



# ECHO

Jan.-Feb.

2014

## And a happy New Year to everyone!

A quick look back at 2013 reminds us of the nearly mind-boggling progress we have made as a church community. Work for the environment, a stand against bullying, new questions about our faith, significant work to change lives in Kenya, serious fun and meaning in our worship, and the distinct and confident decision to become a vital, growing congregation.

WOW! Thank God!

But far be it from me to spend my time looking back! When we look ahead to 2014 the excitement starts to grow, and, I for one, get motivated to get moving! In the New Year we will:

Earnestly look for creative and flexible space where we can offer creative experiences to the wider community, with the goal of strengthening our connections with the world around us,

Try out some new, possibly crazy ideas to get our name out there, and invite new friends into our community,

Look for better ways to connect with children and youth, re-thinking what it means to offer "Christian Education" to every age group,

Restructure our congregational governance. We will invent, if necessary, a whole new way of "being" the church body,



**Articles for February will be due February 23**

**Put articles in the Echo box at church or email to me, Eileen Fletcher.**

**Email address: [efletchermcnamara@fuse.net](mailto:efletchermcnamara@fuse.net)**

Explore ways to engage more significantly in the struggles of our community and the world. The Church of Jesus Christ should do more than offer bread and water to hungry people... we need to be an active part of the fight to end hunger.

Period.

Find creative ways to care for our earth, and all of God's creation,

Continue to explore creative worship, new music, meaningful traditions, and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in building us into a stronger church.

We have a lot to do. It can seem a bit daunting... but remember, We serve, and are called by an Awesome God! In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus declares:

“For mortals it is impossible, ***but for God all things are possible.***”

I believe we will see this come to life in 2014!

In Christ's Love,  
Pastor Mark

## **Pastor's Schedule**

As I begin the New Year as your full-time Pastor, I will be working to find out the best use of my time in order to be available to members, visiting those in need, out in the community meeting people, and engaged in important study, prayer and worship planning. The following schedule is just a way to get started! It is almost certain to change as we figure out increasingly better ways to be in ministry. So be patient, please. Feel free and invited to stop by when I am in the office, but plan to make an appointment if it is something really important. Help me discover the best way to carry out the ministry to which we are called. This schedule does not include any evening needs and opportunities that will arise. I am available, with planning, for evening events. We will adjust the schedule as needed when other things come along!

## **Sunday:**

9:00 – 11:30: Worship and fellowship

Lunch: Gathering for conversation and study

2:00 – 4:00: Scheduled Visits

## **Monday and Wednesday**

9:00 – Noon: Office Hours, available for meetings, counseling, office work

Lunch: Available for lunch discussions

1:00 - 5:00: Flexible Ministry time; study groups, community meetings, projects, etc.

## **Tuesday**

All Day: Designated day for visiting homebound and “shut-in” members

## **Thursday**

Non-office day. On Thursdays I will be in constant contact with Connie, but will be secluded for uninterrupted time studying for worship, and praying for you. I put a significant amount of time into my “message” preparation each week, and that is part of the job. It is also important for me to read and study the latest theology and ministry texts, to stay current, and to inspire new ideas. I appreciate the opportunity to be in study, prayer and meditation on your behalf.

## **Friday and Saturday:**

Off. Spending time with my family!

Please remember... I am ALWAYS available in times of crisis and emergency! DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL ME! And please, let's be committed to open and consistent communication!

## **A Simple Reminder...**

I know that most of us don't like to talk about money and our giving habits at church. I also know that many of us have increasingly limited funds, and we are often stretched to the limit just trying to live. Trust me. I get it.

But the church we love needs each member for whom this church has been a significant, safe place to journey in faith to do our part to make sure we have the resources to be the church we want to be. So let me remind you of an idea I shared in worship several weeks ago. The call was, if you remember, to "Bump It Up!"

That's right. Bump It Up.

As faithful members, our giving should be planned and intentional, whatever the amount is. So here is what I suggest... I encourage each household to determine your total annual income, determine your total giving to FSJ in 2013, and calculate what percentage of your income was given to the ministry of our church. Once this is done, whether you give 1%, 2% or 10%, prayerfully consider "bumping it up" to the next percentage. If we all do this, we will all share equally in the strengthening of the church.

And please remember... I am a huge supporter of you finding ways to contribute to organizations and missions outside of the church that you are passionate about. Are you committed to finding a cure for cancer? Diabetes? Alzhiemers? Are you concerned about abandoned animals? Do you feel strongly about supporting injured and disabled Veterans? Where ever your passions lie, your giving should follow.

God calls us to be generous people. Can we make a difference in 2014?

## ***November Prayer Circle***

Eloise Andrews  
Jim Arnold  
Ada Mae Begley  
Payton Cauchran  
Linda Chalk  
Norma Durr  
Bob & LaVada  
Fletcher  
Clay Frink  
Myron Gilley  
Barbara Harris  
Fanny Murphy  
Kyle Phelps  
Diane Johnson  
Vicki Howard  
Marilyn Jeffers  
Wayne Kaeding  
Alex Kip

Tamara Kirkwood  
& Twins  
Jackie McKinney  
Gilda Moore  
Donald Mull  
Marion Reed  
Fred Smith  
Doug Stumpf  
Gartha Webb  
Richard Wesp



U.S Armed  
Forces &  
Their  
Families

**The Families of**  
James Conyers  
Linda Fitzgerald  
Thomas Herold  
Elaine Weiss

Please leave a message for the prayer circle with Shirley. Include the following information: name of person, illness. Thanks, Shirley M. Lovely, 726-6223. Please check names carefully. Shirley .

**If there are any names that need to be removed  
call Shirley Lovely at the number above.**



## Thank You

Dear First St John UCC

Thank you so much for the scholarship. The money has helped me with my college education. This year I have moved to Clifton with some of my friends and am still pursuing my goal of getting a Business degree. Again thank you so much for all you have done for me.

Alex Vizdom

Thank you for your generous donation to Matthew 25 Ministries. Your recent gift of \$120 on 10/23/13 will greatly help the poorest of the poor and disaster victims.

God's Blessing.

Rev. Wendell Mettey

Dear Members, Friends, & Pastor Mark

Many thanks for your service and presence in the Hamilton neighborhoods. My dear mother, Dorothy Boell loved your visits and gifts at Westover.

Enclosed is a memorial gift in honor and memory of my mother

Please feel free to use it for outreach, mission or wherever it is needed

Thank you! Sincerely in His Love,

Suzanne Boell Sippel.



## Thank You

Thank you so much for your church's very generous donation of \$500 to the work of Supports to Encourage Low -Income Families (SELF)

Sincerely Jeffery A. Diver  
Executive Director

Thank you so much for your recent gift of \$150 that we received on Oct. 18, 2013. Your donation will make a tangible difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Terry L. Perdue

Executive Director Mercy Health

Dear FSJ (especially the Choir)

Warmest greetings of the season and best wish for happiness in the New Year!!

Merry Christmas Sincerely, Susie Ha

May the beauty of the season fill your hearts with happiness as you gather together this Holiday Season

Lovingly Jackie McKinney

To all at the church miss you and love you all!

Jackie McKinney has a new grand child

Born December 19 (8lb +)

Name Christopher Brents Robinson his brothers name is

Tristan age 2.

# Community Dinner Menu

<b>January</b>	<b>Vegetable Soup, Cornbread, Grilled Cheese, Jello</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>Breakfast, Fruit Salad</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>Chicken Potato Casserole, Salad, Bread, Brownies</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Meatloaf, Mashed potatoes, &amp; Green Beans</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Baked Beans &amp; Hot Dogs. Chips, Coleslaw. Brownies</b>

**Our Mission:**

To use our individual and congregational gifts, talents and resources to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ, and to bring to all His word, His healing, His compassion and His forgiveness by being a warm accepting and loving faith community.

The Echo is a publication of First St. John  
United Church of Christ

140 Ross Ave., Hamilton, OH 45013

Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. Ballroom Second Floor

Fellowship Time: 9:15 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.

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Phone 513-863-0793 Fax: 513-863-0871

Connie Wyatt, Office Mgr. Thursday: 8:00 am. -11:00 am.

Rev. Mark Young, Pastor Cell 859-663-8994