

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

NEXT NEWSLETTER:

December 16 printing (a little early for Christmas), so please get your January & 2020 info in by Dec. 15th!

Looking ahead . . .

Dec. 1 ~ Hope

Matthew 24:36-44 [no one knows the day or the hour, be ready]

Dec. 8 ~ Peace

Matthew 3:1-12 [John the Baptist, bear fruit worthy of repentance]

Dec. 15 ~ Joy

Matthew 11:2-11 [John in prison to Jesus; are you the one who is to come]

Dec. 22 (one service at 9:30 am) ~ Love

Matthew 1:18-25 [when Joseph awoke from sleep]

Dec. 24 ~ Matthew 2:13-23 [flight into Egypt]

Choral cantata at 6:30 pm; candlelight Christmas Eve service at 7:00 pm

Dec. 29 (one service at 9:30 am) ~ Rejoice! The Lord has come - Philippians 4:4-8

Our annual congregational meeting is Sunday, Dec. 8 after both services.

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The Newark Christian

Serving God's Transformation of Licking County

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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.



Notes from my knapsack -- Looking to 2020

November is for all of us a time of preparing for the end of the year, and making plans for a new one. Even if you aren't involved (or interested in!) program planning and organizational budgets and the like, you have that general awareness that the calendar is turning, you'll be looking at all sorts of changes to deal with – insurance, contracts, schedules – and that strange looking “2020” which is almost here.

I'm still not quite accustomed to 2020 being a reality; I grew up with 2001 being an amazing distant future, and 1984, for that matter. But both of those dates are past us, and 2020 is upon us.

In preparing our sermon series on “Adventures in Missions,” and in general cleaning out from the historian's cupboards after an attic leak onto our congregational history, I keep stumbling over both 1920, and 2000. They were major turning points for our church, and the years immediately after did not go as anyone had hoped, or planned. They were, in brief, terrible years for Newark Central.

But in turn, Louis Mink in 1927 & Rick Rintamaa in 2006 arrived and helped set things aright; following 1926 & 2005, both of which were historic low points for this congregation, a spirit of revival lifted itself up in our church, not so much from the pulpit but the pews. A dare-I-say Holy Spirit moved over the face of the church, troubling the waters, and we clergy do well simply to follow where the Spirit leads.

Into nationally troubled days of the 1930s, Rev. Mink planned and guided the church into a more solid organizational footing with standing committees for Missionary work, Education, Relief, Finance, and Property; he also worked at turning the congregation back towards Disciples missions, serving as a leader in both the region and general church, even as the entire interior of the now 25 year old church building was overhauled.

Rev. Rintamaa encouraged the missions that had just started when he arrived, working alongside of the Mission Team and Medical Loan Closet volunteers, affirming the hands-on ministries that have long been this congregation's hallmark. He began more regular mid-week studies which have since become nearly year-round Wednesday nights, and built up our Van Horn Scholars program to where it is today.

In both of these periods, I see a common feature that's of interest to us today in immediate terms. Between 1925 and 1940, and from 2005 to 2020, while the exterior of the church was the same, and our heart and mind in Christ as a gathered community is still our reason for being here, the reality is that almost every other feature of church life that was the “new normal” in 1940 or 2020 was non-existent or unimaginable in 1925 or 2005.

(cont. from the front page)

In 1925, we did not have electricity in most of the rooms of the building, and there was no voice amplification – at all. By 1940, every space had electric lighting, and the pulpit a microphone. In 2005, there was no Mission Team, the Medical Loan Closet was less than two years old and in a closet (year one, 24 items loaned; year two, 93!), no Ramp Ministry was out in the community, no Christmas Eve dinner was offered, no monthly Salvation Army dinners were cooked. In 1925, we were governed by the elders alone, and committees were all special committees, each very short-term & project based. By 1940, we had a board and officers and standing committees all roughly recognizable today. In 2005, Patty Comisford had just been with us as Director of Music for a few months; we discussed finances very nervously and had been talking about establishing an endowment fund since 1990; in 2020, Patty is preparing to step down leaving a very strong choir program, when many congregations have stopped having choirs in worship, and our Permanent Fund/Christ the Chief Cornerstone endowment stands at over \$300,000.

My point being: no one could have entirely envisioned what actually did happen in those fifteen to twenty year transition periods. That doesn't mean all planning and preparation is wasted time, but it's also a reminder to be flexible in our planning, and adaptable in our preparations. So much that wasn't even a dream in 2000 is now the heart of our ministry – and much that we're used to today will not be part of it in 2035, let alone beyond.

So let us pray that the Lord of the harvest sends workers into the harvest (Mt. 9:38), and remember that it is God who sends the increase (I Cor. 3:6). The tools may change, the work of evangelism continues. I say this because we are ALL on the evangelism committee!

In grace & peace,
Pastor Jeff

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Jan-Oct General Fund income:	\$188,240
Jan-Oct General Fund expenses:	<u>\$182,067</u>
in the black:	\$6,172

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Christmas Gifts That Won't Break

Pastor Karen will be facilitating a new daytime Advent Study continues Wednesdays at 11 am through Dec. 18th (on break the week of Thanksgiving, Nov. 27th). Christmas Gifts That Won't Break written by James W. Moore is a video study with discussion questions and devotions for the days in between. It will take a look at the Gifts of Hope, Love, Joy, Peace and will conclude with the Gift of Christ. The study is open to anyone who would like to participate, especially if you are not comfortable coming to the evening Advent study (which will still happen Wednesdays Dec. 4, 11, & 18 at 6 pm -- "The Villains of Christmas"!). Study books will be available at the first class but will not be necessary or required if you would still like to come and participate in the discussion. Come explore the spirit of Christmas as we reflect on the unbreakable gifts that God has given us and God's greatest gift, His Son, Jesus.

Please feel free to contact Karen with any questions. You can also call the church or email her
at: pastorkaren.newarkcentral@gmail.com or secretary.newarkcentral@gmail.com.

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Did you know: it cost the church over \$5,000 to seal & stripe the main & north parking lots (which has to be done every 5 years or less depending on the winters), and about \$90 a year for ice melt supplies on the sidewalk -- and almost that much for vacuum cleaner bags per year to clean the carpets after using it!

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Have you remembered the Cornerstone Fund of Central Christian Church in your will or estate planning?