

January 2022

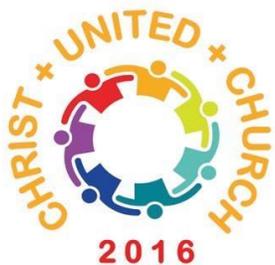
# The Good News

The monthly newsletter of Christ United Church

## Christ United Church

A federated church  
of the Presbyterian Church  
(USA) and the  
United Church of Christ

With Christ  
as our heart  
and God's love  
as our fire,  
we learn, we love,  
we care for all  
people.



## Won't You Be My Neighbor?

A message from Pastor Janis

In the past year and a half, I have been reminded time and time again of the refrain of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood: 'Won't you be my neighbor?'

Who is our neighbor? Are there people whom we could or should consider as *not* our neighbors? Even if Fred Rogers didn't teach us how to fully accept the other into our living room, he taught us how to be loving and to be accepting of those who are different from us. That is the important part. We are all a part of the family of God and a part of Fred Rogers' Neighborhood even when we sometimes don't feel we fully "fit in" or look or act like everyone else.

As we wrap up January and continue through February to Ash Wednesday (March 22, 2022), we will work our way through some of Fred Rogers' best known adages. We will learn who Fred Rogers was and who we are as a neighborhood church as we live through Fred Rogers and the modern Church. Come along with us on this journey, neighbor – we look forward to what we can learn together! ✝

In Christ,  
Pastor Janis

## Epiphany Sunday, January 2 – Your Star is Waiting

Join us on **Sunday, January 2, at our 10:00 am** worship service during which we will celebrate Epiphany and will include receiving Epiphany Stars during the service. If you are unable to attend and would like to have a star or stars mailed to you, please fill out this form:

[Epiphany Star Request Form](#)

If you are reading this on paper, you can e-mail your name and address and number of stars you request to

Office@ChristUnited.Church or call the church office and leave that information on the voicemail at 440-234-0150. ✝



## Planning for the Future by Dreaming Big

Like news from the rest of the world, Christ United Church (CUC) has been through a great deal in the past eighteen months. At times, it seems we have been standing still. But God is always on the move calling CUC into a new day and a new time. God is calling us to move Christ United Church forward. God is calling us to seek and act upon a new vision for doing God's work.

So where do we even begin? We begin by "Dreaming Big."

The Moving CUC Forward Ministry invites every part of CUC to dream big. No idea is too big or



too small. Every idea possesses the potential for mission and ministry. You see, God is not finished with us. God has a new and glorious beginning for us.

To start this next journey, we need to know what all of us at CUC are dreaming. Please give this some prayerful thought and heart and write your ideas down. Don't worry about the cost. Don't worry about how our dreams will get done. Let's just get our dreams identified and, together, we will take the next step.

Share your CUC dreams with Regina Wolfe, Cathy Green, Kathy Smith, Jeff Smith or Kathy Patterson. The Moving CUC Forward Ministry also invites you to be a part of planning this exciting time in the life of God's church. Our next meeting is **Monday, January 10, 2022, at 10:30 AM** (let the office know if you prefer to attend via Zoom). With God's help, we can and will do this!

*"I will pour out my spirit upon everyone; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions". Joel: 2:28 ☩*

## Upcoming Dates

January 2 – Epiphany Sunday

March 2 – Ash Wednesday

## Community Outreach Task Force Update

The Community Outreach Task Force was very active in October and early November. The Fund is down to approximately \$700 uncommitted funds. In mid-December, we received three requests. We are starting to see a shift in the type of request. Requests received lately are less pandemic related and more from lower income people on SSI or SSD. It appears that they were able to catch up on bills with the 2021 stimulus money; however, now, they are falling behind. Inflation may be a factor.

This change has pointed to the need for providing more financial management assistance. We are working with Berea Outreach to find the right balance in the type of assistance CUC can offer. The goal is to avoid repeat requests for assistance from the same individual. Request that we are working on now include:

- A low income woman, who receives Medicare and Social Security, was notified that she was overpaid and her payments have been cut off. An audit showed no problems, but she has not been approved to receive more payments.
- A disabled women with PTSD now requires a breathing machine. She fell behind in her electricity and rent.
- A man has been spending more money than he receives from SSI. He has a retirement fund that he has not accessed. We are working with him on reorganizing his assets to provide him with more income.

Once again, we thank you all for your support with this effort. We are running out of funds for this year. The Governing Board approved an additional \$3,000 to help us until we ask for more approval at the January Congregational meeting. ☩

## ILR Returns

Beginning **January 10**, there are ILR classes in the building on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays through February 17. Check the church website calendar for specific times especially if you want to avoid being at the building when others are there. All classes are in Friendship Hall. ☩

# Fifth Sunday Offering to Support Afghan Resettlement

Mission Committee has designated the Fifth Sunday offering in January to the resettlement of Afghans in the Cleveland and Akron areas. These Afghanistan refugees helped our soldiers during the war by being interpreters, drivers, soldiers, mediators, etc. Now we can be of assistance to them and their families by helping them get settled and start life over again in the United States. Please put on your envelope that this donation is for Mission 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. We thank you for your contribution. †

## November Financials

Month	Y-T-D	Y-T-D BUDGET
Congregational Giving		
\$ 21,574	\$ 215,625	\$ 235,485
Building Use/Misc.		
\$ 835	\$ 10,629	\$ 9,345
Total Income		
\$ 22,409	\$ 226,254	\$ 244,830
Total Expenses		
\$ 22,337	\$ 247,071	\$ 264,168

Please note that as we enter our final month of 2021 our projected deficit is around \$20,000. This is below the \$27,000 deficit we anticipated in September at our Congregational meeting.

The PCUSA per capita for 2022 is \$34.91 per member of the Presbyterian Church. Christ United Church pays 100% of the per capita to the Presbytery. Please consider paying your portion in 2022. Thank you.

**Financial Statements** will be passed out/mailed in January. Please contact Dave Zilch if you have any questions or errors in your statement.

†

# Fellowship and Discuss

*The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out. Proverbs 18:15*

Happy New Year! Fellowship and Discuss will gather in the new year at the Crall home on **Thursday, January 6th at 7 pm.** If you are a former participant who plans to attend or have never participated and are interested in attending, contact Bonnie by phone (440-234-2202) or email [bcrall@ameritech.net](mailto:bcrall@ameritech.net) to inform her of your attendance. Don't forget to bring your Bible.



The Crall's home is located at 6459 East Vancey Dr., Brook Park (off Sheldon Rd, two streets west of Donte's Restaurant which is located on the corner of St. Rt. 237 and Sheldon Rd.) †

## Happy Birthday!

### January

- 4 Alec Suehrstedt
- 11 George Haag
- 15 Jeremie Hilberg
- 15 Nancy Wares
- 18 Carol Gardner
- 18 Zackary Van Zante
- 20 Georgia Wilson
- 25 Jennifer Malusky
- 28 Leah T. Allen



## Wider Church News: A Church's Vans Roundtrip Workers

By Don Michaelsen

"It's hard to get around without a car in Northeast Ohio. Decades of neglect by the federal and state governments have resulted in endless cuts to transit service, which in turn have led to years of ridership decline.

"Amid this transit death spiral, the state continues to pursue initiatives that encourage sprawl. Cleveland has lost 6% of its population since 2010, according to the 2020 Census. The declining tax base and government neglect have stranded low-income people who cannot afford to move elsewhere and need transit the most.

"Enter the Cleveland Clergy Coalition and senior pastor Aaron Phillips. Phillips' Sure House Baptist Church (11318 Miles Ave.) had four vans that were only being used on Sundays. Realizing that people can't get to a well-paying job if they don't have a way to get there, the coalition decided to put their vans to use by connecting Clevelanders with better-paying jobs in the suburbs.

"The initiative, called Get2Work Now, was kick-started in 2019 with a \$100,000 prize from the Fund for Our Economic Future's Paradox Prize (4415 Euclid Ave.).

"Too many people were facing this false choice that you either had to own or operate and maintain what is a really expensive individual car for each family in order to get to work," said Bethia Burke, president of the fund. The fund also provided free transit passes for hospital workers and a car-sharing program for job seekers.

"The church vans have connected 100 workers, who are mostly Black and live in Cleveland's mid-to-south side, to well-paying manufacturing jobs in the suburbs. Two-way trips cost \$15 --- the rider pays \$5 and the employer pays \$10. Deacons from Sure House serve as drivers and mentors.

"[The riders] have someone to listen to them, someone to guide them, and to help them understand different cultures, get off of the

transition period, encourage them to stay on the job," said Phillips.

The vans provide door-to-door service, which takes about an hour --- twice as long as driving directly. But public transit would take three hours and require an excursion to connect with a bus in Akron, 37 miles away.

"The church fills a gap for people who cannot afford to drive themselves to and from work within Cuyahoga County. But it's been hard to keep up. Since the grant the program received has been fully expended, it is now running a deficit. The church has also had to rely on donations to keep the vans maintained, and they recently secured a donation for tires.

"Despite these challenges, they carry on --- because it's a part of Sure House's mission to help people get to work and support them. 'It's a charity --- it's part of our mission plan,' Phillips said. We're better than a staffing agency.'" †

Sources: *The Christian Century*, December 01, 2021; *SureHouseBaptistChurch.org*; *TheFundNEO.org*.

### The Good News

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**Sunday Worship 10:00 AM**

**currently on Facebook and YouTube**

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