

# *Tower Times*

*A Newsletter of St. John's United Church of Christ*

*515 E. 3rd St. Dayton, OH 45402*

*May, 2021*



Dear Friends,

I am losing my mind!

I know that's not a shock for many of you, it's not like I had a lot to lose anyways! All the same, this grand reopen of St. John's is about to eat my lunch. There's contractors who are behind and need a fire lit under their behind. There's neighbours to establish and re-establish relations with. There's an almost never ending bevy of decorations to hang, remove, re-hang, etc. There's details to clean. There's things to touch up and DO NOT get me started on the amount of effort it takes to keep the technology gremlins at bay around here! (Seriously, I never believed in those things until I got here. Now, I'm convinced!) On top of this, there's the day to day pastoring items, my work at the seminary, and, oh yeah, preparing my first academic monograph to go to the publisher!

In sum: I am one pooped parson!

I'll admit: there have been moments where all of this has overwhelmed me. Big time! Thankfully, when I'm in the midst of a full-scale tizzy, the Holy Spirit seems to swoop in and remind me: "The isn't your church. It isn't the congregation's church. That isn't your seminary. The work isn't about you. It's God's, all of it! Your job isn't to make the magic happen, make everything go off without a hitch, or lead the entire world to Christ. Your job is to do what you can, where you can, and when you can. It'll never be perfect. You'll never be perfect. But, that's all perfect, as it's how God works best. So maybe you should sit down, have a rest, and let God take the lead? It will all be okay."

I don't know about all of you, but I know that these words are things I need in my life, particularly in this pandemic. I can't speak for you, but I know a number of you are also struggling with anxiety, grief, and a host of other issues. I hope these words are as true for you as they are for me. I hope, as we prepare to reopen, that you don't just enjoy the process and the newness, but also the power that has made all this happen. Truly, God is still working. God is still speaking. God is definitely with us at St. John's.

~Rev. Adam

## **Thoughts from the Loft**

**By Rev. Jeffrey Campbell, Minister of Worship**

### **Three Important Christian Days in May:**

Thursday, May 13 – Ascension Day

Jesus ascends into heaven, after instructing the disciples to spread the Good News to the world. He promises to return one day.

Sunday, May 23 – Pentecost

This is the festival that celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit in a mighty wind and tongues of fire. The disciples are on fire and preach the Good News with such enthusiasm and in so many languages that people think they are drunk. This is considered the birthday of the Church.

Sunday May 30 – Holy Trinity

Jesus instructs us to baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This day we celebrate how God has revealed God's self to us. God is so nice, we praise God thrice!

### **Other Important Days in May to Remember:**

Sunday, May 10 – Mothers' Day

On this this day we remember and give thanks for our mothers and grandmothers and all who have been like a mother to us. On this day we celebrate families in general.

Monday, May 31 – Memorial Day

This is a national holiday for honoring military personnel who have died while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. For many it is a day to visit and bring flowers to the graves of family members. When I was a child, we called it "Decoration Day".

As I have said before, I am looking forward to our congregation being together again for worship. I miss our choir. We remain hopeful for the day when we resume the vitally important parts of our lives as Christian people – community in worship, service, and fellowship. I thank God that we have been able to worship online! Be kind. Stay healthy. Remain hopeful!



## Goodbye, Guzman Family!!!!

As some of you are already aware, Rev. Hector, Maria, and Jethan are soon to return to their home in the Philippines. Rev. Hector will finish his MTS this month and has already been appointed to a church back home; he starts on June 1st! Rev. Hector's last Sunday with St. John's will be on May 16th. As a church, we want to take the time to say "Thank you" and "Goodbye" to the Guzman family, so we are inviting all of those who have been around St. John's for the last few years and have been blessed by The Guzman family to join us on the 16th, in person, for worship. (See more on returning to worship later in this issue!) In addition to our regular worship, we'll take some time to celebrate Hector, Maria, Jethan and their whole family and pray God's blessing on them as they return home.



St. John's United Church of Christ  
Building Team Report to Council  
April 8, 2021

### **Request for Council Action**

If necessary, Move to declare emergency repair of the amount not to exceed \$2,300. For Kor-rect Plumbing.

### **Emergency Plumbing Repairs**

The news and energy of the month was plumbing. Kor-rect was here four times over two weeks. We knew this was going to be a problem and it was. The final bill for the repair of three toilets and 1 sink was \$2,285. That fixed the leak down into the first-floor office.

Wilfred replaced the damage tiles in the main office.

### **AED Installed and First Aid kit**

The AED is in the case which is up on the wall in the hallway between the two buildings. There is a first-aid kit in the AED box as well.

### **Thank you Wilfred**

Wilfred arranged for the disposal of some non-used chairs with Habitat for Humanity. That is a good contact for the future.

Wilfred repaired a light switch in the maintenance room across from the boiler.

### **Working remaining:**

Install of ramp.

Install of automatic front door(s)

Removal of old furniture in basement empty room

Continue removing unusable materials from storage areas

### **Work in planning and implement stages.**

**Cleaning the church** Narthex, sanctuary choir loft, altar area, pew pads and chair pads.

The church area will be closed and off-limits Monday through Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Summer program** with special students of Montgomery County is going to happen the last three weeks in June and three weeks in July. No school the week of July 4. The program is three days a week and two hours each day. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Andrea Harker is school coordinator. We will continue planning out the program in the next

Andrea Harker is school coordinator. We will continue planning out the program in the next two months. I am coordinating with Women of St. John's as part of the summer program and other projects regarding kitchen area maintenance and clean-up. More on that in future Council reports

#### For Your Information

ESOL School will be using the Fellowship Hall Tuesday through Friday, the days of 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.

Will not be using Restrooms or Kitchen. This is Dayton Police Week.

Will be coordinating with Adam and Steve for in-person services and arrangements accommodations that will need to happen to reopen and after. This could happen at end of May. Will be announced as soon as possible.

If you have questions, ideas, or concerns, please let me know. The Building Team NEEDS two more members. I have been recruiting but difficult without meeting in person. If you know of someone that should be asked, please let me or Wilfred know.

Please remember we are facing some serious deferred maintenance with interior painting (especially second floor and sanctuary), upgrade of all restrooms for handicap access, brick and mortar work, maintenance of stain glass windows, maintenance of bells, maintenance of organ, pianos, and bells and the need for an elevator. Your continuing support is great appreciated.



## INTERNAL MINISTRIES

The Internal Ministries Team will make another phone call connection with our people in early May before we gather for our return to in -sanctuary worship. (Virtual worship will continue as well). Please see additional information elsewhere in this issue.

## GOOD GRIEF

After a little more than a year of not meeting, the Good Grief group is making plans for reuniting Saturday, May 15. While plans are not yet complete, we have contacted our folks to advise of the date and get an idea as to whether each is able to come. Place is not confirmed. Tentative time is 1 o'clock, for lunch at a downtown location. Arrangements to be determined. We assume all will have their vaccine shots and a mask to wear. We know some are still a bit uneasy about our gathering in a group. We hope to make the experience as safe and comfortable as possible.

As we get closer to the May 15 date, we will complete plans making into consideration conditions regarding Covid numbers so our gathering will be as safe as possible.. We will phone each of our regulars with details during first week of May. We have a few options regarding lunch to explore. Anyone interested is invited to join our group. If you are not on our phone or email list, please call Pat Kern 937.435.5515 for details, information and a reservation.



## **Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving**

The St. John's Prayer Chain is here to lift to God your troubling concerns as well as rejoice in your blessings. Contact Dottie Norton (937 298-4876) with your requests, or Rev. Adam (937-532-9322) if Dottie is unavailable. The information you provide will remain confidential and can be as brief or in-depth as you choose. Dottie will then pass your requests or rejoicings onward to the prayer chain members. Members on our Prayer Chain are Ethel Burns, Karen Clark, Pat Goudy, Jill Johnson, Pat Kern, Ann Morrissey, Janet Neubauer, Dottie Norton, Anne Pepiot. If you'd like to join the chain, please let Dottie Norton know!



## **Worship Team**

We had a beautiful Easter Service. The altar was adorned with Easter Lilies and tulips The music was amazing. It was a very meaningful service. Many thanks to everyone who was involved!

We look forward to in-person church and gathering together again. The Worship Team can always use volunteers to help with Sunday service. You don't have to be a member of the team to help out. Please keep this in mind if you are looking somewhere to use your time and talents.

Shirley A. Keller

Worship Team



## WE ARE LOOKING FOR SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS!!!

As we return to worship in the sanctuary, we are in need of folks to serve as greeters and also for folks who will serve as liturgists during worship. We need YOUR help with this if we are to continue to provide quality worship and welcome our guests—new and old—with the love and grace we are known for! Both of these are easy roles to fill, so please don't be intimidated. YOU can definitely help us! Please contact Dottie Norton at 937-298-4876 or RTNorton@aol.com if you have any questions or would like to volunteer.



### Grounds Team

Thank you to all who continue to help us get our outside grounds/gardens up to speed for the season! We will have our final work-day of the season on May 15th from 10am—12:00pm. Please join us as we finish mulching, weed, and finalize the planting of our veggie beds!

Also, our Free Little Pantry was installed April 10th! (More on next page.) Thank you to Wright-State, Good Neighbor House, Ferguson Construction, and Jill Johnson from our External Ministries Team for making this happen.

~Marlene Miller, Team Lead





## **SOMETHING NEW!!!**

### **FREE LITTLE PANTRY AT ST. JOHN'S UCC!!!**

What's a Free Little Pantry? A Free Little Pantry is a device that helps those experiencing food scarcity and who cannot wait to receive an appointment for a time at a food pantry/bank. The pantry allows folks to take what they need, when they need it. For this to work, however, it requires those of us who are living in abundance to help stock the pantry with items that others might need. We'll have a detailed list of items you can drop off in the near future, but for now, think of things like: feminine hygiene products, small diaper packs, canned food with pull-top lids, individual non-perishable snack packs, etc. Our pantry is open in conjunction with our friends at Good Neighbor House—who are helping to keep it stocked—but let's take ownership of this, St. John's and really work to help our community members who are in need! We can do this! Between the pantry and our fresh veggie beds, we can really help take a bite out of hunger!

If you have questions, see Rev. Adam, Jill Johnson, or Marilyn Schwinn.



# God's Garden

Plant three rows of peas:

Peace of mind  
Peace of heart  
Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

Squash gossip  
Squash indifference  
Squash grumbling  
Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful  
Lettuce be kind  
Lettuce be obedient  
Lettuce really love one another.

You will have no garden without turnips:

Turnup for meetings  
Turnup for service  
Turnup to help one another

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.

There is much fruit in your garden  
Because you reap what you sow

To conclude our garden,  
we must have thyme:

Thyme for God - Thyme for study  
Thyme for prayer







It's not long now until we return to welcoming folks to worship with us in the sanctuary on Sunday morning! Wahoo! Some folks have asked: "So what will it be like when we return?" That's a really good question and it's one I've tried to both answer and allude to over the last few Tower Times issues. Making a long story short, things probably will sound a little different, feel a little different, and be a little different from what we've done historically. Truthfully, the world has changed, we have changed, and the church must change as

well! Some things you can expect when you return:

\*The tech station in the front of the sanctuary. This is big for us. We are currently reaching around 2,000 people per week—all over the world—with our online broadcasts. We would be highly foolish to stop these now! We try to keep things low-profile with our tech, but you may need to move your seat to get the view you'd like.

\*Speaking of seats, while the pandemic is subsiding, it's far from over. As such, we will continue to block off every other pew and ask folks to sit distantly in groups. We know this isn't fun, but it's the protocol we need to do for safety. We also will not be able to pass offering plates, pass the peace, or even take communion like previously did, but rest assured, we have some new and safe ways to accomplish all of these!

\*Also, for safety, we will still be requiring everyone to wear a mask until the CDC or the State of Ohio (preferably both) say otherwise. We also will be taking temperatures at the door with anyone having a temp over 99 degrees given a blessing and asked to watch from home until they are better. Finally, we will continue to have contactless soap dispensers in our restrooms on the main floor, sanitizer in the pew rows, and contactless sanitizers at the beverage station in the narthex and outside the sanctuary.

\*We will be keeping things confined to the main floor until further notice. This means we will not be holding fellowship hour downstairs at this time. We will, however, have some seating areas available—along with coffee, other beverages, and pre-packaged snacks—on the main floor and we encourage you to make use of the spaces before or after the service!

\*We have invested in A LOT of upgrades since the beginning of the pandemic! We encourage you to explore and get used to the new layout and feel of the main floor. All the items we have upgraded have been done with the intent of helping us better conduct ministry, particularly with those who visit. If you see something you don't understand or which rubs you the wrong way, come talk to myself, Rev. Jeff, or a council member; we'll be happy to explain the logic behind these things.

See You Soon!

~Rev. Adam

## DATES TO REMEMBER IN MAY:

MAY 15TH: GROUNDS TEAM FINAL WORKDAY FOR THE SPRING SEASON! 10AM-NOON.

MAY 16TH: “SOFT REOPENING” OF WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE GUZMAN FAMILY!

MAY 23RD: “GRAND REOPENING” OF ST. JOHN’S TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY AND PENTECOST SUNDAY! WEAR RED, EXPECT A FEW VISITORS, AND MAYBE EVEN A FEW SURPRISES!

### May Birthdays!

07—Rosie Poppaw  
11—Amy Lynn  
13—Deborah Amaranto  
14—Sharon Dunkle  
19—Judy Humphrys  
24—Ed Humphrys  
28—Bob McCann  
30 —Shirley Keller  
30—Butch Martin



Want to have an item in an upcoming issue of Tower Times? (Birthday, article, announcement, etc?) Send us an email at [office@stjohnsuccdayton.org](mailto:office@stjohnsuccdayton.org) or call us at 937-224-1747!

WE HAVE TWO GRADUATES THIS YEAR!!! DANE HARKER AND JETHAN GUZMAN BOTH GRADUATE IN MAY! IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEND A CARD TO THEM THEIR ADDRESSES ARE:

\*MS. JETHAN GUZMAN—507 S. MAIN STREET, APT. 208  
ENGLEWOOD, OH 45322

\*MR. DANE HARKER—7620 ESSINGTON CIRCLE, CENTER-  
VILLE, OH 45459



Please note: there are no Council Minutes this issue as Church Council spent their April meeting in a leadership exercise with Rev. Carl Robinson. We will return to our regular meetings in May.