



## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

As you read this submission, I have already begun my much-needed journey toward Spiritual Renewal. It should not come as a surprise, that clergy pour out of themselves each day (especially on Sunday), to glorify God, while assisting others in their Walk with Christ. This comes in many forms: worship, praise, prayer, study, teaching, and pastoral care, to name but a few. However, though the sheep who comprise a local congregation find refreshment and new spiritual energy within weekly corporate worship opportunities, it is difficult for clergy to do the same, especially when they are leading, or otherwise officiating the same services. Due to this, along with the reality that clergy are on-call for spiritual needs and crisis all day, every day, it should not be surprising to learn that they pour out, faster than they are able to fill-up. Unless this is properly addressed, vocational burnout and spiritual ineffectiveness are only two of the possible negative outcomes.

Theoretically, this problem should not exist. After all, clergy simply hand everything over to God, and then they have no reason to worry about any of it, ever again; right? Well, this “theory” is not only unrealistic, but truly impossible, if the clergyperson in question takes their calling with any degree of seriousness. The truth is that we do bring congregational issues to God in prayer, yet that does not mean we suddenly forget the situation, or the people involved. In fact, when someone is experiencing hardship of any type, clergy pray for and with them throughout their situation; often continuing to do so, long after the public has moved on to other things. In other words, we carry the burden with our flock, until they can lay it down themselves. Remember as well, that outside of the local church, many of us have family responsibilities, which need our time and focus also.

These are but a few of the reasons that I find myself in need of this season away from vocational church life. My spiritual tanks are empty, and at present, I have nothing of value to pour out in service of God. Now, to be clear, I am not at the point of burnout yet, but I have reached a point where my individual, personal relationship with Christ is suffering. Until I can properly attend to this deficiency, my effectiveness as a pastor will not be what it might, or otherwise should. So, after much prayerful deliberation, and consultation with colleagues, including my District Superintendent, I have elected to take advantage of a unique provision afforded to United Methodist Clergy, which is a Leave for Spiritual Renewal.

The purpose of this leave is to afford me with an opportunity to focus my attention and time upon the relationship that I have with my Savior, and rediscover passion to serve, worship, and grow in His likeness. This looks different for each person, and though my journey will likely change, or adjust throughout the time I am taking, there are some things that are going to be consistent. For example, I will be worshipping each week with my family—together in the same pew. This is something we seldom do, and is very important for my relationship with God, as well as with my wife and children. The specific church will likely change frequently, but we are planning on exploring opportunities in the Lutheran, Episcopal, Orthodox, and Charismatic African American traditions.

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Also, it should come as no surprise to anyone who knows me, that I will be taking every opportunity possible to observe the sacrament of Holy Communion. When participating in the Eucharistic Liturgy, and receiving the sacramental offering of Christ's body and blood, I experience a closeness with my Lord in that Sacred moment. This is something I will do at the churches where we worship on Sunday, in addition to mid-week services that I plan to attend. In addition to these more formal opportunities, I am blessed to have several clergy colleagues and friends, who have committed to share the sacrament whenever needed.

I have also already begun to engage the Holy Scriptures for personal edification and growth, rather than doing so with a Bible Study or sermon in mind. This may seem trivial to some, but when you engage the Word of God for your own growth, it speaks differently than it does when the reading and study are intended for others.

In all, I think it is fair to say that I am both excited and fearful for the next several weeks. Excited in that,

I am trying to submit myself to God's plan and agenda, rather than dictate to Him what I am expecting to be accomplished. Fearful, because I know that God will be speaking quite directly to me about His desires for my life, while holding me accountable for where I have fallen short of His expectations. However, I know by faith that whatever is revealed to me, though challenging and convicting, will be the pruning I need to bare good fruit, and recommit to the calling placed upon my life. So, if you happen to think of your pastor, or his family, over the course of the next several weeks, any prayers offered for us will be greatly appreciated.

I may not be in the office during the week, at meetings, or up front on Sunday morning, but understand this: the flock assigned to me by God, that we call the Johnstown United Methodist Church, is still, and will remain, at the center of my heart. I see your faces when my eyes close, and I feel your presence when in prayer to our Lord. Thank you for allowing me this time of Spiritual Renewal. Thank you for loving me and my family. Thank you for letting me love you too.

**DONATE TO THE  
JOHNSTOWN/NORTHRIDGE  
FOOD PANTRY**

**Thank you for your continued support!  
Please DO NOT drop off expired food!!**




**REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS**

<b>Nancy Banyay</b> Brookwood Retirement Community #220 12100 Reed Hartman Hwy. Cincinnati, OH 45241	<b>Carolyn Loggins</b> New Albany Rehab Center 5055 Thompson Rd., #412 Columbus, OH 43230
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**MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET**

**W**e, along with others in our community, have joined the Church of the Ascension, in assisting with the Medical Loan Closet of Johnstown. The purpose of the Medical Loan Closet is to loan out medical equipment to those in need such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, hospital beds, toilet risers, and even breast pumps for new moms. The Closet is located at **151 Woodgate Drive**, in the rear basement of the doctor's office which is located behind the BP/Dutchess Station. **The Closet is open each Wednesday from 4-6 p.m.** We also accept donations. You will find us on Facebook as "*Medical Loan Closet of Johnstown, Ohio*". If you have any questions, please contact **Sara Poulson at 740-817-3517.**



# TRUSTEE'S AT WORK

by Mary Thomas

The Trustees are still searching for a company or person to repair the west wall along the exit to College Street. Your help in this search would certainly be appreciated. The bricks need mortar replaced and repair done. Please contact Doug Shull or the church secretary if you know a company or person who could do this repair.

J & M Goodman Landscaping has been hired to tend to the lawn, shrubbery, and the like around the church for this season. They already have done some work.

All is well at the rental properties at this time. Todd takes care of any concerns with them.

Problems with the security lights along the parking lot have given problems now and then ever since they have been installed. This matter is being looked into and hopefully can be resolved soon.

## LYDIA CIRCLE UPDATE

by Carol Butt

The Ladies of Lydia met in the home of Carol Butt on Wednesday, March, 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Sue Overholt gave the Opening Devotions and one of the passages she read from was *First Peter, Verses 5,6,7*. Carol's Roll Call was "*How Many Snows Left For the Season?*"

The Ladies approved Sue Overholt to be the Circle's new Treasurer. Carol will assume the Secretary's duties. May 11<sup>th</sup> has been chosen as the date for **The Women of Faith's Mother Daughter-Banquet**. Time to be announced. The Ladies of Lydia voted to make a donation to our Women of Faith group in loving memory of Joyce Priest. Joyce was a wonderful, compassionate and supportive member of Lydia Circle. She also served as Treasurer for many years. She will be missed.

Bible Study resumed from the book "*Ancient Secrets of The Bible*", *DEATH AND RESURRECTION: "What Happened To Jesus?"*. Discussion of selected Bible Verses from Matthew, Mark and Luke were selected from the Bible Study material. Within the group discussion it was noted how similar their account of the Crucifixion was.

There were 18 items collected for The Johnstown Area Food Pantry. Members are reminded to bring their items for someone's personal use to the April meeting. Shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste toothbrush, hand lotion etc. are greatly appreciated.

The next meeting of Lydia Circle will be on **Wednesday, April 17**, at 10 am in the home of Sue Overholt. Bible Study will be taken from Life's book, Women of Faith. Sarah and Hagar will be discussed.

## SECOND MILE GIVING CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

This is a convenient way to help year-round.

Get started today by going to [www.johnstownumc.com](http://www.johnstownumc.com)

Click "**DONATE**"! It's that easy!

by Carol Butt, Coordinator



The Caring Ministry Chair, Carol Butt, works with all of the committees listed below. If you are interested in serving on any of these committees please contact Carol at 740-967-9681.

#### THE BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY

The Bereavement Committee was not called upon to serve for the month of March.

#### GREETING CARD MINISTRY

There was one card sent last month. Anyone in our church family in need of a Thinking of You, Get Well or a Sympathy Card please contact Carol Butt.

#### MEAL MINISTRY

The Meal Ministry was not called upon to serve anyone in March. This service is offered following a hospital surgery or for illness. The committee members serve 3 to 5 meals every other day for a one-week period. Anyone wishing to serve on this committee, please contact Carol. I wish to thank our new volunteers for signing up: Debi Shull, Becky Sarosy, Rhonda Dodderer and Margie West.

#### PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY

One prayer request was made during the month of March. Please contact Carol if anyone in our church family is in need of prayers. The volunteers have been a dedicated group of people this past year and I wish to thank them for their faithfulness

#### SHUT-IN MINISTRY

The members of this committee are asked to visit a shut-in once a quarter. More than one shut -in may be visited during a quarter. If you are interested in this ministry, contact Carol Butt or Pastor Stacy. Because the shut-ins are a distance out of town, cards are being sent periodically to let them know they are being thought of.



Please call the office at 740-967-6691 by Thursday of each week to share names for those in need of prayer.

#### Birthdays

4/02 Dale Purdin  
4/03 Tyler Kohman  
4/03 Ava Robertson  
4/04 Landon Deering  
4/05 Vivian Lanthorn  
4/05 Jane Sarosy  
4/06 Mark Anctil  
4/06 Daniel Kessler  
4/10 Ashley Henney  
4/11 Halleigh Carter  
4/13 Jennifer Robertson  
4/14 Laineigh Deering  
4/14 Chloe Peloquin  
4/19 Brody Smith  
4/22 Garrett Bemiller  
4/22 Kara Keyser  
4/23 Luke Atwood  
4/29 Fred Hendren  
4/29 Debra Shaub

#### Anniversaries

4/05 Mark & Deborah Anctil



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b>  CCL 6:30 pm Trustees 7:30 pm	<b>2</b>  Bible Study 10:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>3</b>  Euch. Serv. 10:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>  AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>  Euch. Serv. 9 am Sun. School 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  Bible Study 10:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>10</b>  Euch. Serv. 10:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	<b>11</b>  UMW 10:30 am	<b>12</b>  AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>  Euch. Serv. 9 am Sun. School 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am	<b>15</b>  CCL 6:30 pm	<b>16</b>  Bible Study 10:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>17</b>  Lydia Circle @Sue Overholt's 10 am Euch. Serv. 10:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>  AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>  Euch. Serv. 9 am Sun. School 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>  Bible Study 10:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>24</b>  Euch. Serv. 10:30 am Choir 7:30 pm	<b>25</b>  <i>Deadline for next month's Newsletter</i>	<b>26</b>  AA Meeting 8 pm	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>  Euch. Serv. 9 am Sun. School 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  Bible Study 10:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm				



Postage

*Gracious and Holy Creator: Unlock our hearts,  
Break down our barriers, Break through and inspire us. Amen.*

**THE**  
**CONNECTION**  
**NEWSLETTER**

**The Johnstown United  
Methodist Church**

159 S. Main Street  
Johnstown, OH 43031  
740-967-6691

**April, 2024**



**Wednesday Eucharist Service • 10:30 a.m.**

**Sunday Eucharist Service • 9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday Worship • 10:45 a.m.**

**Email:** jumcoffice159@gmail.com

**Website:** www.johnstownumc.com

**Phone:** 740-967-6691

**Office Hours:** Tues.-Thu., 8:15 a.m. - Noon

**“TOGETHER, LET US MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD!”**