

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. - Philippians 4:13

JOIN US FOR ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 14

Everyone is invited to a Fellowship Potluck Dinner at 6:00pm, followed by worship, communion, and imposition of ashes at 7:00pm in Beacon Hall.

Families and individuals attending the dinner are asked to bring a food item (enough for 12) to share. If your last name begins with:

- ❑ A-F bring a dessert,
- ❑ G-O and bring a main dish,
- ❑ P-Z bring a side dish/salad.

Beverages will be provided. Please use the sign-up sheets by the Church Office or Gathering Area, or send an email to office@rrumc.org to let us know you are coming.



LENT IS OUR TIME TO GROW - JOIN A GROUP!

Join a Lenten Study Group and experience a season of spiritual growth and renewal. Classes will begin shortly after Ash Wednesday. Details will be included in the Sunday bulletins when finalized and you will be able to sign up after Sunday services, at www.rrumc.org, or by calling the Church Office. The sermons during Lent will be coordinated with the study chosen.

YOUTH WINTER JAM

All youth in grades 6-12 are invited to attend Winter Jam on **February 9, at 5pm**. This is a concert at the Wolstein Center that features some of the best Christian musicians and artists. Sign up at www.rrumc.org by February 4.



LIVING INTO MY STRENGTHS - SPRING EDITION

by Robyn Gauder, Service Engagement Coordinator

Whether we can always see them or not, we each have strengths. God didn't just create us to be; He created us to be people who use the unique combinations of strengths and talents He's blessed us with to bring the world closer to Him.

We invite you to join us, for our upcoming "Living Into My Strengths" program.

In our time together, we will assess what our individual strengths truly are, what those strengths look like in our lives, how they appear in scripture, and how God is calling us to use them.

We hope that you consider walking with us in this journey as we step closer to bringing heaven to earth.

Class will start the week of Ash Wednesday; dates will be included in the Sunday bulletins when they are finalized.

Contact Robyn Gauder with questions at RGauder@rrumc.org.



COME TO COMEDY NIGHT WITH JEFF JENA!

We could all use a good laugh, so be sure to join us for an evening of comedy featuring Ohio's family friendly comedian, Jeff Jena. Jeff entertained us last year and is eager to renew friendships and make new ones!

When: Friday, February 23, 7:00pm

Tickets: Currently available for advanced purchase in the Church Office for \$8.00 and available at the door for \$10.00. Kids under 12 are free!

To sample Jeff's Comedy, please visit jeffreyjena.com.

YOUTH SUMMER MISSION TRIPS

Registration for youth summer mission trips ends February 28. Register at www.rrumc.org.

Middle School: Athens County, OH
June 14-17, 2018

High School: Wyoming County, WV
July 1-7, 2018

REFLECTIONS... *by Rev. Dan Bogre*

As you receive this issue of the Circuit Rider, I and 21 others have just returned from a 10-day trip to the Holy Land in Israel. The trip was extremely powerful and life-changing. This was my third trip to Israel and it gets more and more powerful each time I go. This trip was especially transforming knowing that we are about to begin the season of Lent.



Lent is that season of preparation for the suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior. I am now 48 and have walked this journey of Lent many times, including 23 times as a pastor. On the heels of our trip, this Lent will be very special. We were in Jerusalem. We prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. We walked the Via Dolorosa (The Way of the Cross). We visited the place of Jesus' crucifixion. We went into the Garden Tomb. Those trips to the Holy Land are the very experiences that take the Bible from a book of stories and turn them into life-transforming experiences. Lent is not just a retelling of stories that took place some 2000 years ago, but Lent is the culmination of God's amazing plan of salvation that took on human form just a few weeks ago on Christmas day.

Lent begins on February 14, not with Valentine's Day, but with Ash Wednesday. That day marks the beginning of 40 days of preparation, not including Sundays. How will you prepare? How will you get ready? Will you be there along the streets as Jesus enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday? Will you shout "Hosanna?" Will you pray as Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane? This Lent, will you be part of the beautiful story of life and transformation, or will you just be a spectator? I pray that your heart participates in the preparation for the suffering, death, and resurrection of your Savior. May you celebrate a Holy Lent this year.

CONNECTIONS IN CARING

SHARING A HEARTFELT MESSAGE

Here are two great ways to put your heart for service and for others into action. Join us on:

- Sunday, February 4,** as we create special Valentine's gifts of snowmen and hand warmers to be delivered to shut-ins and those facing difficulties. We will be in the café between the Sanctuary and Harbor Services and after the Harbor Service to work on this project.
- Thursday, February 15,** 2:00-4:00pm in the library to write personal greetings and prepare another college care package for delivery in March.



Please contact Jane Amata at jamata@seniorconciergeservices.net or 440.360.9010 or MaryElin Halek at maryelin3487@yahoo.com for information.

LYDIA CIRCLE - UMW

We are delighted that Stephanie Vetrone will be with Lydia Circle on February 22 at 1:30pm in room 209. She will present a program on "The History of Valentine's Day." There will be a charge of \$10 for what will be one of Stephanie's interesting presentations. There will be coffee, tea, and dessert following that will continue the celebration of Valentine's Day. We so hope you will join us. Please let Sally Smith know you are coming by e-mailing her at jimsalsmith@ameritech.net.

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE HEART HEALTHY *by Gayle Donahue, MSN, RN*



For the first time since 1934, our Lenten journey will begin on February 14, Valentine's Day, and the month we focus on heart health! I am confident that through your daily faith practices you will experience God's heart-healing peace. But, what are you planning for your heart health and Valentine's celebration? Heart disease is the leading cause of death in America and it is one of the most preventable. This year, give your valentine the gift of your spiritual and heart health. Perhaps the greatest gift you can give is to care for your heart and your future. Write down one small step that is important to you and include it with your valentine celebration. Consider:

- Take your blood pressure and cholesterol medication as directed
- Pay attention to your nutrition, portion size, salt content, fruits, and vegetables
- Stop smoking
- Exercise, begin with walking 15 minutes three times a week and in three weeks increase to 30 minutes three times a week
- Write down your family health history
- Begin a stress reduction program
- Schedule that medical or dental appointment you have been putting off
- Add a yoga class you can attend with your valentine for a bit of stress relief and exercise.
- Join us for the new Daniel Plan program. Many find the small group and spiritual support to be the keys to successful healthy change.

Having a hard time outlining a plan that will combine your Lenten journey and heart health? Let's visit! Leave me a message or send me an e-mail.

BP Screening will be available during February and as part of the baseline Daniel Plan screenings. Please watch the Sunday bulletin, Health Ministry bulletin board and website for details.

MISSION/OUTREACH COMMITTEE CONGREGATIONAL GENEROSITY

by David Sagerser

A big thank you to our benevolent and compassionate congregation. Your gifts are speaking the love of Christ into the lives of those in need in mighty ways. Celebrate with us lives touched through your extravagant generosity:

- **Mission Sunday** - \$5955 raised to benefit local agencies ministering to people in need served by Flat Rock Homes, The Gathering Place, Love INC, Malachi House, May Dugan Center, Metanoia Project, Providence House, West Side Community House, and the City Mission.
- **Toy Sunday** - 468 toys collected to benefit local agencies ministering to children in need including Brookside Center, Ohio GuideStone, May Dugan Center, City Mission, Westside Community House, and Twice Blessed Free Store. Some toys were incorporated into the "toy store" established during the holiday season at Twice Blessed Free Store which distributed 428 toys to TBFS children.
- **Hunger Offering** - \$5722.50 collected throughout 2017, divided and contributed to local agencies (West Side Community House, Cory UM Hunger Center, St. Matthew Soup Kitchen, Love INC) ministering to people in need.
- **Warming Trees** - Congratulations! We filled two trees in December with cold weather items. We collected 28 scarves, 201 hats, 168 gloves/mittens, and 17 pairs of socks. Items will be donated to Providence House, St. Herman's, City Mission, Twice Blessed Free Store, and the May Dugan Center.
- **UMCOR** - In the last part of 2017, \$1965 was given to the United Methodist Committee on Relief to assist those affected by forest fires and hurricanes because of the generous donations of our congregation. (Thank you letter was received by the church from UMCOR.)

RIVER MEN

MEN OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

by Andy Shelley & Matt Tenhover

Interested in learning about Christian men of character who changed the world? Then join with other River Men to hear about and discuss the impact of men such as DL Moody, Francis Asbury, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Billy Sunday, and many others!

We'll meet at 7:00pm in Room 209 on the 4th Tuesday of each month starting January 23, 2018. No homework or books needed. All men are invited! To sign up, contact Steve Harry at StephenT.Harry@yahoo.com or 440.668.3514.



MILESTONES

February Birthdays (age 90 and above)

02/01	Orville Bell	90 years
02/09	Joanne Miller	92 years
02/11	Paul Gentzel	90 years
02/27	Virginia Frick	93 years

Births /Adoptions

Bishop John Tookman, on December 19, to Sarah & Daniel Tookman; grandson of Mary & Ned Tookman.

In Sympathy

Bethany Harry and family, in the death of her aunt, Rev. Kit Snyder, on December 4.

Family and friends of Larry Todd, who passed away in mid-December; friend of Fred Harvey.

Family and friends of June Whitmore, widow of former music director, Dick Whitmore, passed away on December 15.

GIFTS OF MUSIC

ANDREW SORDS: "THE ROMANTIC VIOLIN"

by Barbara Bibbee

Sunday, March 4 – 4:00 pm

Andrew Sords began piano lessons at age 5, and shortly thereafter asked for a violin. Early competition successes led to collaborations with more than 250 orchestras worldwide. After garnering accolades on 4 continents, he is hailed by the press as "*utterly radiant*" and "*exceptionally heartfelt*" in concerts.

We are delighted to welcome him and pianist Elizabeth DeMio for an exciting program of works by Beethoven, Gershwin, Strauss, and Sarasate. **Hope to see you for a romantic afternoon!** Additional info is at RRUMC literature displays or www.rrumc.org.



Mission Zone Monthly Collection Items
Children's Free Store Donations

JANUARY: DIAPERS AND WIPES
FEBRUARY: SOAP
MARCH: UNDERWEAR

MARY ANNE & RICHARD CAVICCHI
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SEMINAR

"FINDING OUR STORIES IN ABRAHAM'S JOURNEYS"

Sunday, April 22, 4:00 - 7:30pm, at Rocky River UMC

Facilitated by, Rabbi Enid Lader, of Beth Israel West Temple. This is a four-part program with discussion:

- I. **God's call to Abraham:** What does it mean to leave one's land...one's place of safety?
- II. **The importance of the Land and the Temple:** Exile and Diaspora - Making a new home/Yearning to return.
- III. **Jewish Rituals and Symbols:** From around the world: Israel, Eastern Europe, Spain, China...China?
- IV. **"And you shall be a blessing..."** Moving beyond ourselves, opening our hearts and extending our hands to others.

ALGART HYMN SING

February 20 - 2:00pm

by Bob Secrist

Come sing the wonderful old hymns of the Methodist Church like Blessed Assurance, In the Garden, The Old Rugged Cross and Holy, Holy, Holy in a sing along with the residents of Algart Home.

Algart is a nursing care and assisted living facility on West 89th Street and Detroit Road in Cleveland.

This isn't a choir. There is no performance or rehearsal. We are simply there to talk with, sing with, and care for people who truly need our presence to brighten their day. If you come, it will brighten your day too!

We sing together there the third Tuesday of every month, 2:00-3:00pm. Contact Bob Secrist at 216.521.2365 for more information or simply arrive to sing with us.

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Start your Tuesdays with coffee, conversation, and prayer. Men meet for prayer every Tuesday morning at 7:00am in the church parlor. After hearing a meditational thought, our individual prayers are offered to inspire every man for the day and for the week. The coffee pot is always on and we are most always on our way by about 7:30am. You are cordially invited to join this dedicated group. Contact Dick Sanders at rbsmis@wowway.com if you have questions.



THE FREE STORE NEEDS OUR DONATIONS OF ...

(Items should be clean and in good condition.*)

- Winter coats, boots, scarves, gloves, hats, warm socks, long underwear
- School-age clothes/shoes (ages 6-16)
- Men's clothes/shoes
- Pots, pans, and skillets
- Shampoo, laundry detergent
- Diapers (sizes 3, 4, & 5)

Bring donations to RRUMC during regular office hours, or directly to the Twice Blessed Free Store, W. 65th and Bridge, Mondays and Saturdays, 10:00am – 1:00pm.



* Ask yourself before you donate — "Would I wear/use this?"

BOOK CLUB

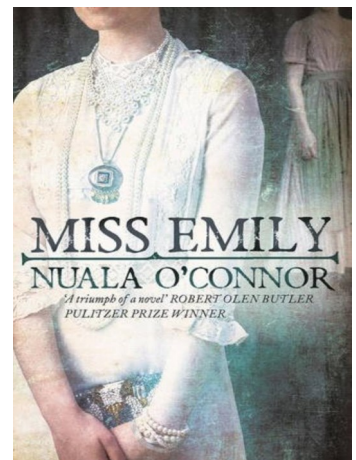
"MISS EMILY"

February 15 - 10:00am

The Book Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 10:00am in the Church Parlor.

Please join us on February 15, to discuss the book, "Miss Emily" by Nuala O'Connor.

Questions? List of future books? Contact Bruce Biggin at brbiggin@netscape.net or 216.221.5880. Always happy to see new faces, and regular attendance is not required.



WITH GRATITUDE

What a wonderful surprise – I received a beautiful flower arrangement from my church on Sunday. These flowers had been on the altar for the service. I thank all of you for your thoughtfulness. Merry Christmas! – *Ginny Knudsen*

Dear MaryElin [Connections in Caring], Thank you to the members of the Connections in Caring group. I was not home when it was delivered to my door. A beautiful red wreath. I was especially surprised when the little white lights came on. Thanks for such thoughtfulness to me! – *Sandy Wright*

Dear Church Members, This morning I found a beautiful Christmas wreath at my door. It had a hook for hanging included. It looks great on my door. Thank you all for your thoughtfulness. Merry Christmas! – *Ginny Knudsen*

To the Rocky River United Methodist Family, Thank you so much for our wreath. We so appreciate it! – *John and Betty Loo Malm*

Thank you phone calls regarding the wreaths created by the Connections in Caring group were also received from Pat Keating and Carol Harrington.

To My Fellow Members, A couple of days ago I received an electrified wreath which now hangs on the door to my apartment. I am deeply touched by the thoughtfulness of all of you whom I count as my friends every day. In the 75 years I have been a member of this church, I have never felt closer to all of you and to God as I did when I received this wreath. Thank you. – *Herb Hoppe*

Dear Rev. Dan and Pastor Paul, Thank you for the beautiful Christmas wreath delivered to my mom at Harbor Court during this Christmas season. – *Bob Brice*

To the members of the ministry and congregation, thank you for the beautiful poinsettia that was delivered by Sally Mylett. It is especially meaningful because it was part of the worship services during the Christmas celebration. In fact, the sanctuary brings back many wonderful memories. My family attended the 8pm service on Christmas Eve. I wanted to mention the Chancel Choir and brass ensemble directed by Mr. Pontoli gave a brilliant performance of John Rutter's "Gloria" on December 17th. – *Jean Stell*

Thank you Church Family for your well wishes, cards, and outreach. It truly made a difference in my recovery. With a grateful heart. – *Jane Amata*

Thank you for remembering. – *Iris Abel*

GO UPWARD!

by Jason Kraft,
League Director



Our 6th season is underway and the basketball and

cheerleading teams are stars of the show each Saturday through March 17. God is so GOOD!

Here are some highlights with Upward Basketball and Cheer 2018:

1. Enrollment for Upward Basketball totals 231 players, which is an increase from the previous season (208 players). Upward Cheer remains constant (23 cheerleaders).
2. There are 26 basketball teams with 43 coaches, and four cheer squads with 5 coaches.
3. Thirteen games will be played each Saturday from January 20 to March 17. Games will span from their 9:00am beginnings to their 5:45pm endings. (Last games begin at 4:30pm.) Both Beacon Hall and Wesley Hall will be utilized for games.
4. Our **Upward Celebration** will be held Sunday, March 18, at 3:00pm. The program includes an entertainer, drinks and desserts, along with plenty of fellowship.

To support and serve during Upward Basketball and Cheer, please contact Jason Kraft (League Director) at upwardrrumc@yahoo.com. Many volunteers are needed for concession stands, officiating, and/or half time devotions.

Come for the fun, grab a tasty snack, cheer on the kids, welcome our visiting guests, and see Jesus meet people in the midst of their stories through sports!

2018 Upward Sports Schedule

January 20 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

January 27 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

February 3 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

February 10 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

February 17 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

February 24 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

March 3 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

March 10 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

March 17 - Games 9:00am - 5:45pm

March 18 - Year-End Celebration - 3:00pm

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Rocky River, OH 44116-1873
Ph: 440.331.7676
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Email: office@rrumc.org
Web: www.rrumc.org

DATED MATERIALS—PLEASE RUSH
Mailed January 18, 2018

Ministry

Daniel F. Bogre, Senior Pastor
Paul A. Bennett, Associate Pastor
Robert B. Hibbard, Pastor Emeritus
Christopher M. Burns, Harbor Worship Leader
Sheri B. Swartz, Director of Church Ministries
Rachel E. Burns, Director of Youth Ministries
Quinn E. Bennett, Director of Children's Ministries
Robyn E. Gauder, Service Engagement Coordinator
Gayle E. Donahue, MSN, RN, Faith Community Nurse
Craig W. Cowles, Interim Free Store Director

Mission Ministry

Rev. Paul Webster, Kanyama, Zambia

Music Ministry

Braden J. Pontoli, Director of Music
Darius J. McBride, Children's/Youth Choir Director
Carmen G. Massaro, and Lynn Young, Handbell Choirs
Jeffrey A. Acker, Organist

Address Labels

Deadline for March Circuit Rider:
February 5

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE STORY!

MISSION POSSIBLE

Friday, February 9 - 6:00pm

Come with your family and serve Christ together as we work on a brief mission project. Then sit down and relax as you eat your popcorn and watch a family friendly movie on the big screen in Beacon Hall.

For the Friday, February 9, Mission Possible, we have chosen to work with "Frontline." We are making 40 to 50 "new mothers packs" to give to women as they start their lives with their newborns in semi-permanent to permanent housing. Please donate baby wipes, bottles, and unisex sleepers or onesies (3-6mo). Items can be brought to the Church Office or placed in the bin outside room 210. Thank you for helping us make this a possibility for these young women who are working to turn their lives around!

SAVE THESE FEBRUARY DATES...

(See the newsletter articles for details.)

- January 20 through March 17 - Upward Basketball and Cheerleading
- January 23 - River Men (Men of Christian Character) Class
- February 3,10,17,24 - Free Store Shopping Days
- February 4 & 15- Connections in Caring
- February 5,12,19,26 - Free Store Sorting Days
- February 5 - March Circuit Rider Deadline
- February 6, 13, 20, 27 - Men's Prayer Group
- February 9 - Youth Winter Jam
- February 14 - Ash Wednesday Fellowship Potluck & Service
- February 15 - Book Club
- February 20 - Algart Home Sing
- February 22 - Lydia Circle United Methodist Women
- February 23 - Jeff Jena Comedy Show
- February 27 - River Men (Men of Christian Character) Class
- February 28 - Youth Mission Trip Registration Ends

LOOKING AHEAD...

- March 4 - Gifts of Music Concert
- March 18 - Upward Year-End Celebration
- April 22 - Cavicchi Christian Education Seminar
- June 14-17 - Middle School Mission Trip
- July 1-7 - High School Mission Trip