

Happy New Year!

It was a wonderful Advent and Christmas season, filled with meaningful moments in worship, good times together, and a growing sense of God's continued presence in our lives. Now we turn to the coldest days of winter, and the long wait for spring.



Over the past 6 months, I have heard many of your stories and reflections of your struggles as a church for the past several years. I know that the grief and sadness you have shared about the decline in membership, decreased energy and activity, and the grief associated with giving away your former building. I know these feelings and struggles are real. I know your sadness is pervasive. I know you all wish for more in the life of First St. John. I also know this; the longer I talk to you, the more positive your conversations grow. I think that, sometimes,

Continued page 2



Articles for March will be due February 24th.

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

Email address: efletchermcnamara@fuse.net

when we need to express our struggles and give voice to our sadness, we lose the ability to recognize the amazing, life-giving presence of God.

So I have an idea. Starting at the New Year, we will keep a “Bottle of Blessings” in our presence. I will bring a bottle and place it in a prominent place. Every time you sense the presence of God in your life, every time you have a story to tell of God’s grace and goodness, every time someone does something kind and thoughtful, every time you witness or experience a blessing... you are invited to write it down and put it in the bottle. We will see how many blessings we recognize throughout the ways God has touched our lives and our community.

I will put the first blessing in the bottle. It will read...

“ God brought us together!!”

A very special “Thank You” to all who worked to make our Advent and Christmas Eve worship experiences so wonderful! From the set-up, the preparation, the help in worship leadership, the clean-up, the decorating, the attention to the million details, the behind-the-scenes leadership, and the unending spirit of cooperation it was all done with grace and generosity. I am not even sure I know who did it all! But I want you all to know how much I appreciate all you do.

My Love,

Pastor Mark

Remembrance Candle and Altar Flowers

Beginning in 2013, we will change the sign up procedure for the Remembrance Candle and Altar Flowers. Please notify the office directly if you would like to sponsor the candle or flowers. Call (863-0793) or email (firststjohn@fuse.net) with the name to be honored or remembered, your name and the date for the remembrance. There is no established dollar amount for either item.

As always, fresh flowers are welcome on the altar and no prior notification is necessary. Just bring in a fresh bouquet from your garden or the flower shop at any time.

Dates to Remember

January 27th Chili dog lunch after service fee will offering money to a local mission.

March 9th concert at Ross High School, Ooh LA LA and the Greasers, cost \$10. Please contact Virginia

FOX 19 SkyCam

Did you know that you can see a current view of our parking lot and the river by going to Partner in Prime's website: www.partnersinprime.org. Click on Fox 19 SkyCam (on the homepage, left side). Check it out to see the current weather condition if you live a few miles away.



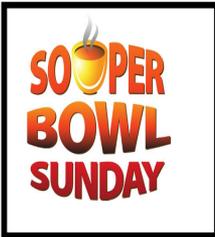
Thank you for your cards, food, visits, phone calls and prayers during my surgery and recuperation.

Hope to return to church after the first of the year Barb Bogan

Thank You for your thoughts, prayers, cards, & calls during my surgery. they where greatly appreciated.
Bill McCalley

Souper Bowl Sunday Will Be

Mmmm, Mmmm Good!



Let's make February 3 (Super Bowl Sunday) more than a football game day.

Many of our Hamilton neighbors would love

to go to their pantry, look at stocked shelves, choose from among a variety of soups, stews and chili, then sit down at their kitchen table to a hot, nourishing, bowl. Many of our neighbors, however, do not have the financial means to have a stocked pantry.

New Life Baptist Ministry located on S. Fourth St., manages a food pantry for the second ward neighborhood. First St. John has the opportunity to stock their shelves which, in turn, can stock individuals' shelves.

On Super Bowl Sunday, please join the **FSJ Team** and bring in canned or boxed soup, stews, and related foods for New Life Mission. Drop your donation in the **End Zone** (downstairs lobby) on your way up to the **Stands** (ballroom). Our **goal** is **176** as we enter our 176th year.

Tackle Hunger

December Prayer Circle

Eloise Andrews

Vernon Arnold

Jim Arnold

Barb Bogan

Ada Mae Begley

Mel Brown

Tom & Nancy
Brown

Payton Cauchran

Linda Chalk

Jack DuVall

Roger Fox

Don Harley

Jesse Heink

Vicki Howard

Judy Huff

Marilyn Jeffers

Alex Kip

Tamara Kirkwood
& Twins

Keith Lipphardt

Jackie McKinney

Donald Mull

Marion Reed



U.S Armed
Forces &
Their
Families

The Family of Christopher Freyberg

The Families of the Firefighters of New York

The Families of Newtown, Connecticut Tragedy

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. If there are any names that need to be removed call Shirley .

January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sundays 9:00 Adult Class 9:15 Fellowship time 10:00 Worship		1 New Year's Day PiP	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 5:50 pm R & A	9	10	11	12
13 Worship team: 9:20 Just Friends: After wor- ship	14 6:00 pm Serve City - Wyatt	15	16	17	18	19
20 Council After Worship	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Chili Dog Lunch	28 6:00 pm Community Meal	29	30	31		

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Th	Fri	Sat
Sundays						
9:00 Adult SS 9:15 Fellowship 10:00 Worship					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Worship team: 9:20 Just Friends: After worship	11 6:00 Serve City	12 5:30 R & A	13 Ash Wednes- day	14	15	16
17 Council After Worship	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 6:00 Communi- ty Meal	26	27	28		

Community Dinner Menu

January, 2013	Vegetable Soup, Corn Bread, Grilled Cheese Sandwiches, Jello Cake
February	Waffles, Eggs, Sausage, Fruit Cocktail
March	Chicken-Potato Casserole, Salad, Bread, Brownies
April	Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Bread, Applesauce
May	Little Hot Dogs, Baked Beans, Potato Chips, Coleslaw, Brownies
June	Hamburgers, Buns, Potato Chips, Potato Salad, Cake
July	Chicken Casserole, Corn, Salad,

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.

Web Page: fsjchurch.org

Office Manager: Connie Wyatt

E-Mail firststjohn@fuse.net

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

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