

THE VISITOR

March 2009

R. Scott Holland, Pastor Mary Carson, Editor, 286-1101

Along The Way . . .

Times are tough these days. According to the news media the economy is in perpetual melt-down mode and it's getting worse every day. It seems we can't even walk into the store without spending forty or fifty bucks for a half a bag of nothing much to show for it.

My son Brad and his wife Jami are the volunteer youth leaders for their church. Last summer Brad was telling me how he and Jami just couldn't seem to make ends meet. Of course I asked Brad the same question I always ask him when he makes comments like that, "Did you get God involved in your finances yet?" He always gives me the same answer, "Dad, you know we can't afford to tithe." To which I always reply, "You mean you can't afford not to."

At some point in time someone else must have said something to Brad about giving God control of their finances because he came over last fall and told me that they had decided to start tithing. I know someone else must have said something because he never takes my advice; after all I'm his Dad.

Brad and Jami really were struggling financially and as the economy worsened, things really went bad for them. Fortunately I had warned them that when they started to tithe they could count on the enemy trying everything he could to get them to stop. After all he doesn't want anyone to really experience the joy of giving back to God and the blessings that flow from it. They kept tithing.

As the youth group topped fifty kids at their house on Wednesday nights they had to start asking parents to help buy food. They were really struggling with paying the bills and having enough gas to get back and forth to work, but they kept to

their commitment to put God first in their finances and kept on tithing.

At Christmas time the church staff usually does a gift exchange. For some unknown reason this year they pooled their money and wrote a check for \$500 to Brad and Jami. One of the Life Groups at their church decided to adopt their family for Christmas as well. They sent over boxes and boxes of food and clothes for the kids and spent over \$1000 on Christmas gifts for the whole family. Brad finally got his Guitar Hero.

An insurance review at their church revealed that they could qualify for a large reduction in premiums if they had a full time occupant at their State Street building. Brad and Jami's church apologized for not being able to pay them a salary but offered to let them live in the apartment at the State Street building, rent free. They moved in last month.

Sure the economy is tough. But the fact is you can't out give God. **Malachi 3:10 says,**

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this, says the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

Brad and Jami didn't start tithing to get money. They love God and want Him to know they trust Him. They tithe as an expression of their faith in God and as a way of saying "God I joyfully give you back this small portion of what you have given me and I invite you to be involved in every aspect of my finances.

As we make our way through the current economic meltdown, consider getting God involved in your finances, along the way . . .

Scott

Moment for Mission

Greetings!

Thank you, PCC family, for your generous hearts. February was the month of love, and your love blessed so many. 367 cans of soup were donated to the Food Cupboard on Souper Sunday. Socks warmed the feet and hearts of the clients of Project Hope for the Homeless. And your giving to One Great Hour of Sharing/Week of Compassion offering will go with God's blessings to help our denominations work with refugees and disaster victims in the U.S. and abroad.

Following are reasons why we do the outreach and mission work that is so much a part of our lives and worship at PCC...From Geauga Jobs and Family Services...Over 600 families, including 1,207 children, were assisted during the holidays with food, gifts, toys and clothing. From Tim Taylor, Executive Director of GJFS, *"We are so very thankful for the countless volunteers giving their time and donations during this holiday season. Geauga County is truly blessed to have such supportive community agencies, churches, businesses and individual volunteers."*

Here are excerpts from thank you letters received by GJFS. Copies of the letters are posted on the missions bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. These are not from the families PCC had, but you can see how important our giving is.

"It is nice to feel others' love at times like these. You've touched my heart."

"This program was my last hope for a Christmas for my child...May God bless all of you."

"You are all special people to think of others while you have other concerns in your own lives... May the Lord bless every one of you."

"We would like to thank each and every one of you for the food and nice gifts. Things were real rough for us. I lost my daughter and great grandson all within five weeks of Christmas. It has been hard. Thank you all."

"Heartfelt thanks to you from my son and I. Your efforts meant more than you will ever know. I have no family members

to share my holiday with, so for me, it was the love and caring shown to us that meant so much. My son loved his gifts...We cooked the food given to us on Christmas day and it was delicious. Thank you all and God bless!"

"Our family would like to thank you with all our hearts and love! It means so much to us when we receive such wonderful gifts for our holiday. As you probably can guess, we are not doing well at all. But we always put our baby before ourselves at any cost. The past 6 years have been just devastating to us. A mental illness almost took my life from me, and took away any chance of a prosperous future. So when the generosity of all you wonderful people came our way, well, it is heart-wrenching. It is very hard to take things that I did not earn. In my situation with schizophrenia and 5 back operations, I have learned to accept whatever comes my way for my family. I just really want you all to know that if anyone is thankful for all your hard work and generosity, it is our fallen family. It's hard to swallow my pride and accept things such as this, but without the services you provide, I would be homeless and unable to care for our beautiful baby. God bless all of you who took the time out to give to others. We thank you and praise you. You are in our prayers!"

Your mission committee thanks YOU, for we wouldn't be able to reach out without your support, and we thank our loving God for the opportunity to help others. Truly, we are so blessed to be able to help and to have the resources for it.

Looking ahead:

Project Hope meal – Thursday, March 12. Menu- your favorite chicken casserole, broccoli, coleslaw, bread, butter, beverages, fruit, dessert

Fifth Sunday offering- March 29 - Camperships for Geauga's kids through GJFS

Love, peace and God bless,

Your Mission Committee

PRAYER CONCERNS, JOYS AND BLESSINGS

Prayers of Sympathy

We deeply mourn the passing of the following people, and ask for prayers for their families:

Anna Maria Laino went home to God February 5.
Floyd "Toad" Leyde passed away February 4.
Marilyn Kremm passed away January 20.

Prayers for Healing

Ida Spicl is recovering from a fall.
Elsie Liplin's broken toes continue to heal.
Clara Rayl is home after rehab.
Tanya Fester is recovering following surgery.
Erin Painter continues her cancer treatments.
Rex Zeller, Kathy Zeller's husband is facing back surgery.
Jeanette Stapel, Ken Temple's sister is now living at the Residence.
Bob Bauer is facing knee surgery.
Bill Boyles is in Geauga following a heart attack.

Prayers of Praise

Jan & Bill Boyles have a new great granddaughter.
Rev. Ralph Wearstler is the new interim minister at North Eaton Christian Church.
Robert Hunter, Gwen Carlson's father is doing much better.
Vickie Hess has recovered from a recent illness.
Dorothy Inghram has doing well after a recent car accident.
Janet & Jim Rayl have their first great granddaughter.

THE ISAIAH PROJECT

Shari Farrell's granddaughter, Amber Pilotti, would like to be part of a mission trip to Argentina sponsored by the Isaiah Project, a religious life program where she is a student at Ashland University. She will be part of a team of five students and a faculty member in coordination w/the Iglesia de los Hermanos Brethren Church and the South American Theological Seminary. She will be working on service projects including youth ministry, orphan care, and local churches, spending one on one time with children and youth who may not get much individual attention.

If you would like to help Amber achieve her goal, a donation box is in the church office, or see Shari. Amber is very grateful, and asks for your prayers for safety and guidance for herself and all those involved in this mission.

GRACE OF GOD

A man dies and goes to heaven. St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates and says, "Here's how it works. You need 100 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the good things you've done, and I give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in."

"Okay", the man says. "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her and loved her deep in my heart." "That's wonderful", says St. Peter. "That's worth two points!"

"Two points?", he says. "Well I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service."

"Terrific!", says St. Peter. "That's certainly worth a point."

"One point? I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans."

"Fantastic, that's good for two more point", he says. "Two points?" Exasperated, the man cries, "At this rate the only way I'll get into heaven is by the grace of God."

"Bingo! 100 points! Come on in!"

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!!!

- March 1—Tom Stewart
- March 3—Janna Stefanko, Stuart Rayl, Joey Rayl,
Stephen Penrod
- March 4—Stanley Newberry
- March 5—Merle Pender, Nancy Rhodes
- March 6—Chris Ulrich
- March 7—Helen Wilson, Nan Burr
- March 9—Bill Arotin
- March 10—Linda Arotin
- March 11—Bobby Campbell
- March 12—Logan Gilles
- March 17—Mary Williams
- March 19—Karl Wick
- March 20—Eileen Moore
- March 21—Terri Carson
- March 22—David Craig, Jr.
- March 23—McKenzie King
- March 25—Gertrude Colvin, George Diedrich, Helga Wick,
Keith Eldridge
- March 26—Peggy Baker
- March 27—Carol Arndt
- March 28—Ricky Reed, Bill Hanna, Bethany Craig
- March 31—Sharon Diedrich

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Our Women's Fellowship is hosting Church Women United's World Day of Prayer here on Friday, March 6. Registration begins at 9:30 am, followed by a continental breakfast. Please bring non-perishable items to donate to the local Food Cupboard. Call Mary Carson, 286-1101 or Jan Stewart, 285-9292 for additional information

THANKS SO MUCH

PCC,

Thank you for the generous Christmas gift. It was truly appreciated. It's a joy to my heart by sharing worship music with you to bring praise to our Lord,

God bless,

Psalm 100:2

Kathy Cosimano

Women's Fellowship,

Thank you so much for the card and Christmas gift. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

God Bless,

Kathy Cosimano

Dear Friends,

We are grateful to have received your recent gift supporting the Hope Homes Foundation in the amount of \$150. We deeply appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Rev. D. S. Kiewit

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for your gift of \$123.12. Your donation will be used to support the One Great Hour of Sharing offering as per your request.

Peace,

Susan M. Sanders

Dear Friendship Guild, & Women's Fellowship,

On behalf of Masindi Education Foundation, thank you for your support. The exciting work of Rock Foundation School would not be possible without the generous support of many.

Sincerely,

David & Donna Weir

UP – BEATS

Here we are, Mary and I, enjoying a few winter days in the Adirondack Mountains. The sun has been shining beautifully on the one to two feet of snow in the woods. The air is clear, thus recently allowing two weeks of continuous below-zero temperatures, reaching as low as – 36 degrees, with a wind-chill below –60! Thankfully, we missed that.

Like Chardon, the winter here has been especially hard. The grocery store in town is independent, so what they sell has to pay the bills. Consequently, there are lots of bare shelves now and few brand choices. There are areas of open floor that you could roller-skate in. Prices are sometimes stiff, but staples are always there. So are smiles.

Tourism is the main industry here in Indian Lake, but nothing flashy; it's along the lines of hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, snow-shoeing, ice fishing and the like during this time of year. Past years, snowmobiles way outnumbered cars, but not this year. Also, they seem concentrated more around restaurants than trails, though there are hundreds of miles of the latter. These sportsmen/women also seek out dinners put on by local fire stations and churches, thus supporting one another and enjoying the social benefits. Although the season is tough, spirits are strong.

Wasteful activities are greatly curtailed, but there is still community merrymaking. The local Winter Festival climaxed with a solid fifteen minutes of spectacular locally-made fireworks shot from the top of the town's ski hill. You've missed something if you've never enjoyed frigid fireworks in snow-covered mountains with all the echoing! The neighbors are celebrating.

The "locals" are tough and close; Indian Lake is like family, in touch and supportive. To me, that closeness is comforting and encouraging – and characteristically Christian (Luke 6-31; Mark 12:31). Gratefully, it is not unique to the North Country. In Chardon, the same Christian love is being shared in abundance.

What a family we have in Pilgrim Christian Church! Whether we experience the loss of income, a loved one, or good health, P.C.C. re-

sponds. In 2008, our food cupboard increased community support by 327 people over 2007, increasing steadily throughout the year. Souper Sunday, we contributed a record-breaking 367 cans of soup to the cause. We cooked meals, providing food to the homeless through Project Hope, to say nothing of responding to family and personal crises befalling various members and friends of our congregation. And when we don't see how we can help physically, we feel compelled to pray on behalf of those in special need. That is always a ready and powerful option.

What is especially beautiful to me is that these responses are not calculated, but spontaneous and Spirit-driven. We just want to help, when we might really feel helpless. Isn't that what Jesus had in mind?

In His love,

Steve Wick, Moderator

**YOUTH GROUP NEWS
CALENDAR**

Every Sunday Morning—Sunday School at 10:15 am. Yes, we'll have food!!!

Events and Meetings—Check the Sunday Bulletin or your e-mail.

This month's scripture verse—

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies: and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

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Ray and Lisa Laino
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March 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion Handbells playing	2	3 7 PM Handbell rehearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	4 7 PM Elder's meeting	5 6 PM Brass rehearsal	6 9:30 AM CWU World Day of Prayer in Fellowship Hall	7
8 Change Clocks, Spring ahead	9	10 7 PM Handbell rehearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	11 7 PM Trustee's meeting	12 5:30 PM Project Hope dinner 6 PM Brass rehearsal	13	14
15	16 7 PM Friendship Guild in Parlor	17 7 PM Handbell rehearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	18 7 PM Consistory meeting	19 6 PM Brass rehearsal	20	21
22 Pastor Scott's installation	23	24 7 PM Handbell rehearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	25 7 PM Christian Ed meeting	26 6 PM Brass rehearsal	27	28
29	30	31 7 PM Handbell rehearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal				

April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 PM Elder's meeting	2 6 PM Brass rehearsal	3	4
5 Palm Sunday Communion	6	7 7 PM Handbell re- hearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	8 7 PM Trustee's meet- ing	9 Maundy Thursday 5:30 PM Project Hope dinner 6 PM Brass rehearsal	10 Good Friday Prayer Vigil	11
12 Easter	13	14 7 PM Handbell re- hearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	15 7 PM Consistory meeting	16 1 PM Pilgrim Guild Luncheon 6 PM Brass rehearsal	17	18
19	20 7 PM Friendship Guild meeting in Par- lor	21 7 PM Handbell re- hearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	22 7 PM Christian Ed meeting	23 6 PM Brass rehearsal	24	25
26	27	28 7 PM Handbell re- hearsal 8 PM Choir rehearsal	29	30 6 PM Brass rehearsal Maple Festival begins		

THE VISITOR**March 2009**

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Bruce Carson

COFFEE HOUR HOST

March 1—Open, want to sign up???

March 8—Christian Education Committee

March 15—Friendship Guild

March 22—Men's Fellowship

March 29—Charline Heiden

ONE MORE THANK YOU

Dear Pilgrim Christian Church,

On behalf of the Northeast Ohio children with cancer and families served by The Littlest Heroes, we extend our deepest appreciation to you for contributing to our 2008 Adopt-a-Family program.

Sincerely,

Joanne MacDougall

Program and Services