

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

*20220 Hopewell Road
Mount Vernon, OH 43050*

*Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ
and minister to the needs of others in His name.*

January – February 2015

Pastor's Ponderings – *Pastor Lee Cubie*

THE SAGA OF THE RICE BUCKET CHALLENGE, AN EPIC TALE OF GOD'S GENEROSITY [A STORY SHARED WITH EAST OHIO CONFERENCE, UMC. SEE [HTTP://EOCUMCNEWS.COM](http://EOCUMCNEWS.COM), DEC 17]

IT IS WITH JOY THAT THE HOPEWELL AND SOUTH VERNON CHARGE TOOK UP THE "RICE BUCKET CHALLENGE." HELLO, MY NAME IS LEE CUBIE AND I AM THE PASTOR, SINCE JULY, OF THIS AMAZING CHARGE. GOD'S GRACE IS TRULY AT WORK IN OUR TWO CHURCHES. HOW DO I KNOW THIS? WELL, I KNOW IT IS NOT BY MY LEADERSHIP THAT WE TOOK UP THE "RICE BUCKET CHALLENGE." IN FACT THE IDEA STARTED WITH BARB BUTLER, WHO ASKED IF THE CHANGE WE COLLECT IN OUR COIN JAR FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER COULD BE USED FOR THE "RICE BUCKET CHALLENGE." THUS BEGAN OUR MONTH LONG SAGA. THE FIRST SUNDAY STARTED AND THE HOPEWELL CHURCH WAS ASKED IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND THE CHALLENGE TO THEIR SISTER CHURCH IN SOUTH VERNON. WITH A RESOUNDING AMEN, I WAS TASKED WITH ANNOUNCING THE DAUNTING TASK OF RAISING MONEY FROM SOUTH VERNON.

NOW YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, HOPEWELL HAS A HISTORY OF CHALLENGING LARGER CHURCHES. BEING A SMALL CHURCH, OF ABOUT THIRTY IN ATTENDANCE, THEY ARE OFTEN UNDERESTIMATED, THE RESULT BEING A DAVID AND GOLIATH STORY. AS THEY LIKE TO SAY, "WE MAY BE SMALL, BUT WE ARE MIGHTY!" HOPEWELL HAD A HEAD START, THEY HAD A COIN JAR, THEY HAD A TRADITION OF GIVING LOOSE CHANGE, AND THEY HAD A WINNING TRADITION.

WITH ALL OF THIS IN MIND, AND A HEAVY HEART, I ANNOUNCED TO SOUTH VERNON, A CHURCH OF ABOUT SIXTY IN ATTENDANCE, THE CHALLENGE OF THEIR SISTER CHURCH. I HAD TO POINT OUT THAT THEY HAD A HEAD START, SINCE THEY ALREADY HAD A COIN JAR, ETC. UPON HEARING THIS, THERE WAS A NOISE AND A TUMULT AND SHOUTS OF, "WE WILL NOT BE BEAT," AND FULL OF THE SPIRIT, SHERRI WARE ROSE UP, RUSHED TO MY OFFICE AND CAME OUT WITH A GIANT PLASTIC COKE BOTTLE, DESIGNED FOR COLLECTING LOOSE CHANGE AND COVERED IN RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS. I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I HAD AWAKENED, AND WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING PROCEEDED WITH THE REST OF THE SERVICE AS PEOPLE RANDOMLY CAME UP AND STARTED PUTTING IN COINS. SO MUCH FOR HOPEWELL'S INITIAL ADVANTAGE.

AS YOU CAN IMAGINE THE COMPETITION BECAME QUITE HEATED, IN FACT



GARY HUGHES, FROM HOPEWELL, TOLD ME, "I AM CONFIDENT WE ARE GOING TO WIN, BECAUSE I AM A SORE LOSER AND I WILL NOT LET THAT HAPPEN!" I SHUDDERED AT THE INTENSITY OF THIS MAN'S PASSION, AND I FEARED FOR HIS SALVATION. SO EACH WEEK WE TALLIED THE AMOUNTS AND ANNOUNCED THE AMOUNTS RAISED. NOW, HOPEWELL WAS TRAILING, GOING INTO WEEK FOUR, SO THEY STEPPED UP AND WITH A MIGHTY WHOOSH OF PAPER MONEY AND CHECKS THEY SET ABOUT TO OVERWHELM THEIR ARCH NEMESIS, SOUTH VERNON. WHEN THE TALLIES FOR WEEK FOUR WERE TOTALED HOPEWELL WAS AHEAD \$130.00. BARB BUTLER STATED THAT SHE "WAS OVERWHELMED BY THE GENEROSITY OF THE PEOPLE AT HOPEWELL." THIS MEANT THAT GOING INTO WEEK FIVE SOUTH VERNON WAS BEHIND BY \$130.00 WITH ONLY ONE OPPORTUNITY TO SURPASS THE GENEROSITY OF HOPEWELL OF "SMALL BUT MIGHTY" FAME.

IT WAS AN AWKWARD MOMENT CLIMBING INTO THE PULPIT HAVING RACED FROM HOPEWELL TO SOUTH VERNON THAT LAST SUNDAY IN NOVEMBER. HERE WERE ALL THE LOVING HOPEFUL PEOPLE OF SOUTH VERNON SMILING AND CONFIDENT THAT LAST WEEK'S TALLY WOULD STILL LEAVE THEM AHEAD. I DID NOT WANT TO TELL THEM THAT THEIR SISTER CHURCH HAD SANDBAGGED THEM AND RACED AHEAD BY \$130.00. WHAT AN OVERWHELMING ADVANTAGE HOPEWELL HAD. IT HAD TAKEN SOUTH VERNON TWO WEEKS TO RAISE OVER \$100.00 DOLLARS, HOW COULD THEY MANAGE TO WIN NOW? I TRIED TO BE POSITIVE AND ENCOURAGING, SAYING IT WASN'T THE AMOUNT THAT MATTERED BUT THE SPIRIT IN WHICH IT WAS GIVEN. BUT BOB GRISOM, LIKE THE NAZARITE SAMPSON, ROSE UP OUT OF HIS PEW, WALKED UP TO THAT PLASTIC COKE BOTTLE DESIGNED FOR CHANGE AND COVERED IN RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS, PICKED IT UP, WALKED BACK TO THE PEWS AND STARTED IT PASSING BACK AND FORTH LIKE A SHUTTLE-COCK MOVING IN A LOOM. THE DRAMA WAS INTENSE, WOULD GOD WORK A MIRACLE IN OUR MIDST?

GOING INTO WEEK FIVE OUR TOTALS WERE AS FOLLOWS: HOPEWELL HAD RAISED \$462.39. SOUTH VERNON HAD RAISED \$432.15. IT TOOK SOUTH VERNON FOUR WEEKS, COUNT 'EM, FOUR WEEKS TO RAISE \$332.15. HOPEWELL RAISED AN ADDITIONAL \$237.61 IN WEEK FIVE LEAVING THEIR TOTAL AT AN EVEN \$700.00. SEVEN HUNDRED, A PERFECT NUMBER FROM REVELATION; HAD GOD SPOKEN? WAS THIS THE MIRACLE? WERE THE PEOPLE AT SOUTH VERNON NOT TO SEE THEIR OWN MIRACLE? WELL GOD IS IN THE RESURRECTION BUSINESS, AND RESURRECTED THE HOPES OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VERNON ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT WHERE WE LIT THE CANDLE OF CHRIST OUR HOPE, FOR ON THAT SUNDAY GOD BROUGHT INTO THAT PLASTIC COKE BOTTLE DESIGNED TO RECEIVE CHANGE AND COVERED IN RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AN ADDITIONAL \$373.36, BRINGING THEIR TOTAL TO \$705.51. PRAISE BE TO GOD, THAT THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VERNON COULD SEE GOD AT WORK IN THEIR MIDST!

OUR TWO CHURCH TOTAL WAS \$1405.51, WHICH IS SIX AND A HALF POUNDS HEAVY OF A METRIC TONNE, WHICH IS 200 POUNDS OVER A STANDARD TON. THIS IS HOW I KNOW THAT GOD'S GRACE IS ALIVE IN OUR CHARGE, FOR GENEROSITY IS A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT AND OF THE IMAGE OF GOD. IT IS WITH JOY THAT I COULD TELL YOU, "BRETHREN OF THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH HAS BEEN SHOWN IN THE CHURCHES OF" (2 COR. 8:1) HOPEWELL AND SOUTH VERNON. AMEN.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: SVUMC ACHIEVED THE GREATER TOTAL; WE MIGHT CLAIM THAT HUMC ACHIEVED THE GREATER PER CAPITA CONTRIBUTION. BUT IN THE END, THE WINNERS ARE THOSE STARVING SOULS WHO WILL RECEIVE THIS RICE.]

Thanks to the Trustees...

...for making sure the HUMC structure looks clean and white once again (*see the Photo Gallery page*). A hardworking crew, that was hired by the trustees, removed peeling paint, caulked the exterior, and applied a coat of high quality paint...just ahead of cold weather!

Follow Hopewell UMC...

...on the Web:

www.mvhopewellumc.org

...on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon

Follow Three Rivers District...

<http://3riversumc.org>

United Methodist Women Report – *Marsha Clayborne, UMW Secretary/Treasurer*

The UMW met at the home of Joan Coon and Eleanor Doup on Tuesday, December 9. Virginia Skinner provided pizza and pop for the group. Everyone brought salad or dessert to share. Joan Coon gave the luncheon prayer. Eight members were in attendance.

Barb Butler called the meeting to order, and dues, missions, and birthday money was collected. Marsh Clayborne gave the secretary and treasurer's report. During old business, it was noted that only eight ultimate cloths are left.

Under new business, the group reviewed a church calendar draft and set meeting dates for 2015. There will be no UMW meetings in January or February because of the weather. The next UMW meeting will be Tuesday, March 10. Jean Riley suggested that we have a "fun night" at the church.

The meeting was adjourned and Joan Coon prepared the program. She presented a couple readings and Bible verses from Matthew 27:21-23. The group played games, and Ellen Kaiser and Barb Butler won prizes. The UMW silent auction began and the group raised \$57.00. The group gathered at the table to fill candy bags to give the children at the "Hanging of the Greens" on December 14.

Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year.

Hopewell Works Well – *Don Russell, Admin Council Chair*

Happy New Year, Hopewell U.M.C....in a church building that enters its 100th year of service to God and the community!

I hope that you will agree that our church has experienced a significant number of challenges over the past few years, with six different pastors and the passing of many stalwart members. But through these challenges, Hopewell still stands tall with the addition of many congregants who, young and old alike, have shown a willingness to volunteer their considerable gifts in helping to continue its purpose as a force in the Mt. Vernon/Gambier spiritual community.

It seems that our committees are working diligently to make our church more relevant and vibrant in our Christian mission. If we look at the last few council meetings for example, we have formally embraced The Nursing Outreach Ministry (Thank you Elaine Farie, Donna Lawhon Spinks, Donna Lybarger, Audra Cubie!); attended to the drainage, erosion, venting, and exterior painting issues (Thank you Trustee Committee!); crafted a more cohesive plan for worship services to include music, decorations, paraments, etc. (Thank you Worship Committee!); approved The Barnabas Project (assisting college students) (Thank you Linda Joseph!), just to name some of the positive actions taken by our church!

These actions are a result of our congregants taking an active role in their committees with an eye on our future, as articulated by the Vision team.

We all have received gifts from God and should exercise those gifts in our everyday lives certainly, but also in our church lives to ensure that Hopewell remains vibrant and relevant in the future.

Happy 2015 to all!!! And remember to review the committee membership reflected on Page 5 of this newsletter. Please bring any thoughts/ideas to these folks and their committees so that we can enjoy even more positive growth in this New Year.

May God bless you all!

Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness."

-- Roman philosopher Seneca

Nursing Outreach Ministry – Elaine Farie, Audra Cubie, and Donna Spinks

The first major endeavor of our Nursing Outreach Ministry was held Sunday, November 16, 2014, at our sister church, South Vernon United Methodist.

Titled "An Afternoon of Planning for the Future", it was an opportunity for the community to understand the necessary steps to prepare for "end of life" decisions.

The five guest speakers: an attorney discussing advanced directives, a representative explaining the need for organ donation, a specialist for lifeline personal response, the director of a local funeral home, and a local Hospice chaplain, all contributed vital information to a very receptive audience. We were also pleased to have a local kidney recipient tell her story of a "second chance" for her life.

As practicing nurses, we encourage the congregation to be involved with our ministry by sharing their ideas for future health-related events, having their blood pressures checked after Sunday services, and recording current health information posted on the bulletin board in the Sunday School room. Our phone numbers are posted there, also, if we can be of any assistance.

In 2015 we plan to have events such as "Caregiving Isn't for Cowards" and also a time for "Prevention of Medication Errors" as two topics for discussion and information.

Our Thanks to everyone for their continued support and prayer.



(Left) On WMVO radio, Audra Cubie and Elaine Farie promoted the Nursing Outreach Ministry's "An Evening of Planning for the Future." (Below, left) On Nov. 16 at South Vernon UMC, the attendees heard from experts on a variety of medical and legal issues. (Below) The evening ended with food and fellowship.



Since You Asked...About the 'Old Rugged Cross'



For several (approximately 8) years a sturdy, hand-hewn cross has graced the altar. HUMC neighbor and former parishioner D. J. Johnson says she, her husband John, and Pastor Michael Padula built the cross from barn beams that the Johnsons had acquired for their great room and kitchen-remodeling project. For the cross, D. J. selected the straightest beams. She says they came from a barn that was probably built before 1860, when sawing beams became feasible in the area.

2015 Church Council

Lay Leadership:

Jean Riley
Bob Joseph
Don Newland
Joanne Purcell

Pastor-Parish Relations:

Barb Butler, chairperson
Bev Lahmon
Linda Joseph
Don Russell
Jean Riley
Elaine Farie
Ellen Kaiser, ex-officio

Trustees:

Cary Purcell
John Wolfe
Amy Yashnyk
Mickey Gourley
Bill Lawhon

Council Chairperson - Don Russell

Lay Leader - Ellen Kaiser

Worship:

Irma Newland
Marsha Clayborne
Donna Lybarger
Bob Joseph
John Wolfe

Stewardship and Finance:

Barb Butler, Treasurer
Don Russell
Eleanor Doup, Audit
Greg Yashnyk
Ellen Kaiser
Linda Joseph
One person from Trustees

Christian Education:

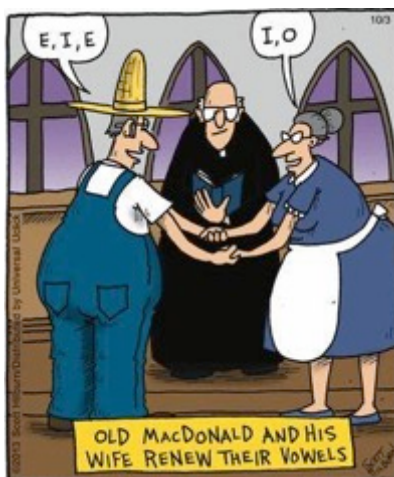
Bitsi Gourley
Erika Kanuckel-Wolfe
Sara Lawhon

Outreach and Evangelism:

Irma Newland
Mary Smith
Karolyn Smith
Don Newland
Bill Lawhon
Bob Joseph

Lay Delegate to Conference:

Linda Joseph
Bill Lawhon, alternate



Birthdays

January

4 DJ Johnson
8 Jean Campbell

February

1 Don Newland
1 Julie Zimmerman
4 Anne Russell

February

9 Shad Bevington
11 Brad Coon
11 Amy Yashnyk
13 Howard Workman
18 Leah Gourley
20 Donna Lybarger
23 Alivia Zimmerman
28 Michael Padula

Please pray for...

...Christians who, in other countries, are persecuted for their beliefs.
...the Hopewell UMC Nursing Ministry: those who are serving and those who will be served.
...our men and women in uniform, and their families.
...those whose Christmas bills exceed their income.
...the community within and around Hopewell UMC.
...members and friends who haven't been in church for a while.
...those in mental and physical anguish.
...members of our government at all levels, for wisdom, courage, and compassion.

Photo Gallery



HUCM, before and after re-painting in November.



Top spellers at MV Middle School for this school year included sixth-grade winner and building champion Jessie Gourley (center, in purple). The winners will be competing in the Knox County Spelling Bee on Jan. 14. Congratulations and best wishes, Jessie!



Nov. 12 – Thirty-two members and friends enjoyed the food and fellowship during the annual, UMW-sponsored church family dinner at the Mullet restaurant on Deal Road. Very little remained but the dirty dishes.



Dec. 7 – After worship, HUCM youth decorated cookies as a gift for others.



Dec. 14 - The Gourley family (Bitsi and Mickey, Jessie, Leah, and Natalie) lit three Advent candles.



Dec. 14 – **Hanging of the Greens.**
Top, left: Wonderful Methodist food!
Top, right: HUCM youth put the finishing touches on the Christmas tree.
Bottom, left: Christmas shoppers bid vigorously on the many silent auction items.
Bottom, right: Joe Beran announced the successful bidders and auctioned a few items. The auction, organized by the UMW, raised \$350! The evening ended with a carol sing.

