

THE VISITOR

Pilgrim Christian Church

Rev. Ralph S. Wearstler, Interim Minister

Mary Carson, Editor, 286-1101

September 2008

Writings from the Rev.

It was an amazing, awesome, transformational event. I couldn't believe how much was accomplished in such a short amount of time. I knew what it was like before, I saw everything two days earlier. It went from "Oh my goodness!" to "Wow!"

If you're not sure just what I'm talking about, I guess it would be helpful to start at the beginning.

Back in late May when we were making plans for our summer schedule of two worship options, a seed was planted with the notion that Worship is more than just showing up on Sunday morning. An expression of faith is more than just words we say or pray, or songs that we sing. A witness of faith can and should be expressed in actions as well.

Well that seed began to take root, as we began to think of some ways that we could worship and witness to our faith in Jesus Christ.

In Eugene Peterson's scripture translation of James 2:14-16, we find these powerful words:

Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this (faithfulness) if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense?

I can already hear one of you agreeing by saying, "Sounds good. You take care of the faith department, I'll handle the works department."

Not so fast. You can no more show me your works apart from your faith than I can show you my faith apart from my works. Faith and works, works and faith, fit together hand in glove.

The kind of glove that we were looking for was a work glove, or better yet, gloves, lots of gloves.

What could we do and who could we do it for?

Well, we began to talk about a workday. Why not a workday for the Church, having people join in fixing things up around the church building.

No, that's not what's needed. Sure, we have had Church clean up days in the past, but that's only doing things that need to be done anyway. Besides, we would just be benefitting ourselves.

Maybe we could help one of our own. We've done that in the past. Over the years we have come to the aid of members, and that is all well and good, but it's still an in-house witnessing.

What if we found someone in the community, in the neighborhood of the Church. Why couldn't we work through United Way or the Department on Aging. They would work with us, they would provide neat T-Shirts and donate refreshments, we could even get a big write up in the newspaper, and we could say ***"Hey! Look at us. See what we're doing. Aren't we special."***

Wait a minute. Is that what James had in mind and heart when he wrote his letter to the community of faith? Even Jesus had something to say about this. In Matthew 6:1-4, Jesus says, ***"Be especially careful when you are trying to be good so that you don't make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won't be applauding."***

"When you do something for someone else, don't call attention to yourself. You've seen them in action, I'm sure—'playactors' I call them—treating prayer meeting and street corner alike as a stage, acting compassionate as long as someone is watching, playing to the crowds. They get applause, true, but that's all they get. When you help someone out, don't think about how it looks. Just do it—quietly and unobtrusively. That is the way your God, who conceived you in love, working behind the scenes, helps you out."

-continued on page 2-

Writings from the Rev. conintued

The Apostle Paul says that if we should boast then let us boast for the Lord. So that's what we did. 30 of us from the congregation found someone in the neighborhood (the Department on Aging did give us a name) who needed a lot of help with their yard, and after 1st Worship on August 17th, we quietly did our thing. No agency donations of water or T-Shirts, no write up in the local paper. Jesus said to love your neighbor as you do yourself, and we did that with more than just words, more than just "Honking For Jesus". We worked hard and provided a blessing, and in return we were blessed as well.

UP - BEATS

(Note: If you are short of time,
jump to the last three paragraphs for now.)

Opportunities abound! It's that time of year when we re-engage with the anticipation of Rally Day, Stewardship and election of new servers of our God and church. Along with the start of school, we get back into the full range of church activities and events.

That means we have lots of different ways we can help to serve our Lord. Some things have been on-going during the summer: the Search Committee has been busy and productive; the worship teams have been bringing us two services a week; Geauga Co-operative Ministry, of which P.C.C. is an active participant, prepared a great conglomerate Sunday service at the Burton Historical Grounds; Vacation Bible School was presented; backyard barbecues have continued at various members' homes; we had a rewarding and effective mission-sponsored work party to help a lady in need here in Chardon; and our church building received a new roof. Not bad for "vacation time!"

Now we will be looking at more routine things that fill a more routine schedule. With our currently "flexible" economy, we need to assure our financial security, both our own and our church's. As we define our contributions to P.C.C., we need to recognize the increase in costs of utilities, wages, resources, up-keep, and – less we forget – ministries. Generosity has been exhibited, for which we thank our God. The Spirit has been working in us with steadily increasing impact. We pray that this is a continuing trend to the glory of God!

Beyond the monetary, though, there are gifts of tremendous and incomparable value that can be exchanged without the outlay of many bucks. These are the gifts of time and talent. Many members and friends come forward for transitory needs, such as funeral meals, Hanging-of-the-Greens, and our pancake breakfasts. These efforts are valuable, enjoyable, and appreciated.

But, there are on-going needs for participants to assure the continuation and growth of our programs, worship services, ministries, and general success as Believers in Christ. We are urged in the Bible to step up and serve (Eph. 2:10; Jas. 2:14-26; 1 Cor. 3:13-15). Be bold!

As members of our Nominating Committee begin their efforts to fill up-coming vacancies on the boards of Elders, Trustees, and Christian Education, take the cue and seriously consider how you might serve God through His church. How can you help ensure His meaningful worship and do His ministries through P.C.C.? You, personally? Can you not afford an extra hour or three per month to share the load and spread the Word?

Do you feel unworthy? Unqualified? Who truly IS worthy or qualified beyond being asked to serve? None of us has to have THE answer to our needs. But all of us should be anxious the share the efforts to define and meet these needs as best we can to serve our Lord. It takes boldness to step up and help; it doesn't take profound knowledge or extreme self-confidence. It simply takes the willingness to try something different and potentially very rewarding.

Many people come to my mind who, when asked to serve, had searched, with God, to understand that being called to participate was truly do-able, even if somewhat scary in its newness. Those people have developed a confidence, an understanding, and an appreciation that they had never imagined possible. That is known as spiritual growth, and it is very satisfying. Ask me, and I will introduce you to these people in our church.

UPBEATS continued

I, as Moderator, am asking each of you – especially those of you who are younger or newer in our church – to come forward and accept an opportunity for growth in Christ's love. Do you have an interest in the trades or finance? Consider being a Trustee. Do you relate to educational needs? How about Christian education? Maybe you feel the Spirit calling you to the Board of Elders, where you can help make the word of God come to life in worship. If greeting and serving at worship on Sundays appeals to you, be a Deacon, of which we need a total of twenty-four, so there will be lots of company. A nice part of all these opportunities is that you get to work with just a few others at a time and can form new bonds

Having mentioned Christian education, above, we have an extra-special need right now. Most of you know that our terrific and dedicated Director of Christian Education, Betsy Griffin, has resigned from the position due to health concerns. It is a disappointing turn of events, and our prayers for healing are heartfelt and strong.

This leaves us Director-less at a time when we might be making a transition between ministers. The Consistory deliberated as to whether we should advertise for a new Director or ask the Board of Christian Education to temporarily take the helm to guide our Sunday School programs and similar activities. We decided that our first, and hopefully only, action will be to ask if someone in our congregation might step forward on a temporary basis to oversee our programs until our options can better be recognized. Our Sunday School teachers would value your input. This is an immediate need, not one that should wait until our Nominating Committee kicks into action.

So, all you retired teachers out there (and others who are teachers at heart) please give this prayerful thought. Here is an opportunity to try something as a fresh experience. It might not be a very long commitment, but it will be a very valuable and much appreciated one. And, if you've the heart of a teacher, you know how much fun and how rewarding it can be. You've got the best subject in the world to teach: Jesus!

Truly, in His love,
Steve Wick, Moderator

Rev. Ralph Attending Mission Trip To Louisiana September 20-28

Rev. Ralph, along with 24 other members from Disciples congregations around Ohio will be working in Metairie, Louisiana for victim of Hurricane Katrina. This project is sponsored by: Ohio Disciples Outreach and Week of Compassion.

While Rev. Ralph is away on Sunday, September 21st, Rev. George Dauler will bring the morning message. At this time, the pulpit for September 28th is not yet filled.

We have been told that there are still two openings available, so if you would like to join Rev. Ralph in this special ministry let him know as soon as possible.

Please keep all those attending in your prayers.

MISSION SUNDAY ACCOMPLISHED

**For all of you who were willing to
do more than “Honk” for Jesus,
“Well Done!”**

We had 30 persons from the congregation share in our Sunday Mission Project on August 17th, after 1st Worship. What looked like an impossible task turned into a transformational moment. Mrs. Beverly Norris was absolutely amazing at what we were able to accomplish in a little over 2 hours, as were all of us. Thanks to all who brought in the yard equipment that helped make things easier. Special thanks to Phil Joliat who shared his skills as a Landscaper to help supervise, to Steve Wick for bringing his giant weed whacker, to Ron Godine with his Samurai chainsaw, and to Ken Campbell with his mighty axe. We were also thankful to Men's Fellowship for providing lunch after the work was done.

Mrs. Norris said that if anyone is interested in firewood from the logs that were cut up, they are welcome to them. Her address is 415 N. Hambden.
We were all truly blessed by sharing in this event.

DESIGNING WORSHIP CONFERENCE

Saturday September 27th - The CrossRoads Worship Community at Avon Lake UCC are a unique group of individuals who have come together to create a weekly worship experience for those who attend Avon Lake UCC. They have blended progressive theology and contemporary music with visual, multi-sensory, and participatory elements to give worshipers a weekly worship experience that keeps them coming back for more. They would like to share their approach to worship in a one-day workshop which will include presentations on preaching, visuals, equipment, planning worship as a team, and stories of overcoming obstacles. For more info: 440-933-3241 or pastor@thealucc.org.

Times 9a.m. - 4p.m. and cost: 1 person \$60, 2 people \$90, 3 people \$120, 4 people \$150, \$30 for each additional person.

Take I-90 (Rt. 2) to the Avon / Avon Lake exit. Go North on Rt. 83 towards Avon Lake. Turn right on Chester Rd then turn left onto Center Rd (Rt. 83). Center Rd will turn into Avon Belden Rd in the city of Avon Lake. Keep going straight until you reach the intersection of Avon Belden (Rt. 83) and Electric Blvd. Turn left and the ALUCC will be on your left.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

What a memorable day September 19th will be for Mrs. Gertrude Allyn! It will be her 100th birthday. To make it extra special, we would like to ask each of you to send her a birthday greeting. Warmest best wishes from your friends at Pilgrim Christian Church, Mrs. Allyn.

Mrs. Gertrude Allyn
99 Allyn Blvd.
Chardon, OH 44024

FRIENDSHIP GUILD TEA PARTY
Monday, September 29 at 7 PM
Bring your favorite tea cup and
Join us for great fellowship.

PRAYER CONCERNS, NEEDS, JOYS AND BLESSINGS

Prayers for Healing

Jan Dillon is recovering from surgery.
Betty Ballantine, fell and is hospitalized.
Bill Boyles had a mild heart attack.
Betsey Griffin continues her treatments.
Gwen Carlson's father, Robert Hunter, continues treatments for lymphoma.
Clara Rayl is recovering at home.
Rev. Ralph & Terri's son-in-law, David Kalina, is hospitalized with a serious infection.
Ruth Hawkins is back at her daughter's home after being hospitalized.

Special Prayers

Don Farinacci IV, grandson of **Georgie Farinacci**, is back in Iraq for his second tour.
All Military Personnel throughout the world.
Ann Ash continues on Hospice at home.

Prayers of Blessing

Wanda Ash is recovering nicely after surgery.
Matt & Alison Rolf announce the birth of **Juliette Victoria Rolf** on August 7. Proud grandparents are **Bill & Claudia Rolf**
All our youth heading off to college.

Prayers for Guidance

Search Committee of PCC, as they continued the search for a pastor.

Prayers of Sympathy

Eva Smith passed away on August 19.
Tanya Fester's father passed away suddenly.
Frances Burr passed away on August 22.
Ron Schmucker's mother passed away.
Robert Wheeler passed away July 25.

ELDER CARE NEEDED

Betsy Griffin is looking for someone to help with her mother's care 2-3 days per week from 2 PM until 4 or 5 or 6 PM. Flexible schedule and hours depending on her work schedule. Perfect for someone who needs extra income but not a full time commitment. Salary is \$10 an hour. Please call Betsy at 286-9699 if you have a loving heart and helping hands.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

September (Grades 9 - 12)

Sunday School - starts in September; every Sunday - class time to be announced..

Regular Scheduled Youth Meetings - The youth group will begin regular meetings in the fall. We will get together soon and pick the best time to have our regular meetings.

Upcoming Special Events - call for more details!

Thursday, September 11th - **MUSIC BUILDS TOUR** benefit concert for Habitat for Humanity. *Outdoor* concert featuring Switchfoot, Third Day, and Jars of Clay. Rock out on the lawn at Blossom Music Center (Pavillion seats are for wimps!) It's a school night, but you can catch up on sleep in math class. Call me for tickets

Saturday, September 13th - **Bleacher Blast 2008** Youth for Christ and Campus Life day at Progressive Field - Cleveland Indians vs Kansas City Royals - who will win? Who cares! We'll enjoy the special pregame show, watch the game, all the while munching outrageously overpriced unhealthy snacks. Count me in!

This months scripture verse -
"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed: By believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life."

John 3:16
From "The Message" Bible translation

Got Ears? - Hey, what's your favorite radio station? If you love great music, without stupid commercials, then check out Air 1; **90.9FM** or listen online at **air1.com**.

***** Please give me your email address so you know about events. *****

Ray and Lisa Laino 286-1778 Home
440-223-3637 Cell
rlaino@pkfamily.com

NOTE TO PARENTS - All youth meetings/events are always supervised by at least two adults.

NEED A RIDE? - Always a lift available to or from Church or Youth Group - call me

Two Opportunities Worship Continues

September 14th (Rally Sunday)

As we move into our Fall Schedule the Elders have recommended that both 1st and 2nd Worship, which we began this Summer, would continue through the end of the year. However, on September 14th, there is a change in the starting time of 1st Worship, which will begin at 9a.m. 2nd Worship will remain at 10:30a.m.

The Christian Education Board will be providing Bible study during both Worship Services. Teen Bible Study will begin after 1st Worship. We are hoping to have two Adult Bible Study options; one will begin at 9:15a.m., and the other will start after 1st Worship. These will be two different opportunities; more information will be posted in the Weekly Reminder.

Join Us Sunday Evening, September 14th (5p.m.)

For Our Rally Sunday Corn Roast Fellowship and Vesper Service

What better way to continue our Rally Sunday than by joining in on the Fun and Festivities here at the Church. We will gather in the Courtyard by the Prayer Garden for fun, games, and getting to know each other better. We will be serving up Hot Dogs and Roasted Corn on the Cob, bring a side dish or dessert to share. Beverages and Tableware will be provided as well. If it's raining we will move the fun inside.

At the end of the evening with will have a brief Vesper Worship with singing and thanksgivings.

Please let the Church Office know that you are coming so that we can have enough for everyone.

September

2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 7 PM Elders meeting	4 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	5	6
7	8	9 7 PM Handbell rehearsal begins	10 7 PM Trustees meeting	11 Project Hope Dinner 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	12	13 Bleacher Blast 2008
14 1st Worship at 9 AM Rally Day Corn Roast & Vesper Service	15	16 7 PM Handbell rehearsal	17 6:30 pm Consistory meeting	18 1 PM Pilgrim Guild Lunch 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	19 Mrs. Allyn's 100th Birthday	20
21 George Dauler preaching	22	23 7 PM Handbell rehearsal	24 4 PM Hot Meals in East Cleveland	25 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	26	27
28	29 7 PM Friendship Guild Tea Party in Parlor	30 7 PM Handbell rehearsal				

October

2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 PM Elders meeting	2 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5	6	7 7 PM Handbell Rehearsal	8 7 PM Trustees meeting	9 Project Hope Dinner 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	10	11
12	13	14 7 PM Handbell Rehearsal	15 6:30 PM Consistory Meeting	16 1 PM Pilgrim Guild Lunch 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	17	18
19	20 7 PM Friendship Guild meeting in parlor	21 7 PM Handbell Rehearsal	22 4 PM Hot Meals in East Cleveland	23 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	24	25
26	27	28 7 PM Handbell Rehearsal	29	30 6 PM Brass Rehearsal 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	31	

The Visitor September 2008

**Pilgrim Christian Church
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OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Deacons

Steve Moore, Captain
Chuck Boros
Mary Carson
Carol Wolfe

Corey Godine
Holly Boros
Bruce Carson

Trustee of the Month

Bruce Carson

THANK YOU

Thank you so very much for the prayer shawl given to Mom and myself. It was very nice and thoughtful. Mom's was perfect, she was cold during the calling hours, and that warmed her and gave her great comfort. So nice to know PCC is there when you need good Christian hugs and prayers. Thank you again for everthing.

In Christain love,
Mary Hedrick and

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!



September 2 - Murry Bishop
September 4 - Ruth Burdick
September 5 - Casey Griffin
September 6 - Carol Penrod
September 7 - Steve Wick, Lynn Wiggins
September 8 - Emily Cosimano, Abigail Carson
September 13 - Jerry Griffin
September 15 - Mary Cosimano
September 18 - Joanne Ettenger
September 20 - Connie Hamilton, Ashley Carson,
Kaitlin Kobuszewski
September 21 - Emily Schmucker
September 22 - Carol Dodd
September 23 - Hannah Cseplo
September 25 - Joshua Arndt
September 26 - Kortney Nyegard, Gene Burkhammer,
Ken Bevington
September 28 - Anne Wick

E-MAIL OR SNAIL-MAIL????

Many of us are now using e-mail as a way of communicating with our friends and family. This makes me wonder if future generations will ever find old letters in the attic that their grandparents wrote. Love letters tied with a ribbon, smelling of perfume, will be something they will read about in books. But, time marches on, and so must I.

This nostalgic thinking comes to mind for a reason. Diane, our super efficient Office Administrator, has worked up some figures on the mailing of the Visitor. The church can save nearly \$100 if 30 families are willing to receive the Visitor by e-mail. There would be a savings of nearly \$170 if 50 families receive the Visitor by e-mail. We are not trying to eliminate the mailing of the Visitor by the Postal Service. After all not everyone has a computer or e-mail.

If this is a pleasing idea for your family, please fill out the coupon below, and return it to the church office. Even if we have your e-mail address, please use the coupon as verification that our records are correct. The September Visitor will be mailed in the usual fashion.

PLEASE SEND THE VISITOR TO ME BY E-MAIL.

HOUSEHOLD NAME _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

VAN MINISTRY

Do you need a ride to church?

Never let the lack of transportation keep you from coming to church on Sunday! We have volunteers headed by Ray Laino & family who will be delighted to pick you up & bring you home after services. Just call the church office (285-8791) or Ray Laino directly at home. (286-1778)

We'll look forward to worshipping with you!

HOME VISITS

We are also glad to visit you at home or skilled care center, bringing communion if you wish. Rev. Ralph Wearstler or one of our Elders would be honored to come & be in fellowship with you. Just call the church office to schedule a time most convenient for you. 285-8791

We are all a church family together!