



Reaching Heights

A Newsletter of Heights Christian Church

VOLUME 25, NO. 4

September, 2015

Celebrating and Caring for God's Creation

Throughout September we will be celebrating Creation in worship, music, education, and other activities. Come and invite your friends to be a part of this inspiring, thought-provoking, challenging season at Heights Christian Church (coordinated by our Creation Care Team!)



Sunday, September 6 Planet Earth Sunday

As we return from summer vacations we'll begin a month-long Creation theme as we share thoughts on the beauty of the natural world and our relationship with it. We will also share in thanking God for the earth's bounty. You are invited to bring in flowers and produce from your garden, garden tools, and houseplants as we bless them and celebrate the wonder of our planet.

Sunday, September 13 Humanity Sunday

This Sunday we will take a look at our stewardship of creation and the impact that our species has on the world around us. A very fitting theme for the Sunday that we will also install our Officers and Ministry Team Leaders, and ordain a new Elder as we move back into the sanctuary for worship.

Note: 2nd Hour studies begin – see descriptions below

Sunday, September 20 Water Sunday

Living on the shore of one of the Great Lakes makes it easy to take water for granted, but in many places this element essential for life is hard to come by. We'll explore, in worship and study, the importance and beauty of this incredible resource.

Sunday, September 27 Food Sunday

Our worship's focus on food will flow over into our 2nd annual "100 Mile Potluck" which the Green Chalice Creation Care Team is hosting. It will focus on the importance and benefit of local foods and supporting local growers and producers. We are asking everyone to bring a dish or food item that has at least one ingredient that was produced or grown within 100 miles of Shaker Heights.



To reduce waste we are also asking everyone to bring dinnerware, silverware, and a glass or cup that you can take back home and wash. We will share recipes, local food resources, educational information, fun and fellowship! This will begin immediately after worship in the Campbell Room. Please save the date and plan to attend!

Adult Studies for September

Bible Study with Joe

Since September's Theme for HCC Worship is "Creation," Joe LaGuardia will revisit the Book of Genesis, using the Bible and a little book by Peter Enns and Jared Byas entitled *Genesis for Normal People (Study Guide Edition): A Guide to the Most Controversial, Misunderstood, and Abused Book of the Bible* (Patheos Press, 2012). All are welcome.

After September, Bible Study will finish the Book that was started last year, entitled *We Make the Road by Walking*, by Brian McLaren. No prior knowledge is necessary and you need not have been in Bible Study last year to enjoy the remainder of this book.

Topic Study

September 13 and 20 will be devoted to environmental issues with guest speakers leading the conversation.

Along The Path . . .



As we continue to work to fulfill our new mission imperative, “Building Community,” a new opportunity is upon us. Over the past few months I have been meeting with community members here in Shaker Heights (including two of our neighbor churches) to do the planning and groundwork needed to start a TimeBank here in the “Greater Heights” community. This included recruitment of coordinating team members, several meetings, visiting with the program coordinator of a very successful TimeBank in Kent, getting software up and running, and all of the other details that come with a new organization.

All that work has come to fruition as we beginning the launch of the Greater Heights Community TimeBank (www.greaterheights.timebanks.org). I will be doing an orientation at Christ Episcopal on September 6th for their members and one here at HCC Monday evening September 14th at 7:00 pm. Additional orientations will be scheduled in the near future. The orientations are important in that they allow us to explain the purpose of timebanking, answer questions, and go over the details of how timebanking works, including a tutorial on the software.

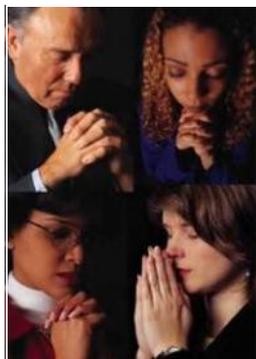
I hope that many of you will come to the orientation on the 14th, sign up, and become active in the timebank. It is an excellent way to live out our new mission directive, connect in new ways with folks around us, and build the kind of network that helps **and** empowers all the members of our community.

P.S. If you haven't heard me explain timebanking (or still have questions) there is more Information in this newsletter on page 6.

... from your Prayer Ministry

On Sunday morning, I listen to the prayers spoken aloud from the pews. People offer sad and happy prayers for beloved family members, for friends and co-workers, for neighbors. Prayer is requested for things going on in this country and all over the world—injustices and violent acts that stun us, natural disasters, and the inhumanity of wars. Our prayers are like a cloud of witnesses surrounding us so we celebrate the good things and remember the needs of others as well as ourselves. And we sing “Hear our prayer, Oh Lord.”

I first experienced this kind of congregational prayer years ago when I was in seminary in Chicago. Part of our class work in a course called “Appropriating Christian Tradition” was to go in groups of four or five students to a different church every Sunday during the school quarter. We went to a big Protestant Church, a store-front church, an African-American church with a glorious Gospel Choir, a mission church under the wing of a more affluent congregation, a Catholic church, Jessie Jackson’s “Operation Push” and a UCC church where I learned the power of prayer.



The life of that congregation, like Heights Christian, was actively centered on doing justice in Christ’s name. Just reading the bulletin made clear where their resources of time, talents and treasure’s were directed. But in the Prayers of the People it came blazingly alive. I heard church members pray for people unknown to them living in obscure troubled places of the globe as if they were neighbors. I could feel their love for strangers in gut-wrenching situations warm the sanctuary. I experienced prayer connecting me to places and people I never would have imagined possible. That’s where I learned that as we pray for God to heal and make whole wounded people and thank God for goodness and grace, God does this for us. I think that’s why we say at the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer “Let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us.”

- written by Ina Hart

Peace and Justice Committee and The Community Advisory Board



Last year was a very successful year as we launched a Community Advisory Board of 25 members to help us discern activities and programs where the local community can experience and celebrate multi-religions and cultures through interactive dialogue groups and educational programs (workshops, conferences) to promote peace, equality and justice.

This summer five representatives of the Board met with five leaders of the Masjid Bilal Mosque to get acquainted and share our vision. One of their leaders said, "Our hearts jumped with joy when we received your letter!" Two of their leaders will join our Community Board at our next meeting on September 1st.

Come On Children Let's Sing

The HCC Gospel choir will have its first rehearsal on Wednesday September 9th at 6:30 pm. We are a small but dedicated group of singers who would love to grow a little larger by having you join us.

We practice twice a month and will be singing roughly once a month in worship. You do not need to read music, just be willing to make a joyful noise to the Lord! Please join us on Sept. 9th and/or call the church office to let us know you're interested.

Christian Women's Fellowship News CWF 2015-2016 Theme

"Building Community: Be Open to God's Call"

Two trips will be planned. to enrich our understanding of "community", one in the fall and one in the spring . Monthly meetings for fellowship are as follows:

<i>Bridge Circle</i>	1st Tuesday of each month
<i>Meditative Art</i>	2nd Wednesday of each month
<i>Book Circle</i>	3rd Wednesday of each month
<i>CWF Luncheon</i>	4th Wednesday of each month

Please pick up a program in the Campbell Room which lists all of our activities and join us. It will be an exciting year ahead.

The Meditative Art Circle will meet on Wednesday, September 9 at 1:00 in the Campbell Room. Everyone is welcome to come and draw, doodle, color and relax. This month we will try drawing on translucent vellum paper using a very fine point Sharpie marker. Please bring whatever pens, pencils, colors, etc. you would like to use. Other coloring/drawing options will also be available.

Gift Cards

Don't forget about our Gift Card fundraiser. They are available for purchase after morning worship in the Campbell Room or in the church office during the week between 9a.m - 4p.m..



Important!!

Green Chalice and Coffee Hour

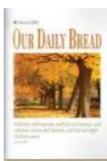


The Creation Care Team continues search for ways to "reduce, reuse, and recycle" to help take better care of our planet.

In cooperation with the Fellowship Ministry Team, we are going to use September as a trial to eliminate disposable cups and use washable mugs and cups for our coffee hour. You are asked to bring in one or two spare mugs from home (we all have at least one "Best..." mug we don't need) that will be used on Sunday morning and then washed for the following week. If the trial program works we will continue this throughout the year. Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

Daily Bread Devotionals

Spiritual growth occurs when faith is cultivated. An October devotional in Our Daily Bread tells us that to be "spiritually fit" we must "feed on God's word and exercise our faith." Your copy of this booklet awaits you in the Narthex or Campbell room tables. Let's all vow to become more "spiritually fit" this fall.



Moderator's Musing

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:1

The change of seasons is fast upon us. I sincerely hope that summer has been a time of relaxation, rest and recreation for each of you. Although enjoying the slower pace of summer, it has been a busy time as church leaders have engaged in prayerful planning for the program year ahead. It will kick off on September 13th and I hope you will feel energized to participate as fully as possible in the life of HCC in the months ahead!



Upon returning from the Disciples of Christ General Assembly this July, I reviewed my notes and was very impressed by the number of creative ways congregations are finding to put "Mission First!" (our denominational thrust for the upcoming two years). One church does "Chain Reaction Ministries", serving Christ by repairing and giving away donated bicycles to help those in need so they can have life-changing transportation. Another does a shoe ministry, collecting and donating used or new shoes. Yet another has a medical equipment loan closet; another maintains a uniform closet for school uniforms. One church with a Thrift Store sponsors "Free Fridays" monthly and invites the community in for a free bag of merchandise. The ideas go on and on!

It is time for HCC to move into action! What matters to you? What idea resonates in your heart? What might we do, even as a one time trial, that would reach into our community and help those in need? Pray, think, imagine and then let's find a way to dive into action! We know God has a plan for us. Now it is the season to become God's hands and hearts in this time and place. Find a friend or two, within the congregation or not, and see if you can lead us into action! God is waiting for us! Let's answer the call!

Mission Resources Ad Hoc Committee Summer Report

The Mission Resources Ad Hoc Committee has worked across the summer in order to gather information from the congregation regarding areas of interest and passion for defining opportunities for mission initiatives. After a series of "Listening Posts" during second hours and a congregational survey, approximately 35 responses were received. Many thanks to those of you who spoke with committee members or submitted written survey responses!

Responses to inquiries regarding how HCC might serve our neighbors fell into four major areas (reported in order of frequency of response):

1. Serving children and youth – including ideas such as tutoring, offering a Vacation Bible School, establishing a youth group at HCC
2. Social Service centered ideas – such as meals/visitation for the elderly, single parent groups, etc.
3. Activities around bringing in speakers, offering forums on current issues, activities Exploring multi-cultural initiatives
4. Food centered activities – such as community meals, holiday dinner for young people who have aged out of foster care

Many, many good ideas have surfaced and our committee will continue to explore these with the congregation. We will also supervise proposals for projects to be funded from the capital reserve monies that are part of the Campbell Court funds. Please keep talking to us, as ideas strike you that would help our congregation move forward putting mission first in our life together.



As a point of information, after confusion as to the difference between the Mission Ministry Team and the Mission Resources Ad Hoc Committee surfaced, our committee agreed to change its name. From this point on we will be known as the *Capital Reserve Advisory Committee*. We hope this will help clarify our purpose!

MINISTRY TEAMS UPDATE



Administration

Property Committee — The Bell Tower Restoration Project (painting and significant wood work) began in August. The project was proposed by the Property Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Funding came from previous capital campaign contributions and some insurance claim monies.

Finance Committee — Work on the budget for 2016 will begin with an initial committee meeting on September 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Education

The children are already back at school and so are we at HCC. Starting on September 6, we will start using our new curriculum. We will be splitting the children into a younger group up to 4th grade and an older group starting at 5th grade. The older group will be in a new location down the hall from the classroom we have used in the past. We will be start with learning about creation which will also be the focus of the September church services.

Fellowship

As the church year starts, so will our coffee hour activities. The Fellowship ministry is going to try and simplify what is served, although we had wonderful snacks last year. We would like to have a larger coffee hour one Sunday a month and the other three Sundays have simple munchies. Of course coffee, tea, and lemonade will be there as always. There will be a sign-up board in the Campbell Room. We think for the bigger Sundays we need 3-4 people to sign up to bring things like dips, fruit, sweets, cheese and crackers. etc. and the other Sundays 1 person to bring simple munchies like chips and salsa or just chips, pretzels, snack mix, popcorn etc. Of course when people bring other things, even though they have not signed up, it is welcomed. Look for the sign-up board starting Sept. 13 with the schedule starting the first Sunday in October. Please sign-up and coffee hours will be simple, full of fellowship, and "delicious".

Also ... Fellowship Ministry is looking for people to be on our committee to help with special events and sometimes on Sunday mornings. Please contact either Joan Fronck: 216.403.5610/ jkf0208@aol.com or Bobbi Phelps: 216.491.9381/bphelps52@gmail.com.

Missions

Summer is Over—Where Did The Time Go?

The good thing about it is that this is the month that our congregation starts its church calendar year. This year is especially exciting because we are implementing a new committee structure. The Missions Ministry Team committees are already hard at work to schedule various activities for this church year. The Missions Ministry committees are: Green Chalice, Peace and Justice, Outreach, CWF, and gardens.

Please pay **special attention to the articles in this issue** about the many activities that these committees will implement during the month of September and beyond. We would love to have you join us for those events. The Outreach committee will meet on September 22nd to get its calendar year of activities in full throttle motion. The Outreach committee has several new members who come with a lot of enthusiasm and skills. All of the Missions Ministry Team committees are about following through with God's expectation of "caring for and giving to others". May we keep an open heart and mind to serve all of God's children. Give God praises and pray for those whom these committees are seeking to serve.

What is TimeBanking?

- ▶ It's a way of giving and receiving to help others as well as yourself. It helps build strong communities.
- ▶ TimeBanking is about “paying it forward,” it is about reciprocity. Not just “how can I help you” but instead, “how can we help each other.”

One hour of you helping someone else through a TimeBank earns you one TimeBank credit, which you can then use for some service that you need. TimeBanking applies to everyone - teens, adults, seniors – everyone has something to give and everyone needs something – it is this reciprocity that makes TimeBanking work and helps build community.

For example:

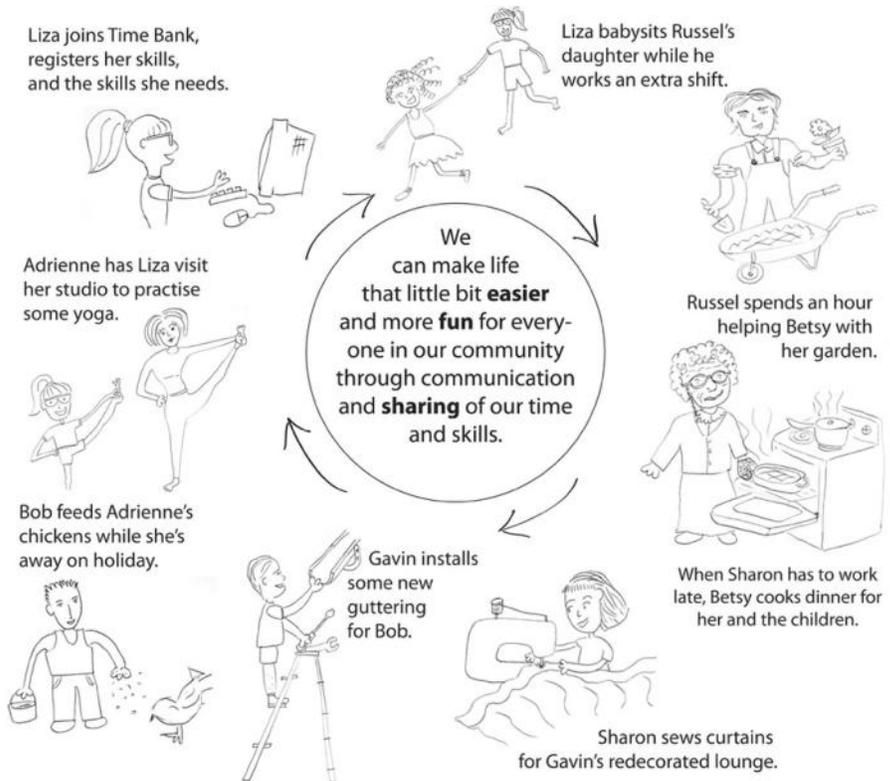
- ▶ Teens can teach someone how to Tweet and use Facebook, how to use a new iPhone, mow the lawn, visit with a senior who needs company, babysit.
- ▶ Adults can share a talent or skill, give a ride, babysit, bake cookies, walk a senior's dog, do some yard work, help with odd jobs.
- ▶ Seniors can share a story, knit a baby blanket, give someone a ride, run an errand.

...and so much more! Anyone can be involved in TimeBanking and all of us can help build community!

Core Values of Timebanking

The Greater Heights Community TimeBank is based on our five core values, which, over time, we realize are the building blocks of a healthy community.

1. **ASSETS:** We are all assets. Every human being has something to contribute, no matter how great or small.
2. **RE-DEFINING WORK:** We redefine work because some work is beyond price and all work is recorded and rewarded equally.
3. **RECIPROCITY:** We practice reciprocity because helping works better as a two way street.
4. **SOCIAL NETWORKS:** Social Networks mean that we need each other and we are creating a caring community.
5. **RESPECT:** Respect means all voices are heard equally and we are accountable to each other.





To HCC, Pastor Roger, Elders, Members and Friends:

Just as Christ called his disciples His friends in the 15th chapter of the Gospel of John, as believers, you too have included me as a friend, for that I am grateful. For those who prayed for me, ***I thank you.*** For those who cooked and brought to us delicious meals, ***I appreciate it.*** For those who visited, called or sent cards of encouragement, ***thank you.*** And for those who empathized and held good thoughts for us, ***I thank you also!***



I am so blessed that my daughter works among such Christian people who show their love of Christ in everyday living. I know that I can never repay you for the many, many acts of kindness that my family received from you so I am asking God to do it for me. May you always be blessed, Dorothy Mathis

(mother of Kese Webb)

P.S ... to add on to what my mother said, I'd like to thank Roger for being my "sounding board" in some of my "ugliest moments"; to Bernadette for "rounding up the food wagon"; Joanie, Val-en-c-ia, and Andrena ... do you ladies hire out? The dinners were out of this world! And, Grace, I cannot begin to thank you for ***everything*** you've done—I cherish your friendship. I can't forget Paul Hummel calling just to check on us. After returning to work and even now, everyone who comes/call in the office, ALWAYS asks about mama. I Thank ***all*** of you for your prayers, kind words and caring hearts. ***HCC, you're the BEST!***

Please allow me one more "thank you"—***to my mother.*** She is the best of the best!!! Her attitude during this whole ordeal leaves me speechless. She's been upbeat, positive, courageous, pleasant, kind and very thankful. The surgery to amputate her left leg took two hours. When I went in to see her after the surgery, she was up talking as if she'd just come back from a x-ray. Her attitude is what's been carrying me through. Despite crippling arthritis, "phantom" pains and the other remaining health issues, Dorothy Mathis is a remarkable 79 year old woman. ***I love you and thank you!***

Kese



BECAUSE YOU CARE
Illness-Surgery-Hospitalization

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Allen Crowley | Jesse Hall | Shirley Reading | C.D./Lois Clark | Mary Rogers |
| Henry Sharpley | Liz Perdue | Lisa Peabody | Alma G. Jones | Nancy Wilson |
| Scott Lemmon | Joe Freudi | Dorothy Mathis | Samarra States | Patty Monroe |
| Sidney Mallory, Jr. | Paul/Shirley Hummel | Cas Castleberry | Janelle Eccleston | |
| Lyubov Nikolenko | Joe/Barbara Tolley | | | |

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

11:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

11:30 a.m. Education Hour

(Nursery & Preschool care provided)

STAFF

Minister *Rev. Roger D. Osgood*

Minister of Outreach *Rev. Joan Brown Campbell*

Director of Music *Dale Hukill*

Director of Gospel Music *Willie J. Wright, Jr.*

Office Administrator *Kese Webb*

Facilities Coordinator *Mike Faust*

Childcare *Rosie Scott*

OFFICERS

Moderator *Jane Troha*

Vice Moderator *Valencia McMillan*

Secretary *Grace Loudenstein*

Treasurer *Neil Chase*

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Ohio Women's Ministries Fall Retreat—September 11-13, 2015



This year's theme is called: Friend Request "A Celebration of Spiritual Friendship".

Rev. Margot Connor will be the presenter.

Besides our keynotes, workshops and Bible study we will have Friday night "Dancing through the Generations." Saturday Night Story telling and Friend Selfies to put on Facebook.

We will have a Basket Silent Auction. Please bring your best work. Also, the service project at this retreat will be collecting feminine products for the Free Store and other women's organizations. We encourage you to bring a friend.

Ohio Disciples Men's Fall Retreat September 18-20, 2015 "Building Relationships"

As Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation is a priority of the Christian Church in Ohio and given the killing of black men and boys in Cleveland, Beavercreek, and Cincinnati by police, we will discuss around the theme "Black Lives Matter" drawing from our experience at the General Assembly. We will join in a spirited dialogue with one another. Our speaker, Dr. Timothy James will share with us how communication, dialogue and critical presence are important for building relations.



To receive more information on the Women's or Men's retreat, or call 614.433.0343. You can also register online at www.ccinoh.org

The Ties That Bind Community Choir



Rehearsals for the TTB choir, directed by Willie J. Wright, will begin again on Monday, September 21st and anyone is welcome to be a part of this interdenominational, interracial, intergenerational group of singers.

Rehearsals take place twice a month on Monday evenings at HCC and the group will be working towards a holiday concert in December.

No prior choir experience is necessary, just a willingness to lift your voice in song!

Community Garden Decorations Painted by HCC Children

