

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
587 Mt. Vernon Road
Newark, Ohio 43055

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NEXT NEWSLETTER:

March 23 printing, so get your
April info in
by **March 19**

Worship texts & themes

Our next Food Pantry Sunday is Sunday, March 18 -- Remember that canned meats, soups, and box dinners are ideal!

Mar. 4 - Psalm 19 & I Corinthians 1: 18-25 "Plumb foolish"

Wed., Mar. 7 - Community Lenten Noon Service at Second Presbyterian, Karen preaching

Third Lenten dinner, Mar. 7 - "From a Dead Sea to a Living Cross" pt. 1

Mar. 11 - Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22 & Ephesians 2: 1-10 "You were dead"

Fourth Lenten dinner, Mar. 14 - "From a Dead Sea to a Living Cross" pt. 2

Mar. 18 - Jeremiah 31: 31-34 & Hebrews 5: 5-10 "Priesthoods of all believers"

Last Lenten dinner, Mar. 21 - "From a Dead Sea to a Living Cross" pt. 3

Mar. 25 (Palm Sunday) - Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29 & Philippians 2: 5-11 "Ride On, King Jesus"

Mar. 29 (Maundy Thursday); Mar. 30 (Good Friday) - Services at 7:00 pm each night

Apr. 1 - Easter Sunday - Mark 16: 1-8 "Ahead Into Galilee" - Sunrise 7:00 am, 8:30 & 10:30

Apr. 8 - Second Sunday of Eastertide - 1 John 1:1-2:2 "From the Beginning"

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The Newark Christian

Serving God's Transformation of Licking County

Notes From My Knapsack - a silent pastor?

This is a little longer than the usual "Notes From My Knapsack" so please bear with me; it will continue to page 3 of this newsletter! Look to the back page for the complete listing of Lenten and Eastertide events and times.

And I'd like to "introduce" you all to Cristy Meade, who will become our Children's Ministries Coordinator on Sunday, Feb. 25 with a children's message and gathering for Children's Church during the 10:30 service -- we may be making some changes in format and such in the future, but please lift her up in your prayers as she begins this important ministry with us.

With that, let me explain in general terms what has happened to me recently with my voice and hoped-for recovery. To recap, I've had a multi-year struggle with a very nasty series of sinus infections, stemming from what was in fact my third sinus surgery not long before beginning with you as pastor in 2012. These were very deep and long-lasting infections, which are finally under control (hallelujah!).

But another problem began to develop a couple years ago with my voice, which would catch and strangle and sound hoarse when I had no cold, not even much of an impact from the infections. As it got very severe in the fall of 2016, I went into a different specialist, who did a work-up, got me to where we were on track to resolve the sinus issue, but he said I might have "spasmodic dysphonia," for which there are treatments to deal with the symptoms, but no cure. I asked if we could wait until the infection was beaten and see how my voice did before we tried the next interventions, and he agreed.

This past October, the infections were gone, but my voice was getting worse. Even when it sounded okay, the discomfort in speaking, especially softly, was extreme. I got reassessed and was told definitively "you have a vocal disability, and have spasmodic dysphonia." In fact, one of the clear signs of this obscure ailment is if you can bellow or sing loudly without constraint, but the moment you try to talk you feel the strangulation set right back in. So, I have spasmodic dysphonia ...

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Church Office Hours:

*Mon – Wed – Fri
9:00 am - 3:00 pm*

Phone 740-366-4961

Email:

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

newarkcentralchristian.org

Our mission:

- *To lead people to faith in Jesus Christ*
- *To work through the Holy Spirit, and*
- *To understand through the Holy Bible.*

We seek to:

- *Grow in knowledge,*
- *Cultivate the grace of Christ,*
- *Strengthen the unity of all Christians, and be*
- *Always moving towards the Kingdom of God.*





Thank you to our wonderful church family. Rick and I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and visits. And, a sincere heart-felt thank you for the love offering that helps us plan and carry out our plans to bring me back home.

And especially a huge thank you to Earl Stevenson (and Claudia) for flying down to Texas to help Rick drive me home. Our trip was about 23 hours long with stops for gas.

Your cards brightened my days when I opened them. Thanks to all of you.

We love each and everyone of you for all the support and encouragement you have given me. Hopefully, by Valentines I will be able to go home with the good Lord shining on us. Many thank yous!

God Bless, Karen and Rick

Thank you so much for the amazing donation of toilet paper you sent to Christ United Methodist Church Food Pantry and all you do to help us keep the pantry going. Thanks Again!!
In God's Love,
East End Food Pantry
Ruth Gilliland

Central Christian Church

Thank you all once again for allowing the Historic Hudson group to make use of your facilities to host our Annual Chicken Noodle Dinner and Auction.

You are such good people to accommodate us.

Sincerely,
Bob Meldahl

Thank you for your generous check to the H.U.P. of Chauncey. We all know we need a lot of help to keep the work of God with us and through us.

Thanks again,
Gwen Doric

Dear Newark Central Christian,

We want to thank you for being there for us, and helping us during my recent breast cancer treatment. Any time we visit or take part at Central, we feel at home and cared for. We hope to return the blessing in some way.

Much love,
Danielle & Jason Grady

(cont. from page 1)

Which means what? Well, the treatment is to have botulinum toxin, aka "Botox" injected through the front of my throat into my vocal cords. And on relatively short notice, that's what happened to me last week.

At first, you sound fine (but your throat feels like someone stabbed it with needles a few times). Then over the next few days . . . or weeks, you get worse before you get better. Which is how on Sunday, Feb. 18, I sounded like Jiminy Cricket. Didn't know in advance, couldn't anticipate how it would go, and in fact as of Wed. Feb. 21 I still can't.

So here I am. I'm waiting to see, and rest easy in having many praying for me in all sorts of corners of this globe, just how well I will sound again. I will lose projection, and will need to use amplification, and there are many variables in this treatment. I keep being reminded "this treatment doesn't have much research around it, because no one ever died from spasmodic dysphonia!"

What complicates my plans and hopes for the future -- the treatment is not permanent. Most people with severe spasmodic dysphonia have this done three or even four times a year. I was diagnosed "mild to severe" so I'm (as usual) in between. And this first time through the mill I've learned that I need to plan on taking a few days off after the next treatment. But if I have to do this four times a year . . .

Yes, many questions arise. As in all things, the outcome is in God's hands! We're blessed to have Karen at hand, though with her last semester in seminary and daughter a high school senior; Jim Woodring has offered to speak; Phil Hunt in Coshocton has very much wanted to speak to our Lenten dinners one more time before his retirement this summer, so he will step in on Wed., Feb. 28. Will I be able to preach as before? Well, it was getting harder and harder to speak the last two years, so "as before" may be the wrong way to look at it.

I will have to do many things differently. Whether this is a "thorn in the flesh" at the Lord's command, or a temporary journey through the valley of shadow, or some more major branch in my path, I cannot say as yet. But I am making adjustments, personally and professionally, and hope that my new roles and different "voice" in the community will serve God's will as perfectly as the flesh is able.

Many, many thanks for the prayers and cards and messages of encouragement I've received, and again I've been circumspect largely because until last week the timing has been uncertain for months -- and then there it was, all at once. But all was well, and shall be.

Please feel free to text me or email me in the next couple of weeks; I'm not on hiatus or vacation, I just can barely make myself understood on the phone! My number is up in the church office and readily available to anyone in the church who wants it. We continue on in Lent, towards Easter, and in a journey reflecting on what it means to not just be religious at the church hour, but out of the 168 hours in a week, to be #167Christians, whose faith is an active part of our lives all seven days, wherever we go -- to our homes, in the doctor's office waiting area, and as we go about our everyday lives. Lenten blessings to one and all!

In Grace & Peace, Pastor Jeff