
St. Andrew's Chronicle

January 2010



Listening for the Breath of God

We have made it to another new year! This is the time when we reflect on the past year and look at possibilities for the future. No matter which way we look, forward or backward, we can see things that were/will be good, and things that were/will be sad. For example, as we look at the year past, we can remember sad times such as when fellow church members celebrated their heavenly birthdays as well as times of great joy such as when a fellow member had a child. Such reflection can be very honest and very healthy. This is just how the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes reflected upon the world when he wrote:

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant,

and a time to pluck up what is planted;

a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil?

I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with.

He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

With all of the good in life as well as all of the bad in life, the author of Ecclesiastes sees God as the only one who can understand everything. Later, in the beginning of the fifth chapter, we learn that our task is to go into the house of God and listen. Repeatedly, the author of Ecclesiastes says all else is "vanity and chasing after wind." This was originally in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word used for vanity, according to Dr. Trent Butler, literally translates as "breath." So, all else is but "breath and striving after wind." Thus, our task is to listen for the breath of God in the house of God. That is our one true task in life: to listen for the breath of God in the house of God. May we all do so this coming year!

Dr. Bob Summers

Lunch and Learn Returns

You are cordially invited to a luncheon and seminar at St. Andrew's on **Wednesday, January 13, at noon**. The seminar is entitled "**Planning Ahead**" and will be presented by Mr. George Ott, who is associated with Hosmer-Muehlig. There will be no charge, and lunch will be provided. This seminar will be a good opportunity to learn and ask questions about the advantages of planning ahead and documenting one's wishes for their funeral in order to help their family make decisions at this difficult time.

A New Year ... A New Opportunity

Each new day brings a promise of a new start. For many the start of a new week is time to begin that diet, get serious about exercising, or forego TV viewing. For a vast majority, though, there's something especially motivating and invigorating about seeing the January calendar on the wall. This is the year we'll accomplish great things.

God doesn't necessarily call us to do great things, however. He asks that we be trustworthy in small things. To that end He gives us gifts to use to build up the Body of Christ and to reach out to the lost.

Some of us have many gifts. People like Michelangelo – painter, sculptor and poet – and Thomas Jefferson – architect, statesman, and scientific farmer – come to mind. God, the Giver of gifts, knows that a number of gifts each of us has varies. Jesus told the Parable of the Talents pointing up this fact and teaching us that success lies in using what we've been given, not in having the greatest amount.

Our gifts also differ in degree. There are many sculptors but few, if any, compare to Michelangelo. Yet their art can bring satisfaction and inspiration to others. You may not be able to sing opera, but you can sing God's praises. You may not be a great orator, but you can witness to the love and grace of God in Christ. You may not be a mechanic, but you can provide transportation for someone needing to get to an appointment or to church.

That's why God gives us gifts and abilities – that we may be equipped to serve others. The start of a new year offers us an opportune time to assess those gifts and see how we can use them for God's glory and the good of His people. The motivation to do this comes from the same One Who gave the gifts! Just as He was motivated by love for us to give us, not just our gifts, but His greatest gift, His Son, so we are motivated by love for Him to serve those He calls us to serve.

Consistory Highlights from November 2009

Pastor's Report: to be reinstated with the first one held on November 21. Staff meetings will be held at 5:30 pm on Wednesdays as much as possible. Aside from trying to avoid hand shaking, we can place hand sanitizer by the doors. Discussion followed on continuing meeting with Rev. Curt Demars-Johnson, the interim pastor at St. Paul's of Chelsea.

Building & Grounds: Dave Schmoekel has recommended that we bring in a qualified electrician to assess the needs of the parsonage. He also proposed that we accept the renegotiated contract for snow removal from Blue Spruce Lawn Care and Snow Removal.

Christian Ed: There is a new changing table in the Nursery that Ray Lowery purchased from the Milbocker Nursery Fund and will talk to the committee about replacing high chairs.

Outreach: Betty Davenport reported that St. Andrew's Sonshine Walkers came in fourth place for fund raising in the 2009 Dexter Relay for Life.

New Business: Jennie Brueninger was welcomed to Consistory as an Elder, replacing Steve Lynch. Barb Affholter distributed the 2010 proposed budget and discussion followed on possible cuts to save expenses as well as how to provide more revenue.

January Birthdays

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|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 - Dolores Kehl | 18 - Craig Baldus |
| 3 - Janis Clark | - Marilyn Clark |
| 4 - Jenny Knope | 20 - Mark Mesko |
| - Kent Shafer | 21 - Carol Jones |
| 5 - Elaine Milbocker | 26 - Nicholas Strudgeon |
| 7 - Norwin Elsasser | - John Weber |
| 10 - Carol Smith | 27 - Mary Dee Heller |
| 12 - Kason VanDoren | - Kim Lund |
| 13 - Travis Bourdon | - Walter Mayer |
| 16 - Paula Allison-England | 28 - Coleen Tomshany |
| - Dave Schmoekel | |



Please inform the church office (426-8610) if we have forgotten any members.

2010 Giving Envelopes Ready for Distribution

Individual giving envelopes for 2010 are available for pick up in the fellowship hall. The envelopes are in alphabetical order for your convenience. In an effort to keep postage costs to a minimum, we need your help to distribute them. **Please retrieve your envelopes and the envelopes assigned to family members or neighbors who have not yet done so.**

Your cooperation and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Annual Meeting Coming Up!

The annual meeting of the congregation of St. Andrew's United Church of Christ is planned on **Sunday, February 14th** immediately following the 10:15 worship service.

The 2009 Annual Report will be sent to members via the US Mail service. If you do not receive a copy, please notify the church office so that the report can be sent for your review.

This has been an amazing year for St. Andrew's Church. Please plan to attend this "year in review" meeting on February 14th.

Choir News

Our choir director, Paula Allison-England hosted the post-Christmas choir party at her home on January 10. Although the number attending was small, we made up for that with the fun we had. Paula and her husband, Barry, cooked up a feast which included pork roasts, potatoes and a lovely green salad. Those attending brought vegetables, rolls and desserts. After the delicious meal, we had the usual White Elephant gift exchange and there's always something very interesting there. We had a wonderful evening and the choir members want to thank Paula and Barry for opening their home to us and providing such a delightful meal.

As you may know, our choir is getting smaller. We urge any of you who like to sing to please come to our next choir practice. These are held each Wednesday at 7:30. Remember, you don't have to be a fantastic singer. And, to prove that, there are no auditions - we'll take you no matter what! Come see how much fun it can be.

Join Us For Some Wonderful Dinners

The monthly dinners are always a crowd pleaser! Listed below is a schedule of the upcoming features through May, 2010:

February 4: Sauerkraut and Knoeffles

March 6: Corned Beef and Cabbage

April 3: Baked Chicken and Dressing

May 1: Chop Suey and Egg Rolls

Serving will begin at 5 p.m. and tickets for dine-in and carry out meals will be sold at the door. Ticket prices are \$8.00 for adults, \$5.00 for youth ages 5-12, and free for children 4 and under.

Please join us for a tasty meal on the first Thursday of each month.

Headline

BodyText

St. Andrew's United Church of Christ

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Phone (734) 426-8610 Fax (734) 426-8620
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website: www.standrewsdexter.org

Dr. Robert Summers, Pastor

The church office is open Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Our answering machine is always available to take a message.

Sunday Schedule

Worship Services	9:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.
Sunday School	during 10:15 a.m. services
Nursery Available	during 10:15 a.m. services

There is a Coffee Hour following both services.

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