Redemption of Scrooge Advent Study

Ebenezer Scrooge is a man in dire need of a second chance. Is redemption possible for such a greedy, dark and sad character?

The Redemption of Scrooge, from Matt Rawle’s The Pop in Culture Series, shows us how the teachings of Jesus can be found in Dickens’ Christmas classic. From the ghosts of Christmas past, to the Life of the present, and the resurrection of Christmas future, this Advent study will “bless us every one” and reinvigorate our spiritual journeys as we look at this familiar story through the lens of faith.

This is a 4 week study that will meet at 6pm in the parlor on the following Wednesdays: November 29, December 6, 13, 20. ALL ARE WELCOME!!

“Never place a period where God has placed a comma.”
MOPS - Mothers of Preschoolers - Our next meeting will be Tuesday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m. Contact Robin Jessen or Debbie Miller for more information.

Thank you again to everyone who made the Movie Retreat a Big SUCCESS! We love the memories we make as a Church family!

SAVE THE DATES! WOMEN'S RETREAT, MARCH 3RD, 2018 at RIVER’S EDGE.
ALL CHURCH RETREAT AT TEMPEL HILLS, MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, MAY 25-27, 2018

GOD IS ON THE MOVE COLLECTIONS!
ITEMS FOR THE MITTEN LINE: SOCKS, HATS, SCAREVES, GLOVES ETC FOR THE NEXT 4 MONTHS, through MARCH!
THE MITTEN LINE WILL GO UP ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

Prayer shawl meets on Dec. 16th at 2:00pm.
In addition to prayer shawls the group will be making items for the outside mitten line.

The youth group invites you to support the Souper Bowl of Caring during the month January. We will be collecting cans of soup and cash donations for Church Street Ministries.

Dear Santa’s Angels,
We are asking for New Toys and Pajamas donations to go to Laura’s Home for the children’s Christmas gifts. They will put all donations in a room for the Moms to shop for their child/children. (They always need diapers and wipes.) Please have all donations to the Church by December 14, 2017. Thank you!!!

TREATS FOR TROOPS
My heart was moved by the response we had to the Halloween candy for the serviceman! We will be repeating this next year! Thanks to Debbie and Doug Miller for the idea and collecting at Weight Watchers, to all the Discovery World families that participated and to Mandi Salvino for delivering the candy! Awesome job!
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (CONT.)

- **UPCOMING EVENTS!**
  - **December 17th**
    - Christmas Pageant and Take It Home Bake Sale!

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**Jan. 14-15, 2018 MLK**
Overnighter @ Federated Church Family Life Center

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**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 10:00 A.M.**

**Thanks to our Wonderful Cast for all your time and hard work.**

For all of those who are participating in this year's West Park Christmas Intergenerational Pageant “A Charlie Brown Christmas”. Practices will be held after worship on the following Sundays.

Please If you cannot attend, let us know as a courtesy to group.

**Dec. 3rd - COSTUMES**

**Dec. 10th - DRESS REHEARSAL**

**Dec. 17th - PAGEANT**

A Big Thanks to Jane Vogt as she continues to be a big part of making the magic happen! And to Bob Arcuri for helping make the sets; you are Awesome!!!

**YOU'RE INVITED!**

to fellowship after the Pageant in Bartter Hall, where we will have The Happy Birthday Jesus Celebration.

The Youth Group will have our Traditional “Take it home Bake Sale!”

We welcome your donations…….Thanks!

Do you need a great Christmas gift? We still have a few calendars available.

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**Merry Christmas & A Blessed New Year!**

Peace & Light,

Ms. Wendy
I have a cousin who loves the season of Christmas unlike anyone I know. Every year, the day after Halloween, she puts up her Christmas tree. She decorates the whole house in eager anticipation of what is to come. She loves the excitement that each passing day brings as the days on the calendar slowly move toward December 25.

For years, I have thought this was too much; I am thinking of turkey and fall leaves while she is already thinking of Christmas. Though I do have great hope in the future and of things to come, I am not usually a fan of rushing along. I try to enjoy the moment, each moment, as a gift from God. It has been the tradition in my home to set up our tree and put out our decorations the weekend after Thanksgiving. But of course, some also think this is too early.

This all got me thinking: how much waiting is too much? How much anticipation is enough? The season of Advent is all about waiting, all about anticipation. Throughout December, we spend our time as Christians looking forward to the birth of Jesus. We know the joy the Christ Child brought into our world and the salvation that is promised in the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus.

But Advent is more than just waiting, greater than anticipation. Advent is also about preparation. This is a season in which we are meant to prepare ourselves for the future – a future in which God’s realm will be realized on earth. This is a time for us to prepare ourselves for the New Jerusalem that will one-day dawn around us! And in our preparations, our responsibilities are highlighted.

It is a good goal for each of us to live each and every day like it is the season of Advent. We could be kinder with our friends, more generous with strangers and more forgiving when we’ve been wronged. We could keep our hopes higher that God will prevail, even when the world around us seems to suggest otherwise. We could find comfort in the sanctuary of our church and in the busyness of our lives. We could remember that God’s children come in many different sizes and shapes and colors and creeds and nationalities. We could, in fact, strive to be more like Jesus Christ.

So I am thinking, that after all these years, my cousin may have the right idea. Let us celebrate every day as if we are waiting for Christmas Day. Let us celebrate every day as if we are anticipating the glorious reign of Jesus Christ. Think how much more wonderful this world would be!!

I wish all of you a happy and reflective Advent season. And also, a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

Pastor Jason
NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Scott O’Con

As most of you know, I am Pastor Jason's husband. Something you may not know about me is that I grew up in Richmond, VA. I met Jason 14 years ago in Charlotte, NC. We lived for almost 10 years in Fairfax, VA just outside DC. Much of my professional career has been in Human Resources. I am about to embark on a new career adventure, starting my own business, offering walking tours of downtown Cleveland next spring. I have driven across the United States twice and love to travel. Oh, and my grandfather was Jessie James, Jessie James O’Con that is.

Lisa Goldrick

I’m mom to 2 amazing girls & a son-in-law. I had spent 2 years struggling with my spiritual life after my parents died. That was until I began attending West Park UCC with Bryan Hrehocik. From first meeting him & attending worship with him, it felt right, like home. Everyone is very friendly & welcoming.

MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!

Acts of Kindness for Christmas

An Alternative Advent Calendar from the beginning of Advent Dec. 3rd to Epiphany, Jan. 6th.

Our reverse advent collection was a big hit last year; many of you asked to repeat it!! Instead of doing a traditional Advent calendar countdown, we are challenging you to observe this season by saying a prayer of thanksgiving each day with your family and donating an item to your Hope Tote. What are Hope Totes, you ask???? Hope Totes are plastic bags filled with essential hygiene products used every day. You probably take them for granted but to a homeless person toothpaste and a toothbrush, soap and clean pair of socks can be a huge blessing. For some it can also be the first step off the streets.

To participate in Operation Hope Tote or if you prefer you can do a smaller purple Hope tote. Here is an example list of some of the things they need:

- Toothpaste and Toothbrush
- Soap
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Shaving Cream
- Lotion
- Disposable Razors
- Socks
- Comb
- Brush
- Tissues
IMPORTANT DECEMBER DATES

Birthdays

1  Susan Grady
3  Christina Craig
   Pauline Lamb
   Roger Owens
4  Hilary Szabo
   Thomas Wolf
5  Vonda Briceland
9  Herb Lamb
11  Sam Al-Hawaz
14  Ariel Hill-Jackson
17  Elizabeth Griffin
18  Louisa Cathcart
20  Susan Carter
27  Sherrill Horn
28  Paul Arcuri
29  Genèvier Russell
30  Gail Kantura

Anniversaries

Ed & Louise Gamary 12-16-1961
Félix & Ivonne Miranda 12-30-1984
Maxwell & Rachel Miller 12-20-2014

Our Wednesday Bible Study Topics

- November 29 - December 20
  Redemption of Scrooge
- No Study December 27 -
  Christmas Holiday

SAVE THE DATES- January

- Jan 1 -- Office Closed
- Jan 7 -- Return of the Youth!!
- A time capsule that was put in our church by the youth group 25 years ago will be opened after worship in Bartter Hall
- Jan 14 -- New Council Installation
- Jan 15 -- Annual Reports Due
- Jan. 28 - Lenten Devotions Due

LOW IMPACT EXERCISE: THURSDAY EVENINGS

Now that the colder weather is here, we will be exercising indoors in Bartter Hall on Thursday evenings from 6:15-7:00 P.M. Come join the low impact exercise in a small group setting for fellowship and fun! Contact Nora Litchney if you have any questions.
Pink Envelope -Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross

Since 1893, the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance has provided support to UCC clergy and lay church employees, bridging financial and leadership needs of retirees, of those serving new church starts, of younger pastors beginning their ministries, and of those facing circumstantial hardships.

At the core of the ministries of Board for Ministerial Assistance is the Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund. The Christmas Fund is one of the four Special Mission Offerings of the UCC, and congregations have been generously giving to the offering for more than a century. Proceeds from the offering are used to provide direct financial assistance to UCC clergy and lay employees in several areas: (a) monthly pension supplementation, (b) quarterly health premium supplementation, (c) Christmas “thank you” checks for retirees; and (d) emergency grants to both active and retired clergy and lay employees. Congregations across the country contribute to the Christmas Fund each year, and it is our December Pink Envelope here at West Park United Church of Christ.

At West Park UCC, we have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through our gifts to this year’s Christmas Fund Offering. Please consider giving to this worthwhile cause.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our next upcoming WORK MORNING will be held on Saturday, December 16th from 9am-12pm. We hope to increase participation in this next session to get some important tasks completed around the church. Lunch will be provided. Yummy!! Hope to see you there!

We are sponsoring a Haitian child through Bethlehem Ministries. Her name is Krhiste Emirrsa Angrand. Krhiste is in 3rd grade, loves to play with dolls and read books in French. Her favorite color is yellow. Look for further information on how you can help sponsor Krhiste throughout the coming years!

Due to concerns nationwide about the safety of our churches and schools, West Park UCC is hosting an “Active Shooter and Violent Intruder Training and Informational Workshop.” Sergeant Tim Higgins of the Cleveland Police Department will lead a 90 minute informational session on Tuesday, December 12, 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Please plan to attend this important event. Please RSVP to the church via email, sign up sheet in the Nar-thex, or phone. We will find out how safe our church is and what we can do to keep ourselves and others safe.
This Church encourages people to think for themselves in matters of religion, following their best judgment and dictates of their own Christian faith and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

West Park UCC Constitution, Article III, Section 2

Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church, joining faith and action. In covenant with the church in all of its settings, we serve God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world as made manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“That they may all be one” (John 17:21)

From the home page, www.ucc.org

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

November 26 - Hanging of the Greens after Worship

Wednesdays, November 29-December 20 - “The Redemption of Scrooge” studies at 6:00 p.m. in the Parlor


Sunday, December 10 - Second Sunday of Advent – After worship, stay for a Study facilitated by Pastor Jason – subject TBD.

Thursday, December 14 - Please bring your last minute gifts to the church to be donated to Laura’s Home on Puritas Avenue.

Sunday, December 17 - West Park’s Christmas Pageant, “A Charlie Brown Christmas.” Christmas Coffee Fellowship in Bartter Hall after. A Take-Home Bake Sale sponsored by the Youth will be held for you to get your last minute goodies.

Sunday, December 17, 3:00 p.m. - Blue Christmas Service – an alternate holiday worship service that addresses the feelings of those who struggle with feelings of loss, loneliness, and grief.

Sunday, December 24, 10:00 a.m. - The Fourth Sunday of Advent AND Christmas Eve! Join us in the morning for Communion Worship.

Sunday, December 24, 7:00 p.m. - A service of Lessons, Carols and Candles to celebrate the birth of Christ. The Crib Room will be available for parents of infants or very young children, but not staffed.

Sunday, January 7, 2017 - Worship and Communion – no L.I.G.H.T. During Coffee Hour, come and see what’s in a 25 year old Time Capsule that our youth put together in 1992!