

August



SERENDIPITY



2012

Summertime, and the livin' is easy . . .

A message from Pastor Carol . . .

A group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush with tickets and brief cases, one of the salesmen accidentally kicked over a table which held a display of baskets of apples. Apples flew everywhere! Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly missed board. All but one.

He paused, took a deep breath, got in touch with his feelings, and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned. He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain to her that he was taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal

where the apples were all over the floor.

He was glad he did because the 16-year-old girl whose stand it was, was totally blind! She was crying softly, tears running down her cheeks in frustration. At the same time, she was helplessly groping as the crowd swirled about her; no one stopped; no one cared for her plight. The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them into the baskets, and helped set the display up once more.

As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket. When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, "Here, please take this \$20 for the damage we did. Are you OK?" She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, "I hope we didn't spoil your day too badly."



As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him. "Mister . . ." He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued, "Are you Jesus?"

Do people mistake you for Jesus? That's our destiny, is it not? To be so much like Jesus that people cannot tell the difference as we live and interact with a world that is blind to Christ's love, life, and grace. If we claim to know Jesus, we should live, walk, and act as he would.

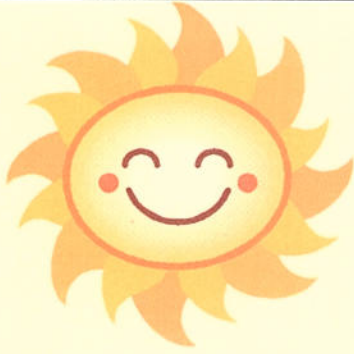
Knowing Christ is more than simply quoting scripture and going to church. It's actually living the Word as life unfolds each and every day. You are the apple of Christ's eye, even though we, too, have been bruised by a fall. Christ stopped what he was doing and picked us up on a hill called Calvary and paid in full for our damaged fruit. Let's start living like we are worth the price he paid!

Pastor Carol

St. John's United Church of Christ

Bluffton, OH

419-358-5641



HOW HOT IS IT?

The birds have to use potholders to pull the worms out of the ground.

The trees are whistling for the dogs.

The best parking space is determined by shade instead of distance.

The temperature drops below 90 degrees and you feel a little chilly.

You break into a sweat the instant you step outside at 7:30 a.m.

Farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to keep them from laying boiled eggs.

The cows are giving evaporated milk.

The potatoes cook underground so all you have to do is pull one out and add butter.

AUGUST CELEBRATIONS

- 8/2 ~ Mary Colletta
- 8/5 ~ Nancy Yeager
- 8/6 ~ Julia Gable
- 8/8 ~ Sam Reichenbach
- 8/9 ~ Brandt Young
- 8/12 ~ Frances Scoles
- 8/13 ~ *Gene and Dottie Long
- 8/16 ~ *Jack and Carol Fields
- 8/19 ~ Maxine McCafferty
- 8/22 ~ Joyce Badertscher
- 8/26 ~ Randy Cox
- 8/28 ~ Carl Scoles
Judy Reichenbach
- 8/29 ~ Steve Kindle
Adam Everett
- 8/30 ~ Mary Ann Jordan
- 8/31 ~ George McCune

Best wishes for many more happy years and wonderful memories!



---GIVE ME PERSEVERANCE---

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll Get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the Best you have anyway.

A reflection on BE-ing

BE understanding to your enemies.

BE loyal to your friends.

BE strong enough to face the world each day.

BE weak enough to know you cannot do everything alone.

BE generous to those who need your help.

BE wise enough to know you do not know everything.

BE foolish enough to believe in miracles.

BE willing to share the sorrows of others.

BE a leader when you see a path others have missed.

BE the first to congratulate an opponent who succeeds.

BE the last to criticize a colleague who fails.

BE sure of your final destination in case you are going the wrong way.

THE RESOLUTIONS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS

Resolved:

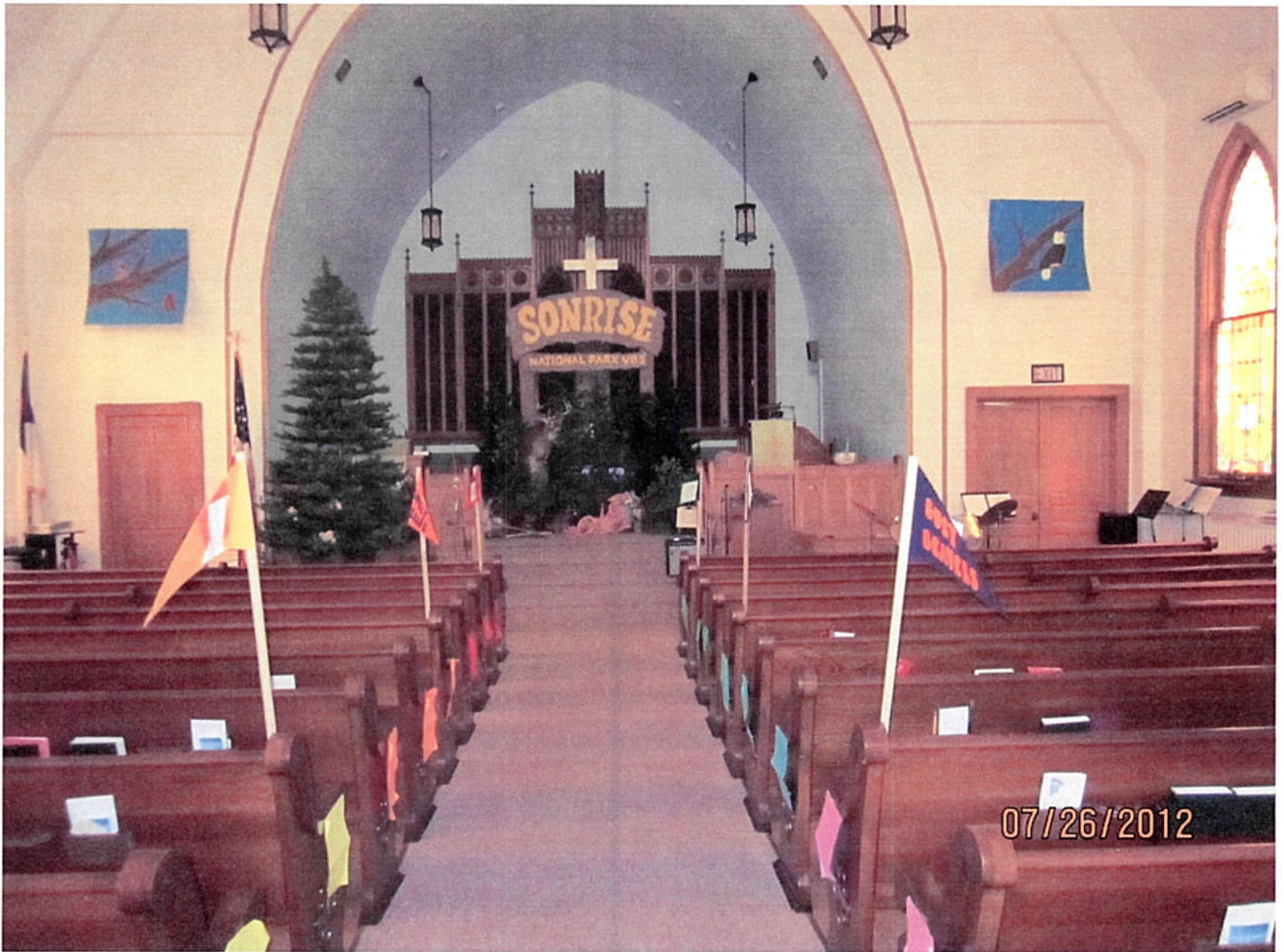
To live with all my might while I do live;

Never to lose one moment of time;

Never to do anything which I should despise or think meanly of in another;

Never to do anything out of revenge;

Never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.



A familiar scene that you see each time you enter Saint John's United Church of Christ, Bluffton, Ohio but not as you remember it. This picture was taken during the Community Vacation Bible School. The theme was Sonrise National Park. The participants looked at different ways God is revealed to us.

The sanctuary was prepared to reflect this with a Deer, Bear, Rabbit, Raccoon, and other stuffed animals in the Chancel area. Even the banners to the left and right reflected the theme.

Throughout the church building were other evidences of God's wonderful world and how we avail ourselves of enjoying it. In the basement of Opperman Hall were many different scenes of world we enjoy; a canoe, a kayak, a tent, picnic setting; upstairs were an eagle and a moose in addition to other wall banners throughout the building.

What is this all leading up to? It is a test to check what you think you see each time you come to worship or attend an activity in the sanctuary.

Looking at the picture. What is behind the "forest" when you come here? What banners will you see? What color are the altar, pulpit and lectern coverings? Do you know the reason and season for the different colors of Altar Vestments?

Looking around the church in other areas: What do you find in the entryway coming in from the College Avenue and Jackson Streets entrance? What does it represent? Where are the pictures of the various Confirmation Classes located? Do you see your church differently? Open your eyes, see.

Pastor Don, retired

Judas Asparagus

A child was asked to write a book report on the entire Bible. This is amazing and brought tears of laughter to my eyes. I wonder how often we take for granted that children understand what we are teaching???

Through the eyes of a child:

THE CHILDREN'S BIBLE IN A NUTSHELL

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God, darkness, and some gas. The Bible says, "The Lord thy God is one, but I think He must be a lot older than that.

Anyway, God said, "Give me a light!" and someone did.

Then God made the world.

He split the Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one bad apple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden....Not sure what they were driven in though, because they didn't have cars..

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel.

Pretty soon all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something.

One of the next important people was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check. After Noah came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, boils, and no cable.

God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff.

Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and thy mother.

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 300 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore.

There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.

After the Old testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of The New. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn.. (I wish I had been born in a barn too, because my mom is always saying to me, "Close the door! Were you born in a barn?" It would be nice to say, "As a matter of fact, I was!")

During his life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Democrats.

Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount.

But the Democrats and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead.

Anyways, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminum. His return is foretold in the book of Revolution.

Submitted by Pastor Don from one of his cousins.

PERSONALITY PROFILE

I AM THE UCC ...

My roots go back 2,000 years, but I am very much now and today.

Instead, I embrace modern intelligent thinking:

Acceptance.

Inclusiveness.

Justice.

I can even be lighthearted. My open-armed approach is appealing to people of all races and lifestyles. Which might explain why my congregations are diverse and unique.

Another funny thing happens when you're less judgmental. You allow people to search, discover and flourish. My friends come to me to seek their own answers, look inside themselves and explore their spiritual lives.

In the end, my personality is reflective of Christ's.

Open.

Embracing.

Nurturing.

And eternally relevant.



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS



Blaine Bauman presented the financial report for the month of June; there was nothing new or unusual to report. Ed Yeager presented the treasurer's report. Nothing new or unusual was reported. Ed will proceed with follow-up on the investment plans with Edward Jones.

Ed reported that a refund from the IRS has been received in connection with Pastor Carol's pension insurance. He also reported that the window project is almost completed and some paint touch-up may be needed around some frames. The floor and chair cleaning company will be contacted after VBS.

A decision was made to renew our advertising with the Bluffton Icon but not to renew the advertising with the Shannon Theatre.

The Tuesday morning ladies' group will be meeting with a Lifetouch photo directory representative in the near future to see if we should proceed with having a new church directory printed. Olan Mills has been purchased by Lifetouch.

There were no committee reports.

Consistory Members

Jenny Bracy ☉ President
Nancy Yeager – V. Pres.
Ron Badertscher – Elder
Steve Kindle – Elder
Jason Cox – Deacon
Randy Cox – Deacon
Pam Everett ☉ Deacon
David Herr – Deacon
Matt Jordan – Deacon
Arliss Plaucher – Deacon
Ed Yeager – Treasurer
Blaine Bauman – Fin. Sect.

Dear Friends of St. John's—
We want to thank you for your concern, thoughts, visits, cards during the last months. Your prayers kept us going.

Maynard and Joyce
Badertscher

BULLETIN BLOOPERS

During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J. Floyd Stubbs supplied our pulpit.

Miss Charlene Mason sang, "I Will Not Pass This Way Again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. Please use the large double door at the side entrance.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It is a good time to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands!

