



crossbeams

A Cheviot United Methodist Church Newsletter

March 2023

Greetings from Pastor John Wagner

Greetings! My name is John Wagner, and I'm a recently retired United Methodist minister. About a month ago, I was asked to fill the pulpit here at Cheviot UMC while your pastor, Carrie Jena, recovers from a mild heart attack. She was only in the hospital a day or two and plans to be back with you after a time of rest. I've tried to let her have this moment to convalesce, but we've spoken occasionally and she always sends her love to you folks.

I want you to know I welcome the opportunity to serve with you here at Cheviot. We have been warmly received, and it's an honor to fill this role. My wife JoAnn has gotten to help out with music, and that's also been a gift. But most of all, it's an unexpected opportunity to do something for our good friend Carrie. We first met when I was assigned to a congregation in Middletown. She was already the pastor of "The Gathering" – a church dedicated to serving the homeless, mentally ill, addicted or otherwise marginalized persons in our community. I came to greatly admire her as one of those pastors who, simply put, walks the walk. She's the real deal.

I'd like to share something Carrie wrote a few years ago for her previous congregation. It's about the season of the church year when Christians tend to ask one another, "What are you giving up for Lent?" Most often it's some kind of rich food we ought to be avoiding anyway. Carrie takes it a step further. Here are some of her thoughts:

"Lent is much more than a season of depriving us of what we want. It is a season of becoming what God wants, and owes much of its spirit to the forty days Jesus spent in the desert preparing for his ministry. We say he was tempted there, but a more accurate translation may be 'tested.'

The ancient Hebrews viewed the desert as an abode of demons, especially those parts of the desert where winds would howl around tall, rough stone. It must have been terrifying at night: dark, looming shapes, the unearthly wailing of the wind, and nothing else ... (And yet) the wilderness experience was planned for Jesus by a loving Father for the purpose of both forming and perfecting Him out of God's deep love for His Son. What does this mean for followers of Jesus—for those of us whom Paul said were 'baptized into Christ's death?' who are experiencing or have experienced the formative work of the wilderness in our own lives? And it raises the question:

Is there something about the Christian life that requires a wilderness experience in order for preparation, transformation, and even salvation to take place in us?"

As I've gotten to know the people in this congregation I've learned that while you have your own unique character, you also have the same hidden heartaches we all must endure in life. Lent is a time to acknowledge our own darkness, as Carrie suggests, but then ask God to help us accept the light of his grace freely offered through Jesus Christ.

I hope we can all make Lent 2023 a good and profitable time for ourselves and our mission as Christians living in this world.



God bless you,
John Wagner

March
Birthdays to Celebrate

- 3-Mar** Mary Ann Jacobs
- 7-Mar** Nathan Davis
- 13-Mar** Jim Klein
- 15-Mar** Brent Wittich
- 25-Mar** Julie Krebs
- 29-Mar** Rick Specker
- 30-Mar** Cathy Klein



March
Anniversaries to Celebrate

- 1-Mar** Bill & Angela Flight



March Mission Offering

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is the humanitarian arm of the United Methodist Church. UMCOR lives out signs of God's extravagant grace in the world by working with communities overwhelmed by natural or man-made disasters, building on the strengths of what is locally available and actively involving the residents in recovery efforts. We celebrate this agency in March and take an offering to cover the annual operational and administrative costs. UMCOR applies 100% of all other donations directly to relief efforts.

Your support of this vital mission is appreciated.
Thank you!!



Cheviot United Methodist Church
How to Reach Us

Pastor	Reverend Carrie Jena pastor@cheviotumc.com
Prayer Requests	Paula Long office@cheviotumc.com
Church Secretary	Paula Long office@cheviotumc.com
Communications & Social Media	Lisa Sinclair SocialMedia@CheviotUMC.com
Children's Music Coordinator	Anne Schummer ChildrensMusicCoord@cheviotumc.com
Business Manager	Lindsey Bethel BusinessManager@cheviotumc.com

Worship with Us...

Blended Service

****10am****
in the Sanctuary

Bible Studies

See our website, information in this newsletter or call the office for information and to learn how to join our in-person and online studies during the week.

View the Church Service--

- * Go to *youtube.com*
- * Type: **CheviotUMC** in the Search box

...this March

Church Office
513.662.2048
office@cheviotumc.com

Our mission is to create a Jesus-Centered community where individuals and families in every stage of life can thrive and grow spiritually, physically, and relationally in Christ.

It was an amazing idea that I was watching on the Evening News. Someone had this wonderful vision (not sure if it was an adult or child). They put a bench out on the playground and called it the (Buddy Bench). The purpose of it was that if a child felt lonely, was having a bad day or any other real issue they could go sit on the bench. Then some classmate who saw them sitting there and cared about that classmate could go to the bench and sit with them. To my understanding, that Bench still is there.

Perhaps I really liked the idea because if there had been a Buddy Bench when I was in school, I would have been one to go and sit on it. Life during that time was not easy for me. My mother was in and out of the hospital (the psychiatric unit) and life was not easy. She had made some of my clothes and I remember a green jumper that I wore a lot. And I remember that it had a spot on it right in the front. Add to that—when we were chosen on the playground for games with sides like kickball, I was one of the last to be chosen.

Sometime later in my life when I had gone for some counseling, the counselor asked me to close my eyes and think of a situation in my life that had not been easy. In my mind's eye, I saw myself in that green jumper and students standing around me. It was the same scenario, I had not been chosen. But this time someone was coming into the room and they came straight to me. And what they said to me was, "I choose you". I recognized that Person; it was Jesus. And His love came to me and He loved me!

It is a crazy mixed up world out there and there is way too little love in it. I have been rereading some of the Mitford books by Jan Karon. This time, I have been amazed at the characters she has chosen to put into her books. Yet even more amazing are the real life situations she has woven into the lives of her characters. And always there is an emphasis on God and His Great Love and being the God of second chances. And I would add third, fourth and fifth plus many chances for us to return Home to Him.

Saturday I was told about a great revival that was going on at my Alma Mater, Asbury College, now University. I got on the internet and looked it up and sure enough God was moving in an amazing way in the hearts of the students there. There was the sweetness of God's presence as they were praying, repenting and confessing their sins to God and each other.

A song came to me, "Come Holy Spirit I need Thee, Come Sweet Spirit I pray, come in Thy strength and Thy power, Come in Thine Own Gentle Way". My mother, who had a tough life, loved Jesus and she taught me that the Holy Spirit is Kind and Gentle and Loving. She also taught me that God is not the Author of confusion. And the Spirit that I sensed as I watched the videos at Asbury verified what I had been taught about God's Holy Spirit. His Presence was so real.

Lately, a verse from Ephesians 4:32 keeps coming to me. *"Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God (the Father) has forgiven us through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord."*

In the Mitford books I read, Love is a continuous life of forgiveness. I would add, God's Love is a continuous journey of forgiveness.

I wonder if there was a bench and you were sitting there and Jesus came and sat down next to you, what would you say to Him and what would Jesus say to you? And what if you sat down on the bench and someone you need to forgive or someone who needs to forgive you sat down next to you. Would the sweet presence of God's gentle and loving Holy Spirit be there to melt your hearts and bring healing? I pray so.

In closing I share a prayer that Jan Karon had in each of her books. It goes like this-----

"Thank you Lord, for loving me and for sending Your Son to die for my sins. I repent of my sins and receive Christ as my Savior. And now, as Your child, I surrender my whole life to You".

God has indeed chosen us, and He is indeed the God of second, third, fourth and so many more chances. He has forgiven me many times and continues to forgive me.

"Come Holy Spirit, we need Thee. Come sweet Spirit we pray, Come in Thy strength and Thy power, come in Thine own gentle way".





Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study meets in the Community Room - a **TEAMS** option is available- Saturday's at 8am.

e-mail Mark Woodward:
markwoodward082@gmail.com
for the link.

Sandwiches for Our Daily Bread



Hi, Everyone!!!

Thanks to all who made sandwiches in February. If there is anyone who might be interested in joining the "Sandwich Warriors", I will be glad to tell you all about this mission project.

Our next "sandwich day" for Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen will be Thursday, March 23.
Please contact Barb Scheibling or the Church Office: 513.662.2048
if you plan to make sandwiches *by March 19.*

ODB also welcomes individually wrapped snack cookies and crackers, chips, *etc.* and oranges and slightly green bananas to include with the sandwiches--this might be of interest to those who may not have time to make sandwiches. These items can be left on the kitchen island, labeled **Our Daily Bread**, by March 23. *Please save your Kroger plastic bags!*

Thank you, and Blessings!
Women of Hope

LYDIA CIRCLE

Lydia Circle is a women's fellowship group supporting each other and the missions of the church. Meetings are in Werner Lounge the second Tuesday of the month from 1pm to 2:30pm.

Our March 14 program is "Missed Opportunities."

All women are welcome!

Contact Sue Kindervater for more information: 513.353.1629



United Methodist Church Clergy Human Sexuality / Disaffiliation Issue Update

CUMC leadership has agreed that it is time to review where the United Methodist Church issue regarding clergy sexual orientation stands. There has not been a General Conference since the Special General Conference held in 2019. At that conference, the push to change the Book of Discipline to no longer cite sexual orientation as a reason to be denied as a candidate for ordination was defeated. However, those supporting the effort to change the discipline have been exploring new approaches to achieve this result. A General Conference has been scheduled for 2024.

Our plans are to review the background and provide an update on the changing landscape around this issue at an all-church information session on Sunday, March 12, at 6pm. This will be followed by a study on human sexuality after Easter, between April 26 and May 31. We will likely hold local church conversations about the relationship with The United Methodist Church during this period of time. All members of CUMC are invited to participate in these events.

Anyone wishing to research information prior to the information session on March 12, can use the following URLs to access information from the United Methodist Church denomination website, the West Ohio Conference of the UMC website regarding disaffiliation, and the newly formed Global Methodist Church denomination website:

<https://www.umc.org/en>

<https://www.westohioumc.org/disaffiliation>

<https://globalmethodist.org/>

Tom Kindervater (email: LayDelegateAnnConf@CheviotUMC.com)
Lay Delegate to West Ohio Annual Conference

Thank You!

To my dear CUMC family, I want to thank each of you for all the lovely cards and for the kind and appreciative words for my talent and service of music at this, my home church. I have loved teaching and playing all the anthems, Christmas programs, bell choir pieces and duets with Carol. I will miss all of that and all of you, past and present. I have only retired from this church-not from making music elsewhere.

"His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me."

With Love,
Marcia

Dear CUMC members and friends,

My heart is overflowing with gratitude and love on the occasion of my retirement from Cheviot Church. Words cannot begin to express my appreciation for the cards, notes, gifts, hugs and lovely goodbyes expressed to me during that time.

My long tenure at Cheviot has made my life's journey a wonderful memory. I loved every part of it: playing a beautiful organ, directing a fun-loving choir, working with Marcia on organ and piano duets, using our instrumental musicians to enhance the worship experience, planning the service music each Sunday, and most of all enjoying the fellowship of Christian love with my church family. You have made these past years a joyous and celebratory experience and I love you for it.

God bless and keep you in the center of his will, make his face to shine upon you and give you peace.

Amen

Carol Gangwer





Westfed Pantry Update

Thank you to all who've faithfully contributed to Westfed Food Pantry. This outreach to the local community would not be possible without your continued support.

Westfed accepts all unexpired food and toiletry items.

Donations may be left in the Westfed baskets (bottom shelf) outside Werner Lounge at any time.

Large paper grocery bags are also needed.

Requested items for March: **cereal and crackers**

Westfed Pantry, located at Grace Lutheran Church, is open March 23 and March 30

from 1:30pm – 2:30pm to residents in zip codes 45211 and 45238.

Entrance to the pantry (3628 Boudinot Avenue) is from the rear parking lot off Verdin Avenue.

Thank you for your continued support.

Worship Service at Scarlet Oaks Nursing Home

Join us March 26, 1:30pm to 3:30pm, as we provide a worship service to the residents on the last Sunday of each month.

Our prior visits with the residents have not only been rewarding, but heartwarming. We will be looking for greeters, worship service participants, fellowship time servers, communion distributors and above all, a smile and warm conversation with residents, many of whom have few family or visitors. This is truly a way of showing the love of Christ to them.

We will carpool from the church.

We will also be asking for fellowship time donations (cookies, brownies, etc).



SAM (Senior Adult Ministries)

SAM is a fellowship group organized for anyone ages 50 and up.

Please join us for a dessert in the Fellowship Hall Wednesday, March 15 at 1pm.

Entertainment by Jeff Jena.

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUESTED by Sunday, March 12.

Bring a friend!

Make your reservation by--

calling the church office: 513.662.2048 **or**

via e-mail: SAMChair@cheviotumc.com





True story! The other day I was buckling three of my 2 year old grandkids into their car seats. We were off to pick up another granddaughter from kindergarten. It was one of those moderately cold late mornings. To save time, I had loaded everyone in with no coats or shoes. Don't judge me! We were on a time crunch.

Levi, the youngest of the 2-year olds started saying "frozen" while I was situating the other two. The longer I didn't respond to him, the louder and more urgent he became. "Frozen, frozen" he yelled. I quick turned the car on, pushed the heat and fan onto high. "Hang in there buddy, I'm going to grab a blanket for everyone. It will start to warm up soon." Everyone covered up, we were finally on our way. The car was warming nicely as we were heading to the school. "Frozen," he wailed again! Oh my, I'm going to lose a star from my granny child care. What was I thinking, no coats or shoes! Please Lord, forgive me. Then, I heard, "Anna Elsa!" *Ohhhhhh*, that FROZEN! He wasn't cold, he wanted music.

It's been almost two years since I joined the team here at CUMC! We've been on a journey to be relevant in and for our community through Jesus loving ways. It sounds so simple doesn't it? Let's just be relevant! I hear but sometimes, like I did with my Levi, I interpret the need incorrectly. Becoming relevant and staying relevant isn't like flipping a switch. It takes time, perseverance and passion. It takes team work. It takes laying down what might have worked in the past to try something new or foreign so that others will fall in love with Jesus.

Every Sunday at 10am, there is a small, team of people who love Jesus and are dedicated to provide experiences for kids to love God, know Jesus, and serve others. They share Big Ideas (Bible Truths) thru a different theme each month. It's high energy, creative, safe and so much fun. We pray continually for the children God will send us. As grandparents, we have a role to fulfill in making God known to the next generation. Make plans for a grandkids sleepover, JAM on Sunday morning and of course breakfast after church. True story! You will be blessed and relevant!

Terri Beth Faust
JAM Coach

Sunday Morning Refreshments

Fellowship & Food

Hospitality is in need of finger foods for our Sunday morning fellowship hour, following the service. If you would like to contribute a "goody", there is a sign-up sheet in Werner Lounge which helps the Hospitality Committee to know whether we need to fill in with additional items, and allows for a varied selection of items. **[It is important you use the sign-up sheet]**

Suggestions: cookies, donuts, coffee cakes, cheese and crackers, fruits and veggies, and other finger foods are welcome. *Do you have a favorite recipe to share???*

Your help will allow us to continue to have a nice reception on Sunday mornings.

Thanks to all who have shared with us in the past!!!

Hospitality Committee

