

January 2018

Volume 18, Issue 1

# The *Chimes*

Newtown United Methodist Church

3546 Church Street, Newtown, Ohio 45244

513-561-6678

## From the Desk of Pastor Katie

Dear Friends in Christ,

You may have seen the same reports that I have throughout the year about a rising coyote population throughout the Greater Cincinnati area. Some homeowners may welcome their presence, as they help keep the pesky small mammal population under control. Others may feel differently if there are beloved cats, dogs, or other small mammals that are part of your family. As someone who has always enjoyed the great outdoors I do not mind catching glimpses of them every once in a while. Though not remotely domesticated, coyotes seem largely untroubled by human activity. This is no surprise, given that coyotes are reported to be the most adaptable of North American carnivores. Unlike most other northern predators – timber wolves, cougars, badgers, and wolverines – coyotes are actually flourishing these days, even in populated places like Cincinnati.

I wonder if we could learn a thing or two from their capacity to adapt. And by “we” I mean the Church. Not just Newtown United Methodist Church though, Newtown is certainly included in that observation, but Christianity in general. I may be a Millennial, but I am well familiar with the stories of those who grew up in earlier times and their memories of an age when membership and weekly worship in church or synagogue was a given. Those days have been over for a very long time, (I barely remember them myself!) but we haven’t really noticed the extent of the attrition until recently. Suddenly – only not really suddenly – the pews seem emptier. Certainly there are new members joining (we had 5 new members join in November and 2 baptisms this year!), but those who do typically worship in much the same patterns of most American society now – which is to say, far less regularly than 20 or 30 years ago, to say nothing of 40-50 years ago. So at least at Newtown UMC, our membership rolls remain relatively stable, especially given a pastoral change-over early in the year. But with each passing year we see an increasingly larger segment of our membership less frequently on Sunday mornings.

I observe all of this not as to provide a “downer” headed into the new year, but rather to issue a challenge for the Church (Newtown UMC included) – to find ways to adapt to changing cultural norms with respect both to church membership and Sunday worship while continuing to focus energy on being a vital part of the movement of The Way: in Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity.

How do we do that? Well, WWCD? (What Would a Coyote do?)

Our neighborhood coyotes exhibit an interesting blend of curiosity and savvy. How curious are we about the spiritual needs of our members whom we see infrequently? Are there things we can do to encourage connectedness to the Newtown UMC community? (i.e. A monthly community dinner to invite community members in and to meet each other? Informal conversation and fellowship at the coffee shop or Main Street Café at a designated time each week? Increased inclusion of children in worship with a weekly Children’s Moment?) What about the spiritual needs of our neighbors in Newtown and beyond? How willing are we to move past our comfort zones to find out?

Coyotes are driven by hunger. The more they eat, the healthier they are and the better able they are both to hunt and to produce healthy litters of pups. What do we hunger for? For God’s abiding presence in our lives? For an increase of faith? For fellowship and the deep connections it brings? To share in Christ’s concern for justice and mercy for those on the margins? How hard are we willing to work to satiate those hungers, especially when our habitat has changed over the years? How well do we work together for the good of the pack? And, if it turns out we are mostly hungry for the good old days, what would happen if we simply acknowledged that, so that we could then set it aside, and then get curious about what might lie beyond, and savvy in our pursuit of it?

I am abundantly thankful to be in ministry with all of you and am humbled every day to have been entrusted to be your pastor. Let’s look forward to 2018 with expectant anticipation of all the many ways the Holy Spirit will lead us into new ministries and ways of being The Church together.

Called to REACH, TEACH and LOVE the Village of Newtown and beyond,

+Pastor Katie

## The Covenant Service

Join us on Sunday December 31<sup>st</sup> for a taste of a traditional Covenant Service in the Wesleyan Tradition. John Wesley himself found the service rich and meaningful as he expressed in his journal in January 1775, "It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences... I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings."

Our service will be specific to Newtown UMC as we commit and recommit ourselves to God's work in 2018. The service has been carefully structured around our new vision statement that "Newtown United Methodist Church is called to REACH individuals, TEACH our community about God and to extend God's LOVE to all the world." Please, join us for this meaningful service as we look toward the New Year.

## Pop-Up Pageant

Come tell the Christmas story with us on Epiphany Sunday (January 7<sup>th</sup>) in this brand new, all-inclusive, intergenerational experience. Bring the ENTIRE family, and be prepared for lots of fun. All characters are cast on the spot with costumes and narration provided. No public speaking or acting chops necessary! This will be a creative way to live up to the vows we take as a community each time we witness a young one baptized into the faith. What better way to teach our youngest worshippers about the Nativity story than to act it out with them! Please invite a friend to come along. We can't wait to see you!



## Ice Cream Social

Join us after the Pop-Up Epiphany Pageant on January 7<sup>th</sup> for a fun and festive Ice Cream Social hosted by the adult Sunday school class.

## Discipleship Coordinator's Meeting



DEEPENING  
DISCIPLESHIP

Many of you have expressed an interest in beginning new small group ministries or Bible Studies in 2018. There is an Adult Discipleship Ministries Coordinator's meeting that takes place every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at Armstrong Chapel UMC. Pastor Katie is looking for someone who would be interested in attending that group to glean information and participate in the wonderful

connectional ministry happening throughout the District. Please let Pastor Katie know if you would like to attend a meeting with her in early 2018.

## Worship Team Meeting

The worship team will be meeting on Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> immediately following the Fellowship hour. The focus of this meeting will be planning for Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2018.

## Leadership Retreat with Suzanne Allen

ATTENTION all 2018 Administrative Council, SPRC, Trustees, Finance and Nominations Committee members. Our 2018 Leadership Retreat will take place **Friday February 2 and Saturday February 3.**

The Assistant to the District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Suzanne Allen will be coming to lead us as we continue to listen to God's voice. We will gather at 6:00 p.m. on Friday Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> for a meal and our first session. We will continue at **9:00 a.m.** on Saturday Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> and run until 3:00 p.m. Because we will be laying the foundation for our work together as God's people in the Village of Newtown, this retreat is vitally important to the future of NUMC. Thank you in advance for making every effort to be in attendance.

## Administrative Council Meeting Dates in 2018

All regular meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

January 8, 2018

February 2-3, 2018 (Leadership Retreat)

March 12, 2018

May 14, 2018

July 9, 2018

September 10, 2018

November 5, 2018

## Dream Like Jesus - Ohio River Valley Leadership Training Day

The annual Ohio River Valley Leadership Training Day will take place on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> at Armstrong Chapel UMC from 9:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. This event is recommended for anyone serving in leadership or who is interested in learning and leading in the year to come. The keynote speaker this year is Rev. Rebekah Simon-Peter, author, speaker, minister and coach who transforms

EMPOWERING THE  
LEADER IN ALL OF US



church leaders and the congregations they serve. Workshop sessions will cover a wide range of topics from opioid addiction to developing spiritual leaders to youth development and church safety. There will be something for everyone! Email Nancy Newton ([nnewton@wocumc.org](mailto:nnewton@wocumc.org)) at the District office or Pastor Katie ([pastor.numc@zoomtown.com](mailto:pastor.numc@zoomtown.com)) for information on how to register.

## Evangelism for Non-Evangelists

Did you state your desire to be part of an Outreach team here at Newtown UMC during Loyalty Sunday? If so, consider taking this **FREE five-week webinar from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.** This webinar series invites you to grow deeper in your own faith and, as you do, reflect on why you believe God is good, articulate your faith in a way that is authentic to that belief, and develop creative practices that grow from those beliefs. It also equips you to implement those creative practices in a congregational setting.

Webinars for this course will take place from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (EST) on:

February 1st, February 8th, February 15th, February 22nd, March 1<sup>st</sup>

Register online at <https://www.garrett.edu/online-offerings/evangelism-non-evangelists>

### Walter Bruggeman at Otterbein Retirement home

World renowned theologian **Walter Brueggeman** is coming to Otterbein Lebanon!

He will be speaking on his new book,

***Chosen? Reading the Bible amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.***

**9am Wednesday, January 31, 2018**

Otterbein Senior Life

Chapel, Campus Center, Circle Drive

585 N. St. Rt. 741,

Lebanon, OH 45036

Free of charge, limited seating, registration required

Questions? Or to register call (513) 696-8537

Let Pastor Katie know if you would like to carpool.

## Acknowledgements

The congregation of the Newtown United Methodist Church would like to thank the families below for sponsoring the **CHIMES** and the Sunday Bulletins. Information about becoming a sponsor can be found on the church message board section of this issue of the **CHIMES**.

### CHIMES

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

RICHARD SMITH

DOROTHY LARSSON

DOROTHY LARSSON

### SUNDAY BULLETINS

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

DOROTHY LARSSON

DOROTHY LARSSON

### Pastoral Needs

If you have a need for Pastoral services, please contact Pastor Katie by calling the Church office at 513-561-6678 or email Pastor Katie at [pastor.numc@zoomtown.com](mailto:pastor.numc@zoomtown.com)

If you have an urgent need after office hours, contact Pastor Katie at home at (513) 843-5520.

### **Church Staff and Support Personnel Email Addresses**

[Facility.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Facility.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Music.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Music.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Office.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Office.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Outreach.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Outreach.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Pastor.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Pastor.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Publicity.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Publicity.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

[Treasurer.NUMC@Zoomtown.com](mailto:Treasurer.NUMC@Zoomtown.com)

Craig Correll

Kristy Swift

Phyllis Fought

Jennifer McComb

Pastor Katie Steele

Robin Steinmetz

Clay Anderson

### NEWTOWN UMC VISION STATEMENT

Newtown United Methodist Church is called to REACH individuals, TEACH our community about God and to extend God's LOVE to all the world.

### **CHURCH MESSAGE BOARD**

- ❖ If you would like to sponsor the **Chimes** please place a donation of \$49.00 (checks payable to the church) in an envelope marked **Chimes**.
- ❖ If you would like to sponsor the **Sunday Bulletin**, the cost is \$30 per month. Please place your donation (checks payable to the church) in the offering plate marked **Sunday Bulletin**.