

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

20220 Hopewell Road

Mount Vernon, OH 43050

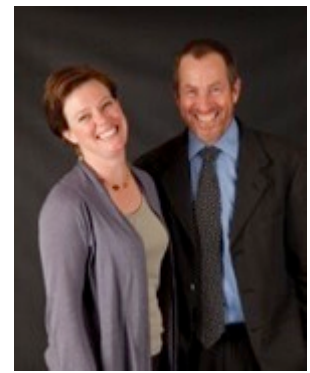
*Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ
and minister to the needs of others in His name.*

March – April 2015

Pastor's Ponderings – *Pastor Lee Cubie*

Confession

We have entered into the season of Lent. It is a time of introspection for some of us. It is a time when we discipline the body through fasting and self-denial. It is a time when we take stock of our life. It is a time of prayer and meditation. Often it is thought of as a time when we seek to improve who we are in the face of God. This is all well and good, but I would like to suggest a different reason than personal Christian self-improvement.



The purpose for confession and repentance, the two hallmarks of Lent, is to establish a relationship of blessing with God. But this is not to be a private blessing. The blessings or gifts that God gives to the church are for the building up of the church body [Eph. 4:12]. We do not think very often of righteousness as a gift from God but outside of the righteousness imparted to us in Christ, we are unrighteous [Romans 3:21-26]. Righteousness, therefore, is a gift from God. As a gift from God, it has a purpose greater than private pride. Jesus warns us that piety or righteousness is not for self-glorification [Matt. 6:1]. So the question remains, what is the gift of righteousness for if not for personal salvation?

In the book of James we read, "Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.*" Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves; he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit." [James 5:13-18] This is an interesting passage because it suggests a different reason for confession than just the remission of sins.

In this passage, I believe is the primary purpose of personal righteousness, and therefore, what should be for us as Christians, the primary purpose of Lent. It is not about personal salvation but about the health of the church. James seems to be pointing out that confession and righteousness are for effective prayer for the wellbeing of others. This matches what we

see in Jesus where his righteousness is not for his benefit but for our benefit. He was powerful in prayer because he was obedient to his Father. Obedience to the Father is the primary definition of righteousness.

For me, Lent takes on a new meaning with this understanding of righteousness. Lent is a season which brings us into focus with God so that we may be a blessing to others. I hope this Lent blesses you with the richness of God's righteousness. And as you grow in righteousness may your prayers grow in effectiveness for the healing of others. Amen.

Nursing Outreach Ministry Update – Elaine Farie, RN

The Nursing Outreach Ministry will be having a program, “**Caregiving Isn't for Cowards,**” on Sunday, April 19 from 3:00 to 5:00 PM at South Vernon UMC. We will be focusing on the importance of realizing all that is involved in caring for a loved one in the home situation as well as the need for the "caregiver" to be cared for. There will be guest speakers to share their knowledge: a discharge planner from the hospital, a social worker from Hospice, a nutritionist, and possibly more. We are still organizing this and will keep everyone updated.

Also, please check our little bulletin board in the back of the church for health related info, as well as the phone numbers for Audra Cubie, Donna Spinks, and Elaine Farie if we can be of help to anyone...Also, B.P. checks after Sunday service.

Stay warm--keep healthy. SPRING IS COMING I heard the birds singing!!!!!!!!!!

2014 Annual Financial Report – Barb Butler

Beginning balance 1/1/2014	\$ 12,695.96
Total Receipts	\$ 50,634.63
Disbursements	<u>(\$ 36,099.14)</u>
Checking Balance 12/31/2014	\$ 27,231.45
Building Fund Balance	\$ 14,754.72
Transfer was made from the building fund to cover the two major building improvements:	
Foundation work	\$ 3,335.00
Paint and Painting	\$ 6,492.97

Financial Statement as of 2/28/2015

– Barb Butler

Beginning balance 1/1/2015	\$ 27,231.45
Receipts	4,258.00
Disbursements	<u>(\$ 5,466.26)</u>
Checking balance 2/28/2015	\$26,023.19
Building Fund	\$14,754.72

Old Man Winter not only is putting a freeze on us, but also putting a freeze on our church income.

Pray he lightens up a little, real soon. I think we all miss attending that little country church.

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Report – Barb Butler, retiring Chairperson

Six members of the PPR Committee and Pastor Lee met on January 28 to review the last six months and to appoint a new chairperson, as Barb Butler desired to step down. Elaine Farie graciously accepted the position of chairperson for 2015. Thanks, Elaine.

Follow Hopewell UMC...

...on the Web:

www.mvhopewellumc.org

...on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon

Follow Three Rivers District...

<http://3riversumc.org>



On Christmas Eve, the Hopewell youth were a central part of the worship service.



Since You Asked...About the Cross and Flame Emblem

The Cross and Flame emblem is a powerful reminder of who and Whose we are as United Methodists.

The insignia's adoption quickly followed the union of two denominations in 1968: The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Following more than two dozen conceptualizations, a traditional symbol—the cross—was linked with a single flame with dual tongues of fire. The resulting insignia is rich in meaning. It relates The United Methodist church to God through Christ (cross) and the Holy Spirit (flame). The flame is a reminder of Pentecost when witnesses were unified by the power of the Holy Spirit and saw "tongues, as of fire" (Acts 2:3).

The elements of the emblem also remind us of a transforming moment in the life of Methodism's founder, John Wesley, when he sensed God's presence and felt his heart "strangely warmed." The two tongues of a single flame may also be understood to represent the union of two denominations. -- Abstracted from UMC.org



Donna Lybarger, helping others in her nursing profession...as seen in the Mt. Vernon News web site. Donna is one of four nurses in this small, but mighty, congregation.

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

-- Martin Luther King, Jr.



Charge Conference 10/29/14 Gay Street UMC – Don Russell

[Ed. note: This item, overlooked for the last newsletter, is included to highlight (**in bold**) some key...and timely...observations about our church and 'older church' tendencies and two questions to ponder.]

Attendees were from Ebenezer, Epworth, Gay Street, Hopewell, South Vernon and Mulberry Street; the attendees from Hopewell Church were: Don and Irma Newland, Barb Butler, Bev Lahmon, Don and Anne Russell and Lee and Audra Cubie.

Dr. Call began the conference with the singing of a hymn in both Swahili and English. He informed the conference that we would be voting verbally as there should not be any contentious issues for action.

We then sang "Marching to Zion" and Dr. Call read from Colossians. He then asked that each of the attending church council secretaries take minutes of the meeting and submit same within 3 days to the District Office.

Dr. Call then asked a representative from each church to discuss what its most notable activities and strengths were. Pastor Lee identified Hopewell as a "lay-driven" church which, in spite of having no permanent pastor for 8 months, had grown in membership, and he spoke about the Nursing Outreach Ministry as an example of its "caring ministry" and highlighted its program concerning "end of life" to be rolled out 11/16/14.

We then viewed a video, "Why Community Engagement Matters." Its focus was connection to God, connection to community. It pointed up that the older the church, the less connection with community, i.e., the energy shifts from outward to inward spiritual care and emphasized that it was more important to do things with the community than for the community. It also spoke to outreach, "hands-on" community service involvement to attract and retain younger Christians. It pointed up the congruency of these acts with scriptural teaching of love God, love thy neighbor.

Dr. Call then posed the question, "Who would mourn if your church were no more? What kind of void would it leave?"

We then voted on all issues enumerated on the 2014-15 Church Conference Official Ballot. Dr. Call then closed with the singing of "The Doxology" and prayer and then adjourned the conference.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

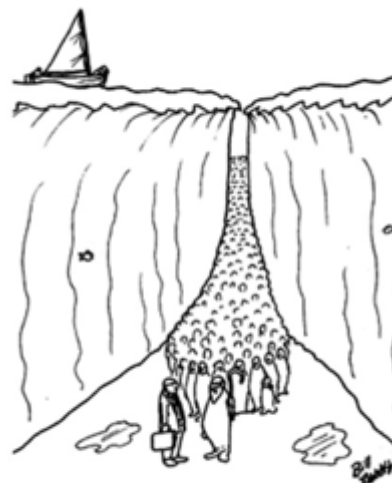
THE WALL STREET JOURNA



"It started as an out-of-body experience but I forgot the password to get back in."

Attention All Ladies:

May 1 and 2 the South Vernon Women's Ministry has invited the Hopewell ladies to participate in their Retreat being held at Camp Cornish. If desire, you can spend the night. More information to follow. -- submitted by Barb Butler.



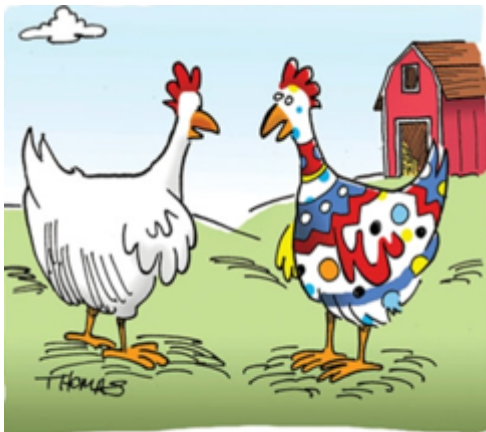
"Because we didn't have time to do an environmental impact study, that's why."



"Arise, shine, for your Light has come." -- Rev. Don Newland's message, subbing in the pulpit on Epiphany Sunday, January 4.



December 28 was special at Hopewell UMC as Bev and Wendy Lahmon dedicated the beautiful Advent wreath and table in loving memory of Timothy Lahmon.



"I was an Easter egg."

Birthdays

March

- 13 Karolyn Smith
- 14 Joanne Purcell
- 21 Audra Cubie

April

- 2 Adam Lawhon
- 3 Kyler Beauchamp



The furnace at HUMC broke down during the week of Feb 15, but after two service calls, it is now repaired. Thanks to the Newlands for alertly detecting the issue and to Trustee (and trusty) Bill Lawhon for sticking with the problem until it was resolved.

