



Crossbeams

A Cheviot United Methodist Church Newsletter

The Importance of Blessing Children

"Now the Lord said to Abram, go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." **Genesis 12:2**

What is a blessing? It is simply a time where we look at a child in the eyes and tell them, "You are a blessing." It is not always the words that we say, but it is the effort that we put into creating time and space just for them.

The statistics about children today are startling: One half of all children report being bullied at school and bullying is cited for the number one reason for non-attendance and teen drop-out. One out of five children live in poverty. Since 1972, one million children in America have seen the breakup of their parent's marriage. One in twenty children will experience the death of one or both parents by age 15.

Once our children leave home to go to school, we don't have control over the way that they are treated by others. We can't stop every hurtful word or offense that they experience throughout the day. We can't protect their tender hearts from the negativity that the world has to offer. Children won't always tell us when they have been hurt by someone's words. Many children will keep those harmful words to themselves. But we can replace those hurtful words and negative experiences by telling children that they are a blessing.

Is it any wonder that Jesus simply blessed children who were brought to him? These children were much too young to understand the concept of a Messiah or who it was that their parents had brought them to see. So Jesus, rather than explaining to them who he was, simply blessed them. And through his touch, his warmth, his presence, they became fully aware of his love for them. He, as God had done with Abram, began his relationship with children by blessing them.

The best way to bless children is to explain to them that you are going to bless them. And it is a good idea to demonstrate it the first time. They can choose where they would like their blessing. It can be on their hand, on their forehead or they may not want to be touched at all. Once you explain it to them, you can make a symbol on them (a cross, a heart, a smile, or one they ask for) or simply hold their hand in yours. Look the in the eye and say, Name, you are a blessing!

You can bless a child before church, at the end of church, as they leave to go to school, in a time of grief or pain, at bedtime, for a special event like a birthday or first day of school. Anytime is a good time to bless a child!

We would love to see your children and grandchildren in church. Blessings!



Pastor Carne



**Cheviot
United Methodist
Church**

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

I don't know if you remember the *oldie*, "Heart of My Heart". I love that melody:

*Heart of My Heart brings back a memory,
When we were kids on the corner of the street...*

This month, being the month for "heart" interests, I thought of changing the title from "Heart of My Heart" to "Heart of God's Heart."

We use many heart phrases to help us express things. For instance, we talk about a person without compassion as being "heartless." We urge others to "have a heart." Our deepest hurts are called "heartaches." A jilted lover is "brokenhearted." When we want to have a serious talk with someone, it's a "heart to heart." We all want to feel "lighthearted" and not "heavy hearted."

Recently I read a Christian fiction book and the secret to loving one another as a married couple was found in the verse from **Proverbs 4:23**, "*Above all else, guard your heart.*" As I pondered this verse, thoughts came: what does that mean and how does one "guard" their heart so that love wins out?

The heart, in the Bible, is the wellspring from which all of life flows. Out of it flows our thoughts, our desires, our wills, our emotions. In the Book of Proverbs "heart" is mentioned 75 times; it is this book's major theme. Our hearts have great value to God. Thus He tells us to guard them.

On Sunday evenings, we gather up our garbage from throughout the house and put out on the curb to await the garbage men on Monday mornings. Once that is done we forget it. We do not "guard" it all night and wait anxiously for the truck to appear. It is all worthless to us and of no value! Yet the most important part of our spiritual life is our heart and we act as if it is worth nothing. So what does it mean to "guard our hearts?"

The Bible says that our "hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know them?" We need to know that the heart has enemies and we need to know how to fight those enemies God's way. In all of our hearts, there is the desire to love and be loved, to know and to be known. And if our hearts are not "guarded" those needs and desires can lead us astray.

We are constantly faced with temptations and these can lead us down the path of destruction if we do not know how to guard our hearts. We

seek to be "in control" of our hearts but fail miserably.

We do not "guard" our hearts. We watch media and listen to garbage all week long not realizing that it is molding our hearts. We give in to peer pressure, even as adults, and end up with bad habits and addictions that cripple the heart.

We have "heart attacks!" Our hearts are attacked every day in one way or another. And either it gets stronger because we have learned to guard it, or weaker because "we" in and of ourselves cannot do it.

How can our hearts be guarded so that we do not submit to the world's pressure?:

- ♥ First realize that we are a part of a "Bigger story." Our life story is encased within the story of the Love of the God of creation. He has us here for a purpose. He has eternal plans for all who follow Him.
- ♥ Realize that because of this truth, good and evil, God and the devil both want our hearts!
 - ♥ Again, Proverbs has much to say about the heart. We are to turn our ears to wisdom (God's) and our hearts to understanding. Then wisdom from God will enter our hearts. Do not let God's truth out of your sight, keep His truth within your hearts.

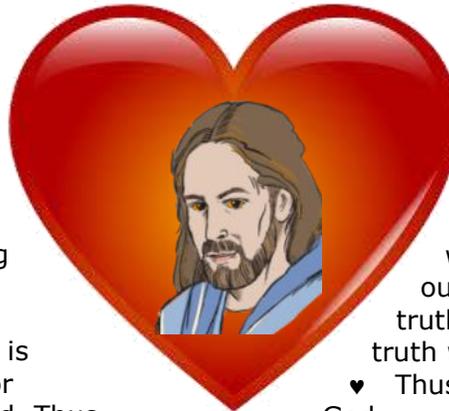
♥ Thus we need to seek after God.

- ♥ We need to allow God to love us. Do we?
- ♥ We need to allow God to redeem us, renew us and restore us to wholeness.
- ♥ We need to let go of our past, having received God's greatest gift to us, salvation through Jesus Christ. And we need to "enter in" to a daily relationship with Him.
- ♥ We can then turn all in our life, whatever it is, over to God, and know that He will help us "Guard our hearts" His way.

There is no love stronger and no one more powerful than God.

Mark Twain is quoted for having said, "*The two most important days of our lives are the day you are born and the day you find out why.*"

In allowing God to come into our heart we become part of God's heart. We enter His "greatest story ever told!" Only then can we know how to "guard our hearts" in this world. And if we do, God's love will win out because God's love never fails!



SWEET SHOP -- coming February 9

Hey Everyone--get your sweet tooth ready for our fabulous Sweet Shop. It is returning Sunday, February 9, in the Werner Lounge between church services.

There will be pies, cakes, cookies, candies etc. all for you and the ones you love. The ladies of the Lydia Circle are doing this fundraiser to support those in need at the City Gospel Mission and the Bethany House. We may also expand our help to others that are homeless and hungry.

Your support will help us in our endeavors.
God bless everyone that supports our outreach.

If you have any questions, please call Linda Schumacher at 513.245.0898

The Lydia Circle invites you join us

February

Birthdays to Celebrate

- 01 John Cummings & Hank Johnson
- 03 Bill Flight & Jessica Schummer
- 05 Gary Black & Lisa Cox
- 08 Eleanor Jackson
- 09 Susie Hauser
- 11 Beulah Streifthau
- 12 Cindy Bruestle
- 16 Maria Barr
- 18 Wayne Smith
- 20 Ernest Kobbe
- 21 Kay Beiderbeck & Fran Koch
- 22 Silver Flight
- 25 Sharon Ackermann, Janice Marsh, Mary Ann Sparenberg & Evelyn Widner
- 28 Peach Moser & Jim Nose

Playlist

A Youth Small Group Study

Anyone in grades 7 thru 12 are invited to join us for this new small group study, *Playlist, Bible Lessons Based On Popular Songs*. Using the lyrics from today's hits to examine what it means to find God's purpose and direction for your life. Our final meeting is Thursday, February 6. 7pm-8pm, in the Youth Room.

Please contact youth leaders, Katie & Ashley if you have any questions.

youth@cheviotumc.com



February

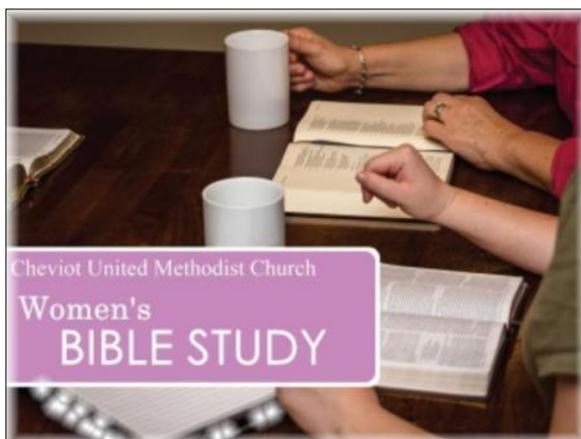
Anniversaries to Celebrate

- 05 Bill and Bobbie Ostermeyer
- 22 Ken and Karen Meiners

Thursdays-To-Gather Dinner

The Hospitality Committee invites our neighborhood and congregation to Thursdays-To-Gather Dinner on Thursday, February 20 at 6pm. The Committee will provide BBQ (shredded chicken, pork, and Sloppy Joe's), coleslaw, baked beans and chips. We ask those attending to bring brownies for dessert. A donation of \$5 per adult is suggested to offset cost. Children under 10 are free.

This is a great opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor. Mark your calendar! Sign up on our weekly Worship Booklet in the *Count Me In* section.



Saturday Morning Women's Bible Study

- ◆ All women are welcome to join the Saturday Morning Women's Bible Study.
Invite friends & relatives, too !!
- ◆ We meet every other Saturday in the Upper Room (formerly known as the Chapel)
- ◆ We begin at 8am and finish around 9:15am
- ◆ We anticipate ending this study March 7.

We are reading and discussing the book entitled *The Will of God* by Leslie Weatherhead. The book contains 5 chapters and we will discuss one chapter each time we meet.

"The Bible is the only book whose Author is always present when one reads it."
--Anonymous

Please watch our weekly Worship Booklet and e-mail for news of what our next study will be and *feel free to begin joining us at any time.*

Thursday Evening Women's Bible Study

We have started a new bible study that is open to all women. The Bible Study is entitled ***Here We Go Again...Reading the Bible in a Year...or Two.***

We meet every 1st and 4th Thursday, 7pm, in the Upper Room, (formerly known as the Chapel) and will end no later than 8:30pm.

We are using the book entitled *A Women's Guide to Reading the Bible in a Year* by Diane Stortz. We will not finish in one year (more like two years), but the wonderful thing about the Bible is that you can always join in at any time.

Here are the readings for February:
February 6 -- Genesis 1-21
February 27 -- Genesis 22-42
then,
March 5 -- Genesis 43-50 & Matthew 1-15

Additional Bible Studies

Adult Bible Study is every Sunday in the Upper Room at 10:20am.
Women's Bible Study is every Sunday in the Community Room at 10:20am.
Men's Bible Study is every Saturday in the Community Room at 8am.

Community Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday is a service that marks the beginning of Lent, culminating in Holy Week and Easter. The use of ashes as a sign of repentance has a long history of Christian worship and the Imposition of Ashes can be a powerful experience of forgiveness and reconciliation. We invite all church members and members of our community to join together Wednesday, February 26 at 7pm for this meaningful time of worship and reflection.

Westfed Food Frenzy

The annual food drive to replenish the pantry's shelves takes place this month. After each service February 2 and February 9, bags with shopping suggestions will be available from Missions Committee members. Buy a few items or fill your bag; all non-perishable food items, toiletries, and cleaning supplies are welcome.

Please place donation bags along the fireplace wall in the Werner Lounge. We'd like to keep the hallway to the Fellowship Time goodies clear.

Thank you for supporting our local food pantry!



Westfed Food Pantry

Items needed: spaghetti, spaghetti sauce (cans preferred rather than glass jars), and large paper grocery bags.

Check our weekly Worship Booklet for additional needs that may occur throughout the month. Donation baskets are outside the Werner Lounge. Donation envelopes are available on the Welcome Tables.

Please make checks out to CUMC with the memo: *Westfed Thank you for supporting our neighborhood mission.*

Second Congregational Forum—Growing Deep

This past November, Pastor Carrie laid out a three-point strategy for growth and sustainability in 2020 and beyond. Each part of that strategy is an important element to ensure our church will be here for our children and grandchildren as well. These strategies will not happen by accident, but by the coordinated efforts of every member, staff member and leader of our church working together. On Sunday, February 16, Pastor Carrie will be hosting a Congregational Forum to explain the importance and the method for helping our church Grow Deep in their relationship with Christ and a knowledge of God's Word.

This forum will take place in the Upper room. Please park in the back parking lot and enter through the education wing doors. Sign up in the *Count Me In Section* of our weekly Worship Booklet or by calling the Church Office: 513.662.2048

Thank you!

Pastor Carrie would like to thank everyone for their thoughtful Christmas gifts to the Jena family this past Christmas. We are blessed to be part of such a warm and generous church. Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated. We wish you and your families a wonderful 2020!

SERMON SERIES & SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

Pastor Carrie and the GROW Team are proud to launch our first Sermon series and all-church small group experience for 2020.



The title of the study is called "*Believe*" and it will start Sunday, February 2 and continue through Sunday, March 1. In this series, we will grow in our relationship with Christ and with each other as we learn to live out the key beliefs, actions, and virtues that characterize a true follower of Christ. Don't miss this opportunity to get involved in a small group where you can share your heart with others on a journey of spiritual growth and transformation.

The GROW Team are having sign-ups in the Narthex. Check the all-church e-mail each week for a current list of groups.

Crafters are Selling Cards

Valentine cards and cards for other occasions will be sold between services Sunday, February 2.

YOUTH / CHILDREN Kids Fun Night

On Friday, February 7, drop off your children (grades K–6) at 6:30pm, for a fun evening of games, snacks and a Bible lesson.

Pick up is at 8pm.

Sign up in the *Count Me In* section of our weekly Worship Booklet.

Know Someone Interested in Becoming a Member?

Welcoming new members into the life of our church is one of our favorite things to do here at CUMC. Our New Member Orientation is an opportunity for those who will be joining us to get to know Pastor Carrie, learn about the exciting ministries and mission opportunities at CUMC and to make new friends.



All who are interested in joining us are welcome to meet Saturday, February 8, at 9:30am in the Upper Room for a fun time of learning and fellowship. Please park in the back parking lot and enter through the education wing door.

Jesus was a person who came to bring down the barriers that kept people from knowing and loving God.

At Cheviot United Methodist Church, we too want to bring down barriers that keep people out-- a church where people are invited in and encouraged to stay and grow in the love of Jesus.

Women Of Hope

Women of Hope (formerly known as Sarah Circle) is starting the new year with a new name and new energy!

We meet Tuesday, February 25, 7pm, in the Upper Room to start planning our year.

We look forward to seeing how we can continue to support the women of the Hamilton County Change Court and offer programs which promote social justice in our community. We also plan to continue to find ways to support our Cheviot neighbors and the local mission efforts of CUMC.

....and we like to have some fun and enjoy fellowship along the way

Please join us on February 25 and every 4th Tuesday of the month. Contact Vicki Groh at: 513.661.5852 or vgroh@zoomtown.com with any questions. *Hope to see you there!*



Let's Do Dinner

All Ladies are invited to get together for a fun evening of dinner and conversation. Our February gathering will be Thursday, February 13 at 6pm at **Sakura Steak House** (formerly Dante's Restaurant) located at **5510 Rybolt Road.**

Reservations are required, so be sure to sign up on our weekly Worship Booklet in the *Count Me In* section.

For more information and to say *YES! I am coming*, please call the Church Office: 513.662.2048, or Shirley Pemberton: 513.368.8995.

Bring a friend with you.

You may be surprised who is looking for a church!

MATTHEW 25 Ministries

The next Mathew 25 Ministries is Saturday, February 15, 11am to 1pm. Meet in the *Matthew 25 building* located at:

**11060 Kenwood Road
Blue Ash, Ohio 45242**



Questions? Contact Lisa Cox: coxalisa728@gmail.com or 513.661.8487

2nd Annual Trivia Night

Community and church members are encouraged to join us Saturday, February 29 for the 2nd Annual Trivia Night -- hosted by Jeff Jena. The festivities begin at 7pm. Sign up on our weekly Worship Booklet in the *Count Me In* section. We will provide drinks. Please bring an appetizer or snack to share.



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Event Promotions	communications@cheviotumc.com

Worship with Us...

9:10am
Traditional Worship
 in the Sanctuary

10:20am
Bible Studies
 Contact the Office
 for Men's, Women's & Children's
 meeting locations

11:15am
Contemporary Worship
 in the Fellowship Hall

...this February

Church Office
 513.662.2048
 office@cheviotumc.com

Our vision is to connect and serve all people so that lives are transformed and empowered through the love of Christ.