying we know that the difference between showing mere interest and commitment is Action. Making a commitment requires taking the Action required that would accompany your signature. In other words, we are not just looking at Quantity (nine persons to serve) but also the Quality (active participation in committee meetings etc.) of their verbal commitment to serve by each of the volunteers. Our goal is that this committee reflects the diversity of our church to include but not limited to race, age, and gender. And that somehow, some of our longtime and newer members are also encompassed into the search committee. In short we need representation/voice from across all (including under the age of 20) aspects of the makeup of our church. The youth must also have voice!! By doing this we hope to not make the same mistake of the church we read about in the short story above and as a result possibly miss out on the best pastoral candidate that can address the multiple needs and problems facing our beloved Euclid Ave. Congregational Church. So, if you have the desire and are committed to making this search as fruitful as possible and you have strong views about what we need in the way of our next earthly spiritual leader, be committed! Get involved! Sign up! . . . Time is short!!!

In Christ, Al Parks, Moderator

COMING TO TERMS WITH THE HISTORY OF EACC – JANUARY 17

Everyone is invited to help us create a time line of EACC's history on Saturday morning, January 17, from 9-11:30AM. We'll go decade by decade until all 165 years are posted on the parlor wall for everyone to add to and comment upon at their leisure later for a month or longer. We'll have time to remember our past together and reflect on its significance. Please join us whether you've been a member for 8 months or 80 years. Refreshments will be served.

WORSHIP AND ARTS

The current co-chairs of this ministry will be replaced with the new year. This has been an interesting year in that the ministry was involved in three christenings. We continue to have challenges with getting persons to serve communion and to serve as acolytes. Two of the members of the ministry, Marguerite Bibb and Juanita LeFloria, are working to make this phase of our ministry work. We continue to need the support of the congregation. Our thanks to members of the congregation who so graciously responded to our call for communion servers and preparers. This will continue to be a challenge for the new members of the ministry.

Peace and Love

Fannie Cockfield and Henry Edwards, Co-Chairs

CHURCH IN THE WORLD MINISTRY

As December comes to an end so do the projects Church In The World has undertaken. As the final Tents of Hope events of the year, our squares were sewn together to form panels which were used to make our Tent. The extra squares were sewn to form a quilt which will hang in our church, as a reminder of everyone's dedication to helping others.

Church In The World along with the other Ministries for Advent started a "Holiday Warmth" collection of socks, mittens, gloves, scarves and other items for the Homeless Shelter for men and for the women and children of Women's Re-Entry. Each week during Advent an announcement was made reminding the members of our congregation to bring new items and place them in the decorated boxes in the parlor. Kathy and John Baker faithfully delivered the items weekly. A special thank you goes out to the Men's Council for the 40 warm new full size blankets they donated. That was fantastic!

During our "MAIL BAG" event cards were provided by Charlene to sign and mail.

I hope everyone sent at least one card to the soldiers during the Christmas holidays.

Thanks to all the staff, our pastor and the members of the congregation for all your help this year with CITW's many projects. We were successful because of each and everyone of you!

Kathie Buckner, CITW Co-Chair

STEWARDSHIP

FURNACE UPDATE – Upon recommendation of our previous architecture company, HAVC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) engineers are being contacted for analysis of our heating system. We wish them to address increasing the efficiency of the system and helping to decrease our heating costs (zones, flappers blowers, etc). Environmentally green will be considered.

FLOORING FOR PARKING LOT, E. 96 STREET ENTRANCES & NARTHEX – Carpet samples will be available for review, evaluation and recommendations on a yet to be determined Sunday(s) in January.

SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM – Completed except for walls to be painted with a mural by Sunday school children.

FRONT LAWN SIGNAGE UPDATE – Selection of samples of signage turned over to Publicity Committee for further research and recommendations. Then final recommendations to be referred back to Stewardship Ministry for review of bids.

SECURITY - Church Staff as well as members of congregation (when applicable) are encouraged to be vigilant about locking doors and turning off computer and lights as well as turning on the security system as a daily responsibility

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM – UCC Insurance Board recommended evaluation of our Churches' electrical system. Recommendation approved by motion.

RECYCLING PROGRAM – Referred to SM for recommendation to appropriate ministry. Project referred to COM for discussion and decision

CLEANING SERVICE – Please contact Ruby Brooks directly with any cleaning concerns or compliments.

LIGHTING EUCLID AVENUE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS - All light bulbs were burned out. Now on order. When bulbs are replaced, timer will be reactivated and Euclid Avenue stained glass windows will be lighted at night.

Ruby Brooks and Nancy Nigosian Co-Chairs



THANKS FOR THE SOCKS, GLOVES, SCARVES ETC.

The warm socks and gloves that many members brought into church during Advent were distributed to the Men's Homeless Shelter at 2100 Lakeside, to Transitional Housing, a women's homeless shelter, and to WREN, Women's Re-Entry Network. WREN writes, "Happy Holidays! Thank you for your generous donation of socks, and gloves. We are grateful for your ongoing support...Thanks to the generosity and compassion of people like you we can make a positive contribution to the quality of life for our participants and our community."

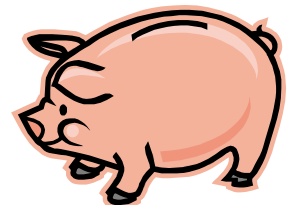
NOVEMBER 2008 FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

Expenses Compared to Budget

	January - November 2008		
	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Annual Budget
INCOME			
CONTRIBUTIONS	102,614	113,842	123,918
ENDOWMENT INCOME USED	176,408	209,474	225,324
OTHER INCOME	10,360	14,300	15,600
Total RECEIPTS	289,382	337,616	364,842
EXPENSES			
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES			
Total PERSONNEL	174,241	188,833	210,518
Total BUILDING MAINTENANCE	79,790	69,262	74,210
Total OFFICE	8,499	9,350	10,200
Total OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	9,158	16,284	17,564
Total ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	271,688	283,728	312,492
PROGRAM & MINISTRIES EXPENSES			
Total CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY	7,622	11,464	12,050
Total FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY LIFE MINISTRY	2,779	7,050	7,800
Total CHURCH IN THE WORLD MINISTRY	18,133	20,454	26,650
Total WORSHIP & ARTS MINISTRY	2,463	5,450	5,850
Total PROGRAM & MINISTRIES EXPENSES	30,997	44,418	52,350
Total EXPENSE	302,685	328,146	364,842
Net Income (Loss)	(13,303)	9,470	0

YTD OUTREACH SUMMARY

OCWM	13,125
Interact	2,625
Hunger Offerings	1,567
Great Hour of Sharing	645
Strengthening the Church	265
Other Special Offerings	492
Christmas Offering	0
Neighbors in Need	341
	19,060



YTD GIVING SUMMARY

ANTICIPATED MONTHLY OFFERINGS	113,842
ACTUAL OFFERINGS - CURRENT YEAR	102,614
DIFFERENCE - OVER (UNDER)	(11,228)



Happy New Year, Everybody! May 2009 bring you all the blessings God wants to give you.

In reviewing 2008, I am thankful for many things; becoming your Christian Education Director is one of the most important. In looking ahead, my job description provides the framework for what I hope to accomplish in 2009. Elements of the

job description are underlined.

An obvious responsibility is to recruit teachers. Two of our dedicated and creative teachers are taking leave, so we need two new teachers for students in grades 2 through 7 (more or less). I may teach them myself for awhile so that I can get to know them better and because I really love being in the classroom.

Indulging that passion, however, is a luxury I can't afford to continue very long. This means I'll be calling people very soon to fill the Safe Church requirement of two teachers in every class. If you have experience teaching, I'll probably be contacting you. If you believe God is calling you to this ministry, why not beat me to it? If you don't have experience, but feel called, please respond. I can pair you with an experienced teacher. We also hold teachers meetings every Sunday, partly to fulfill my responsibility to train teachers. If you can spare only a little time, I'm looking for people who can come in once and share some knowledge or experience of theirs with the students.

While the current year is unfolding, I'll also be looking ahead to choose a curriculum for next fall. Now that I've gotten to know the students a little, I have a clearer idea what kind of curriculum will serve their needs and interests best.

Providing opportunities for adult education has been a challenge—I don't want to start a class that would compete with the Sunday morning class Al Parks teaches. A possibility is to do a brown bag study session after the healing service every Wednesday. Watch for more information about that.

I'll continue to help teach confirmation. Soon, Pastor Terri and I will be meeting with family members of the confirmands to discuss the program.

During the January 4 service, I'll be leading the Children's Time. I do this only occasionally because Pastor Terri enjoys leading it and the students benefit so much from her involvement with them.

While preparing for the Christmas Program, I was also talking with the Christian Education and Faith Formation Committee about how to appropriately spend all or part of the remaining CE budget. We decided to use part of the budget to buy some books to update the library. Although managing the church library is not an explicit part of my job description, the committee and I agreed that it was clearly a part of providing the best possible Christian education experience for our members.

Working with volunteers to organize the library has been an enjoyable experience. Several more people have volunteered to help in January, so I'll soon be consulting them to schedule a time to gather here for some productive socializing. If you would like to help out with the library, either in a hands-on capacity or as part of an advisory team for selecting new materials, please get in touch with me.*

Attending CEFF meetings and meetings with other committees when the need arises has been a valuable use of my time. Committee members have been supportive and helpful as I became acquainted with EACC's history, policies, and group dynamic. I look forward to their continuing input as I carry out my responsibilities.

Attending staff meetings has been a joy. The people are delightful and the interactions are supportive and productive.

Working with the wider UCC is an area which I have only begun to explore. In 2009, I'll be searching for local, regional, or national programs and activities that can help members grow in their faith.

Teaching Christian Education has long been a passion of mine; doing what I love among people who are capturing my heart makes this a dream job. The 20 hours a week I work here at EACC are challenging and satisfying.

*You can contact me by calling the church office, 216-791-5200, emailing me, marcia.eacc@sbcglobal.net, or as a last resort, talking with me on Sunday morning. (Our Sunday morning cup of activities runneth over, so a conversation then will probably be rushed.)

2009 ENLISTMENT CAMPAIGN REPORT

We're still running behind our enlistment needs for 2009. As of Christmas Eve, we had received estimates totaling just short of \$97,000 toward our goal of \$125,000. There are still more than ten church families who have not responded. The Enlistment Committee will continue to work toward 100% participation from these families, bringing us closer to our budgeted needs, to enable us to continue our ministries into 2009.

GOT ORNAMENTS?

If when you're taking down your Christmas tree ornaments this year you find some that you're willing to part with, please bring them to church. We need some for our large tree in the parlor.



THE EUCLID AVENUE CITIZEN CIRCLE

The Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle, one of the Greater Cleveland Reentry Strategy's Citizen Circles, is an interfaith group of community residents who provide support to formerly incarcerated persons as they rebuild their lives and regain their places as citizens and neighbors. EACC members who belong to the Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle are Nathaniel Martin, Kathy Baker, Dean Sieck, Johnnie Mitchell, Calvin Humphrey and Eleanore Dees. Up until now the Circle has been meeting with people who could help us learn about available community resources. For example, at the December meeting, Kristine Jackson (who sings in both our Chancel and Gospel Choirs) told us about the Educational Opportunity Center where she is an advisor.

At the Circle's next meeting on January 12, we plan to meet with our first participant. If you are interested in joining us, please contact any of the members of the Circle. Training is available.

HOMELESS STAND DOWN

The Homeless Stand Down is InterAct's most ambitious project of the year. It occurs on three separate days at three different venues and involves 2,000 people who are experiencing homelessness, and hundreds of volunteers. This year on January 31 at Pilgrim UCC (2592 West 14th), February 6 at the Cleveland Convention Center (500 Lakeside) and February 16 at Trinity Commons (2254 Euclid), three days of warm welcome, warm food and clothing, and many essential services will be offered to the homeless people of Cleveland.

There are many ways you can participate. You could volunteer to help as driver, greeter, host, distributor of clothing, haircutter, nurse, etc. etc. (Training is provided.) You could donate personal care kits (hygiene products), bagged lunches, winter clothing, bus passes, or money. Please come to the piano in the parlor after worship for more information and to sign up. If you aren't going to be in church please contact Kathy Baker (216-383-1684) or Barbara Edwards (216-321-9062) to learn how you can help.

IN THEIR PATH 2009!

With a goal of raising \$250,000, Joan Southgate will be walking the 250 miles from St. Catharines, Ontario, to Cleveland in May of 2009. The money raised will be used to help restore the Cozad-Bates House, the only pre-Civil War building left standing in the University Circle area, and to allow Restore Cleveland Hope to establish an Underground Railroad Resource Center there.

Restore Cleveland Hope is challenging supporters, friends and community groups to form teams to raise \$1000 to "buy a mile" of Joan's journey. Several individuals have already pledged to form their own teams. A friend of a RCH board member has "bought" 2 miles: specifically, the Peace Bridge that spans the Niagra River. Joan's book club has pledged a mile. The third grade class at Holy Rosary School is planning a bake sale, because they want to help restore the house that they have visited and learned to love.

Adrienne Brockway along with the Church in the World Ministry of EACC will soon be announcing plans for how our church can become involved in In Their Path 2009!, Restore Cleveland Hope's first major fundraising event.

EPIPHANY PARTY JANUARY 4



The entire congregation is invited to an Epiphany Party on Sunday, January 4, from 3-9PM at the home of Carolyn Smith, 1867 Cumberland Road in Cleveland Heights. Carolyn and her late husband Andy have traditionally given a party on the Sunday nearest the 12th Day of Christmas. "As the wise men brought gifts to the Christ Child,"

Carolyn says, "I ask that you bring a bag of non-perishable food which will be donated to the Cleveland Food Bank." Guests are also asked to bring a favorite dish to share. Beverages will be provided, along with entertainment by some of Carolyn's piano and voice students. Telephone Carolyn at 216-321-8008 for directions or more details.

FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNITY LIFE

On Sunday, December 28th, the congregation heard the reading of Diana Ellington Reid's play, "Another Christmas Story". This was a joint intellectual and reading effort by our youth in the Saturday Fun Program and "Fellowship" ministry. The event highlighted the talent, skill and enthusiasm of the youths, their parents and adults within our congregation. This seminal reading group is called the Euclid Avenue Church Readers. Many, many thanks to Al Parks, Loretta Weems, Sonja Graham-Everett, Vivian Taylor, Cheryl Wacasey, Mary Guen, Cloggie Crowder, Veronica Fullerton, Millie Copez, Tim Robson and Reverend Young. A job well done to Nia, Xavier, Gavon, Quidon, Varnice, Montana, Keayna and James. As always, my thanks to Mr. Clark for setting up the sanctuary. The children read well and with feeling. Diana's creation was thoughtful and timely. We have budding stars in this congregation.

Fellowship and Community Life Ministry wants to remind the church leadership of an upcoming opportunity on January 17, 2009. A workshop will be conducted here from 9 - 11:30 a.m., entitled, "Coming to Terms With Our History". This will be a fun opportunity to see how members - recent and long term - are plugged into the history of Euclid Avenue Church. Mark your calendars. Encourage other members to come. We have much to be thankful for here in this place.

Eleanore Dees, Co-Chair

Sights From Circle Fest



* * * KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS * * *

- ◆ **Andrew** (*Helen Humphrey's nephew*)
- ◆ **Georgia Bibb**
- ◆ **Leon Bibb**
- ◆ **Gysai Cooper** (*Cleveland Clinic, friend of Christian Sanders*)
- ◆ **Carmen Hill-Rutledge** (*Cleveland Clinic*)
- ◆ **Hallie K. Jones**
- ◆ **Phyllis Martien**
- ◆ **Gregory Richardson & family** (*Manuel Roderick's best friend*)
- ◆ **Barbara Smith Weems**
- ◆ **Sandra Thomas**
- ◆ **Howard Wood & Family** (*Cleveland Clinic*)
- ◆ **Rosie Wyatt**
- ◆ **Thelma Young** (*mother of Pastor Terri*)

Please remember these persons in your prayers and notify Eleanore Dees, (216) 295-0872, or the Church Office to identify the names and/or needs of others who would appreciate being remembered in our prayers.

Bural and Kathie Buckner would like to announce that their son Chief Warrant Officer 2 Craig G. Buckner married Sarah James, daughter of John and Kathy, on December 27th, 2008 in Trenton, Ohio. She's a teacher with the Department of Defense Education Activity on Okinawa, Japan. He's in the Marine Corps, stationed at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California. He is scheduled to leave for Iraq within the next few weeks. This will be his second tour of duty to Iraq. Please keep him in your prayers.



Cards for Recovering Soldiers



* * * JOYS * * *

Carole Brown is one of the Master Quilters whose work will be included in a special celebratory exhibit at the Historical Society of Washington D.C. from January 11-31. The Historical Society and the Women of Color Quilters Network have partnered with The Group for Cultural Documentation to present "Quilts for Obama: An Exhibit Celebrating the Inauguration of our 44th President." Carol's quilt, "Hear My Silent Song," will be one of only 44 quilts on exhibit. Carole has been quilting since only 2005 and was amazed as well as honored that her quilt was chosen. She will be attending the opening.

Amber Bogard was named one of the "Players of the Week" by the Plain Dealer. She is a sophomore at Lutheran East where she plays forward/center on their basketball team. Against Akron Kenmore she had 12 points, 12 rebounds and three blocks; against North Canton Hoover she had 14 points and 12 rebounds; against Midpark she had 24 points, 10 rebounds and 3 blocks. In addition to basketball she enjoys drawing and biology class.

Gillian Kuroiwa, a high school senior, plays the cello in both the Contemporary Youth Orchestra, which performs at various concert halls, and the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, performing at Severance Hall. She hopes to make music her career and is currently auditioning for schools of music at several colleges. Her top choice is Oberlin, since she is already studying with a teacher there.

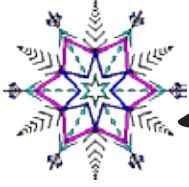
Peter Henderson has been hired by the Cleveland Clinic in its Environmental Services department through the Clinic's Job Partnership Program. Pete applied as a member of this congregation and fortunately was employed right before the Clinic announced its hiring freeze!

Christine Fant just got back from a cruise in celebration of her 85th birthday. She also had her first plane ride. Her daughter and granddaughter, who is a travel agent so made all the arrangements, were among the five in the group that went with her. Christine has many photos and memories to share about this exciting experience.



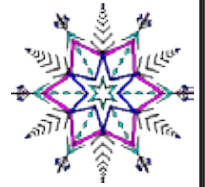
Lap Quilt Gifts

The Women's Association reports that 16 lap quilts were donated to Shaker Gardens Nursing and Rehabilitation Center this December.



JANUARY 2009

(BIRTHDAYS/WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES NOTED HEREIN)



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

Monthly Ministry/Team/Council Meetings

1st Sunday - Transitional Steering Team
 1st Wednesday - Council of Ministries
 2nd Sunday - Fellowship..., Worship...
 3rd Sunday - Christian Education...
 4th Saturday - Men's Council
 4th Sunday - Church in the World
 5th Sunday - Ushers

**FEB. Beacon
 Deadline:
 JAN. 20**

1
 HAPPY
 NEW YEAR!

OFFICE CLOSED

Nathaniel Martin

2

3

Kristen Alberda

4

8:45 - Adult Study
 10:00 -Worship
 11:30 - Fellowship
 Transitional Steering
 team,
 12:15 PM
 Confirmation
 Class
 Epiphany Party
Floecie Goard

5

7:00 PM - C.A.

Christian Sanders

6

10:00 AM
 - Women's
 Association
 4:30 PM - Kenpo
 Martial Arts

Nicole Buckle

7

12noon
 - Prayer & Healing
 Service
 6:00 PM
 - Gospel Choir
 7:00 PM - C.O.M.
 - A.A

**Victoria Mitchell
 Maurio Powell**

8

8:00 PM
 - Chancel Choir

9

10
 10:00 -
 Saturday Fun

11

8:45 - Adult Study
 10:00 -Worship
 11:30 - Fellowship
 Fellowship &
 Community Life,
 Worship & Arts
 12:15 PM
 Confirmation
 Class

12

7:00 PM - C.A

13

10:00 AM
 - Women's
 Association
 4:30 PM - Kenpo
 Martial Arts

14

12 noon
 - Prayer & Healing
 Service
 6:00 PM
 - Gospel Choir
 7:00 PM - A.A

15

8:00 PM
 - Chancel Choir

16

17
 9:00 EACC's
 History Review

John Peterson

18

8:45 - Adult Study
 10:00 -Worship
 11:30 - Fellowship
 Christian Ed, Stew-
 ards-ship, Church in
 the World
 12:15 PM
 Confirmation

19

Martin Luther King
 Jr. Day
 OFFICE CLOSED
 7:00 PM - C.A

**Denise Merritt
 Kathie Buckner**

20

10:00 AM -
 Women's
 Association
 4:00 Pastoral Care
 Team
 4:30 PM - Kenpo
 Martial Arts

Dominic O'Neal

21

12 noon
 - Prayer & Healing
 Service
 6:00 PM
 - Gospel Choir
 7:00 PM - A.A

22

8:00 PM
 - Chancel Choir

Doris Simmons

23

**Cornelius Bogard
 Ashley Wasburn**

24

10 AM - Men's
 Council
 - Saturday Fun

25

8:45 - Adult Study
 10:00 -Worship
 Annual
 Congregational
 Meeting

26

7:00 PM - C.A

27

10:00 AM -
 Women's
 Association
 4:30 PM - Kenpo
 Martial Arts

28

12 noon
 - Prayer & Healing
 Service
 6:00 PM
 - Gospel Choir
 7:00 PM - A.A

29

8:00 PM
 - Chancel Choir

Bethany O'Neal

30

31
 Homeless
 Stand down

❖ The Associated Press reported today (Dec. 19) that the United States is the only Western nation unwilling to sign a declaration presented Thursday at the United Nations calling for worldwide decriminalization of homosexuality.

The refusal drew quick reaction from the Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC's general minister and president. "The decision of the United States to oppose a U.N. resolution that would call for the decriminalization of homosexuality worldwide is appalling," he said. "The fact that we were the only major western country to refuse to do so, and on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is especially reprehensible. It should come as no surprise, however, that an administration that condoned the use of torture and that turned the relationships of gay and lesbian people into a wedge issue for partisan political gain would take this action," said Thomas.

A top United Nations human rights official lamented that there are still too many countries that criminalize sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex and that some 10 countries still have laws making homosexual activity punishable by death.

"Those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, those who are transgender, transsexual or intersex, are full and equal members of the human family and are entitled to be treated as such," U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay told a high-level panel discussion on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, held at U.N. headquarters in New York. "The ageless cliché that everyone is equal but some are more equal than others is not acceptable. No human being should be denied their human rights simply because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. No human being should be subject to discrimination, violence, criminal sanctions or abuse simply because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Ironically many of these laws, like Apartheid laws that criminalized sexual relations between consenting adults of different races, are relics of the colonial and are increasingly recognized as anachronistic and as inconsistent both with international law and with traditional values of dignity, inclusion and respect for all." She said that laws proscribing the death penalty for such activities are used to justify threats, attacks to the physical and moral integrity of persons, including their exposure to torture, with human rights defenders being particularly vulnerable. "The stigma attached to these issues means that violence and discrimination often go unpunished as victims dare not report their cases and the authorities do not pay sufficient attention to those who do," Pillay added.

Observers of the proceedings noted the U.S. delegation's concerns stemmed from an unwillingness to commit the federal government to policies that may conflict with existing state statutes. Several U.S. states permit discrimination based on sexual orientation in matters of adoption, housing and employment at privately held companies.

Human rights advocates are disappointed that the United States would refuse to extend the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights to LGBT persons and are looking to President-elect Barack Obama to change course on such issues.

❖ Embedded advertising is everywhere – and much of it, especially during the holidays, targets children. The UCC's Office of Communication, Inc. is asking you to take notice – and then to take an active role in forwarding the word about the potentially harmful role of product placement in today's media.

Product placement seems harmless enough, says the Rev. J.

Bennett Guess, executive director of OC, Inc., the historic media-justice arm of the UCC. Yet branded content now consumes 45 percent of prime-time network programming in addition to paid commercials. Nielsen reports that American Idol featured products 4,636 times in the first half of 2008. "While Simon, Paula and Randy may not necessarily prefer Diet Coke in real life, millions of American Idol viewers are led to believe they do – at Coca-Cola's paid insistence," says Guess.

To raise awareness of this troubling trend in embedded advertising, OC, Inc. is rolling out its "Spare Kids the Ads" campaign this week. Three holiday e-cards – designed to promote awareness about increasing product placement and its impact on transparency in corporate influence and scriptwriting – are available for participants to send to friends and family members. OC, Inc. is encouraging UCC members to join media-reform activists in distributing the creative e-cards far and wide as a way to take a stand for a better media. To get started, simply go to <ucc.org/sparekidstheads>.

"We think this a fun and informative way to ask people to consider the growing impact of product placement in the media," says Guess. "The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is currently looking into how embedded advertising is becoming more intrusive, especially in relation to its targeting of children."

In June, the UCC's OC, Inc. joined with the Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood in urging the FCC to adopt a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on product placement and product integration, citing the increasingly blurred lines between television programming and advertising. "We are deeply concerned that these stealth advertising salvos were being aired during a nationwide epidemic of obesity and diabetes, when food producers were under scrutiny for their marketing tactics," the letter to the FCC stated.

You can also express your concern about the proliferation of embedded advertising by visiting the FCC's website, <fcc.gov/contacts.html>, and/or by emailing FCC Board Chairman Kevin Martin at kjmweb@fcc.org.

❖ In mid-November, President George W. Bush announced the recipients of the 2008 National Medal of Arts, the nation's highest award for artistic excellence for artists and arts patrons. The Jubilee Singers from the UCC-related Fisk University and 8 other recipients will receive medals presented by the President and Mrs. Laura Bush in a ceremony at the White House. The National Endowment for the Arts manages the National Medal of Arts nomination process and notified the artists of their selection to receive a medal.

Fisk has a long history of excellence. Its alumni figure prominently throughout the annals of history. The 142-year-old institution is known as the alma mater of internationally renowned historian and author John Hope Franklin, social scientist W.E.B. DuBois, poet and essayist Nikki Giovanni, Congressman John Lewis, as well as its current President Hazel R. O'Leary, the first African American and woman to be Secretary of Energy.

Recently the school was named as the top Historically Black University by Newsweek/Kaplan and ranked fifth of 300 schools in terms of student volunteerism and graduation rate. This year, Princeton Review selected Fisk as one of the top 15% of American colleges and universities for the seventeenth consecutive year.

Fisk is one of six historically African-American colleges related to the UCC. It was founded in 1866 by the former American Missionary Association, an outgrowth of the Amistad Support Committee and a forerunner of the UCC's present-day Justice and Witness.

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the magi and the shepherds have found their way home, the work of christmas begins:

To find the lost and lonely one, to heal the broken soul with love, to feed the hungry children with warmth and good food, to feel the earth below, the sky above!

To free the prisoner from all chains, to make the powerful care, to rebuild the nations with strength and good will, to see god's children everywhere!

To bring hope to every task you do, to dance at a baby's new birth, to make music in an old person's heart, and to sing to the colors of the earth!

~ Jim Strathdee, in response to a Christmas poem by Howard Therman

**EUCLID AVENUE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
9606 EUCLID AVENUE
CLEVELAND, OH 44106**