Emmanuel United Church of Christ

April 2019 Newsletter

PASTORS PAGE

In recent weeks many of my sermons have focused on the topic of change. In part this is because the season of Lent is a time for introspection as we journey with Jesus to the Cross in Jerusalem, but also because the only way we as a community can respond to the recent trends within the Church is to apply those same introspective techniques to the Body of Christ. We must ask of ourselves; "How will we worship?", "How will the Church respond to the needs of the community, both internal and external?", "How will we be fed and feed the Spirit to those within our community?", and more.

From century to century these have been the challenges of the church and, were you to look at the history of the church, it always seems like the new centuries bring about the most significant changes. Many historians and theologians would agree that we are in a time of Great Awakening, much like our ancestors in the 19th and 20th centuries. As the Protestant faith continues to evolve and 'Awaken' we find ourselves on the cusp of something new. This is a scary and frightful time. Change often means letting go of traditions and it is used synonymously with a removal of the old. Those who are the protectors and participants of the traditional are oftentimes the most hesitant to receive and embrace the new as it comes, which is understandable, yet time marches on and change continues to happen.

I wish that from my vantage point I could tell you exactly what change will look like in our congregation. If I could see the future, then perhaps all our lives would be better, but the sad and hard truth is that I cannot. And so instead, I can only cast a vision for what I feel might be a part of that change. I envision a community that communicates regularly. I find it fascinating that we live in a time of instant communication and yet still struggle to know the goings on within each other's lives. One of the major barriers for this is that such communication relies on technologies that evolve so rapidly that even I, as a "youngish" member of our community, still struggle with keeping up-to-date on. So I ask the question, "How might we communicate better with one another?"

I envision a community that relates and connects to one another on more personal levels. So often we find ourselves guarded and removed from our neighbors rather than engaged and involved with our neighbors. Unless there is a fire, an accident, or some other publicly known tragedy in our lives, we seem so far removed from one another that we bear our pains and our struggles as if no one around would or could care to help us. Being a part of a Christian community means that we rely on one another for guidance, support, and emotional bonds of care. We are not any weaker than our neighbor and are only as strong as our neighbor can help us be, and so I ask, "What does an emotionally and spiritually vulnerable, yet supportive, community look like?"

And finally, I envision a community that focuses less on financial constraints and more on impactful ministries. Yes, to a degree this is a pipe dream that all communities and organizations hope for; a financial backing that makes all our money problems go away forever. But barring Scrooge McDuck joining our congregation, I understand that this will most likely never happen. Yet I still find myself asking, "What does a community that focuses on care and ministry and not the financial bottom line look like?" If I had an answer, I would be rich and perhaps the financial burdens of our church would be gone, as all congregations are asking this of themselves. Yet in a practical sense I believe this will mean re-imagining the ways in which we carry out our finances, the ways in which we approach stewardship, and the ways in which we raise funds for our congregation, perhaps going so far as to be more competitive and to fight for those finances. Even Mother Teresa was a master at fundraising.

So as I speak of change from the pulpit, these are the changes of which I speak. Theologically we will always been in a certain amount of flux, which is natural for a United Church of Christ congregation, but the ways in which we carry out the ministry to which we have been called as individuals, as a church, and as a community of faith, will need to be challenged, adapted, and ultimately change in order to serve the 21st century. And as we go about those changes and that ministry, may we ever keep Christ at the head and in our hearts.

Blessings,

Pastor Jeremy.

FROM YOUR CONSISTORY

I can't believe that it is already the beginning of April. I am ready for the winter to be done and spring to show her face. Hopefully with the changes of the seasons that will reflect in the attendance for worship Sunday mornings. When you are in attendance look around you and see who we are missing. Then reach out to them and encourage them to come back. For those mornings you cannot attend Pastor Jeremy's sermons will be posted on our Website. An important fact of not attending church is also not having an offering. The needs of the church continue even though the weather or activities may prevent us from attending. Please consider this going forward this year as our **Current fund** is already in a deficit. Our bills continue even when we are not there. As Pastor Jeremy stated at the Annual meeting that if all of us review our past year's giving and try to take it to the next level our current fund would improve. Also consider electronic giving. Contact Teresa if you are interested.

In January, Pastor Jeremy presented a Priority, Goal and Action plan for this year and reviewed the one from last year. He has set 9 goals for this year one of which is leadership development. Pastor Jeremy stated, "I believe that in order for Emmanuel United Church of Christ to be successful we need to do a better job of developing leaders from within our congregation." He went on to say that he looks forward to working towards those newly developed and adapted goals for 2019. When asked to either head or be on a committee **please** consider it. Pastor Jeremy, nor the consistory can do it all. It takes all of us coming together as a congregation to achieve this. So if you have not signed up for a committee or team please see the pastor or I and we will get the list to you. If you have this list at home and have not turned it in please do so ASAP. These planning committees are an important source to draw from for each group in our church.

As reported at the Annual meeting there have been a few changes being made so that Michele Geiser, our Financial Secretary, and Teresa Pinks, our Treasurer, can better keep our financial reports. Along with Jeff, who is coaching them through this change, they should be able to navigate each other's reports and the consistory will be able to better understand them. Thankyou Jeff, for all your time in getting this system up and running, as it will eliminate the need for Church windows, which we pay a monthly fee for.

Since we are talking finances John Motter, also speaking at the Annual meeting, brought our attention that we have CDs in the bank that are not "working" for us. As you know over the years since these were started the interest rates have gone down considerably. He has suggested, and the consistory agreed, to look into investing **part** of the Rainy day funds. In the February meeting John invited Greg Averesch, from Ameriprise Financial, to come and speak to us about this and we asked him to draw up some proposals for the consistory to consider of which, before any decisions are made, we will bring these before the congregation.

In other business we are looking at what money is available in our memorial fund. Some Ideas for uses for this fund include lighting for the fellowship hall and classrooms, hand chimes, which we are currently borrowing, finishing the surface of the playground, eventually parking lot repairs and resurfacing. We are updating the list of memorial fund donations from past years so we know what we are working with. We have been in contact with the families involved.

The following improvements that are under way at this time: 1.Renovations are underway at the parsonage thanks to help of John Motter, Dave Fett, and Dick Baker. With the addition of a bathroom and new flooring in the basement the Pastor Jeremy, Jen and Kaleb can make better use of this space, especially with a new little one on the way! This project will come in between $6000 and $7000. **Donations to the Improvement Fund are always needed for this project and others to come. 2.** Fellowship Hall floors were cleaned and waxed with the help of Chris Wenger and Billy McClain. Thanks to the Baker 'sand Julie Oberly in organizing this project. The Women's Outreach picked up the bill for this, which was around $500. We just ask that when using the hall to pick up the tables and chairs rather than dragging them across the floor. This will help avoid the "scuff marks". 3. New lighting for the fellowship hall and classrooms has been ordered and will begin to be installed this month. We will use monies from the memorial fund for this project. The cost for these are just over 4000.00

We also hosted the Community meal, and participated in the Chili Cook-off, hosted by the Presbyterian Church where the proceeds went to the Food Pantry for both events. A huge thanks to Kira Young for making this year's chili, where in the people's choice contest came in third. She made a yummy smoked turkey chili that was a hit. What was left was brought back to church and divided up and the donations given to the food pantry. At the beginning of March we held our spring Fish Fry. We had a big crowd, some of whom said it was their first time attending. Thank you to all that helped to make these events a success.

Moving forward into March and April we look forward to seeing you at the different services provided during Lent. With the inclusion of the Presbyterian and St. John's UCC churches for the Lenten season it should prove to be an inspiring season. Look for the times in this newsletter so you can attend!

I look forward to seeing you at the Sunday and weekday Lenten services!!

God with Us,

Bev Shepler, Consistory President

WOMEN'S OUTREACH

March - At the March meeting the Women's Outreach visited with Jill Burkholder, Linda Steele and Midge Moser. Memories were shared, new connections were made, and discovering who is related to who. Visitation is a wonderful opportunity to get to know people and discover new facts.

April - The Women's Outreach will be collecting money donations for personal care kits from March 7 - March 14 (Palm Sunday). The kits are approximately $12.00 per kit to put together. The kits are ran through church world service (CWS). There will be a basket at the back of the church if you would like to donate. Once donations are gathered we will then go and buy the supplies to put in the kit. These kits will be put together at our meeting on April 15. Any monetary amount is welcomed.

May is our mystery trip. Here is a hint. We will be taking the personal care kits to the drop off point. Departure Time to be announced.

June is the Women's Outreach retreat. Watch the bulletin for more details.

Mark your calendar: Ice Cream Social - Friday, August 3, 2019

Much thanks to the Consistory for organizing the cleaning of the fellowship hall floors. They look wonderful!

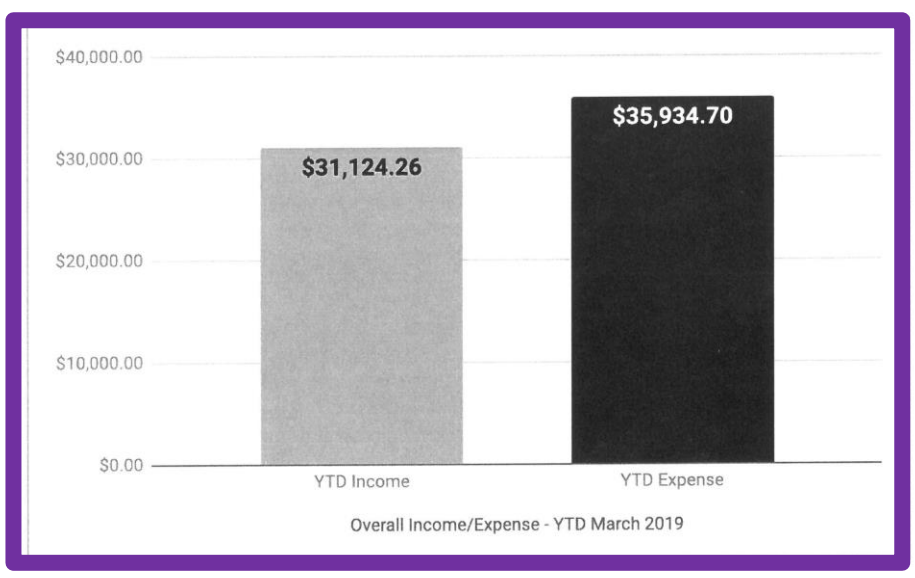
"The body is a unit, though it is made of many parts, and though all its parts are many, they form one body. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it". 1st Corinthians 12:12, 27

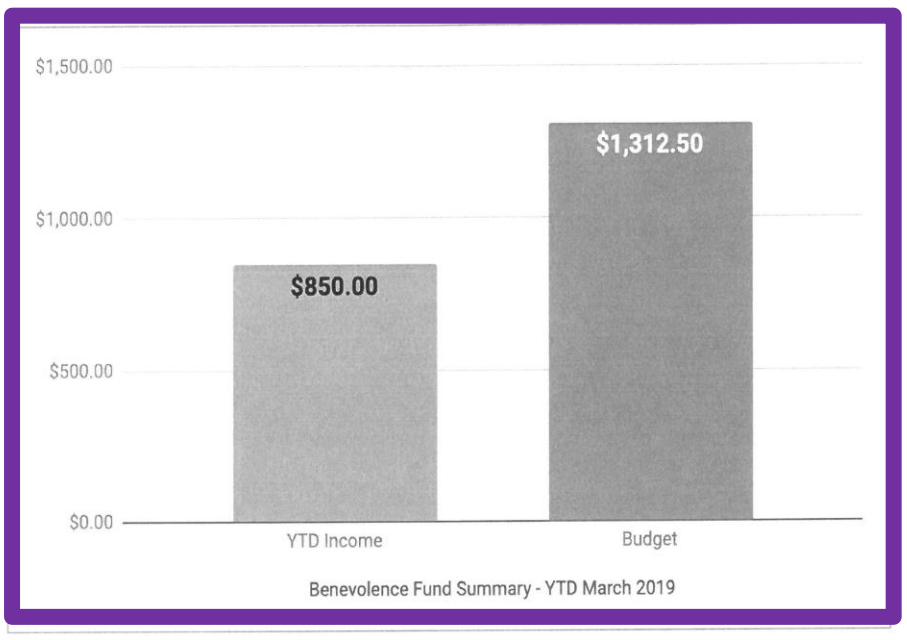
FAITH FORMATION

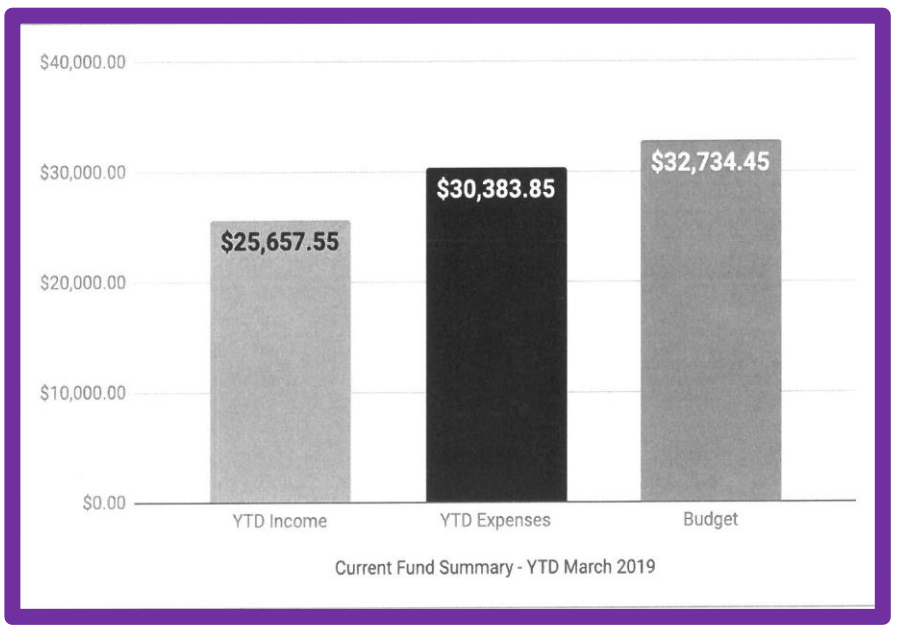
Calling all Superheroes! Grab your cape and get ready to save the day with Jesus! This year's VBS theme is Superheroes! It will be held Sunday, July 21- 25 from 6-8 at St. John's UCC. Our church is in charge of storytelling and science! These are new for us, and I'm super excited! Be on the lookout for registration forms and volunteer sign-ups in the near future.

With summer approaching and the end of the school year coming even faster, this year's Sunday school classes are also coming to an end. Our last class will be Sunday, May 26. During the summer months the Nursery will remain opened. There will continue to be a Nursery volunteer sign-up sheet on the bulletin board between the restrooms. The Nursery is available to any child ages newborn to five. Children who are older than five are asked to stay in the Sanctuary during the service. This helps keep the Nursery quieter and less crowded. The children who remain in the Sanctuary are welcome to use an activity bag during the service. These bags can be found on the table located at the back of the church.

Financial Updates







Don't Forget
to
Order Your Hanging Baskets
they would
Make a Great Mother's Day Gift

***Forms are on the back table

and money is due by April 17th

Lent & Easter Schedule

April 3rd	Lenten Service/Meal 6:00
April 10th	Lenten Service/Meal 6:00
April 14th	Palm Sunday
April 18th	Maundy Thursday (St. John's 7:00p.m.)
April 19th	Good Friday
	11:30a.m. Cross Walk Starts at St. Mary's
	12:00p.m. Service at Presbyterian Church
April 20th	Emmanuel Easter Egg Hunt
April 21st	EASTER
	7:00a.m. Sunrise Service
	9:00a.m. Breakfast
	10:00a.m. Easter Service/Communion

Jase Kiene	04/01
Becky Leiber	04/01
Deb Leiber	04/01
Logan Skelly	04/01
Jasonn Chatelain	04/03
Celsie Ruhlen	04/04
Isabella Cathryn Sampson	04/04
Rowan Sampson	04/04
Dennis Caskie	04/06
Makenzie Frankart	04/06
Lou Ann Leiber	04/07
Jay Stratton	04/07
Rick Krummrey	04/09
Blake Vance	04/09
Roxanne Williams-Chaterlain	04/09
Connie Baker	04/10
Steven Palte	04/10
Richard Baker	04/12
Landen Worcester	04/13
Amairi Painter	04/14
Larry Eikenbary	04/16
Chasity Ruhlen	04/16
Reese Stark	04/16
Jill Rumer	04/17
Karen Kopp	04/18
Charlotte Burkholder	04/20
Renee Caskie	04/20
Frank Andrews	04/22
John Dailey*	04/23
Ryan Koenig	04/23
Cade Garmatter	04/25
Karsyn Garmatter	04/25
Brianna Ruhlen	04/26
Chad Reichenbach	04/29
Cody Williams-Basinger	04/30

Praying the SCRIPTURES

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April 7th
John 12:1-8

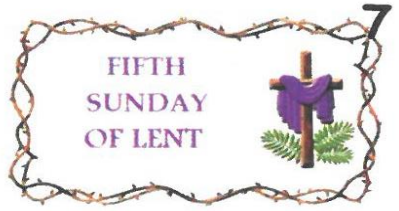
April 14th
Luke 22:14-23:56

April 21st
John 20:1-18:

April 28th
John 20:19-31

May 5th
John 21:1-19

2019 Emmanuel UCC Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Lenten Meal/Service 6:00p.m.	4	5	6 Fellowship Trip to Tiffin leave church @ 11:45
7 	8	9	10 Lenten Meal/Service 6:00p.m.	11	12	13 Men's Breakfast 8:00a.m.
14 Palm Sunday New member introduction	15 Women's Outreach 7:00p.m.	16	17 Money Due for Hanging Baskets	18 Maundy Thursday 7:00 Service St. John's	19 Good Friday 11:30 Cross Walk 12:00 Service @ Presbyterian	20 Easter Egg Hunt 10:30-??
21 EASTER 7:00 Sunrise Service 9:00 Breakfast 10:00 Service Communion	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				