

# THE GOOD NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF WEST PARK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Fall 2022*



WEST PARK UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

3909 Rocky River Drive  
Cleveland, Ohio 44111  
216.671.7228 phone  
WestParkUCCOffice@gmail.com  
WestParkUCC.org

*Following Christ, Caring for All, Growing Together*

## RALLY DAY

These last few years have been a tough time for our world and for our church. We have, though, persisted and even thrived in some areas. While we rejoice in our online capabilities and virtual opportunities we must acknowledge that attendance is down from pre-pandemic levels. As our busy summer schedules return to regularity with the start of the fall, all are invited to attend worship on Sunday, September 11. BRING A FRIEND!

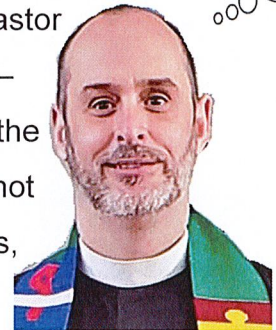
## DINNER FOR SIX

During September, you have the opportunity to sign up for our Fall dinner program. This is a series of dinners to promote fellowship and visitation within our church community. A sign up sheet is located in the narthex or you can sign up by calling the church office. All who register will be assigned to dinner groups and will gather for dinner three times during the coming months on the evenings of October 1, November 5 and December 3. Each group will chose their own locations for dinner. This is a great way to get to know some new friends and reaffirm old friendships.

## IN MY HEAD

### *thoughts from Pastor Jason*

Many years ago, I thought my pastor in Virginia did something wrong – and he did it every year! During the summer months, my pastor did not wear the traditional clerical robes, only a stole. I told him (and myself) that clergy should always dress for worship and that worshipping God in January was the same as worshipping God in July. I promised myself that I would always wear robes when leading God's people in worship.



Then I moved to Cleveland. As we all know, our church can get quite warm during the summer months. So, against uniformed protestations, I also do not wear the heavy robes in the summer. It is just too hot!

I am looking forward to wearing robes again, not just for the formality, but because putting on my robes after the summer months has become, for me, a harbinger of things to come. As the heat of the summer sun relents, and the days begin to shorten, our shared rhythm of church life begins a new pattern each fall. While we often think of spring as the season of rebirth, I think we might also make a good argument that autumn is also a season of rejuvenation and restoration.

God has more planned for us at WPUCC. Our church is in but the autumn of our ministry. We have spent the last 16 decades in service to Jesus, but God is not done with us yet. There is still more to do and plenty of time to do it.

Our lives are the same. We spend the energies of our youth exploring the world and building relationships. But our lives and our faith can become more fully realized as we grow older, as we move toward the autumn and winter of our lives.

I pray the seasons ahead are full of opportunities for each of us, to learn and to grow in our faith.

*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace. (Philippians 1:6-7b)*

Yours in Christ,

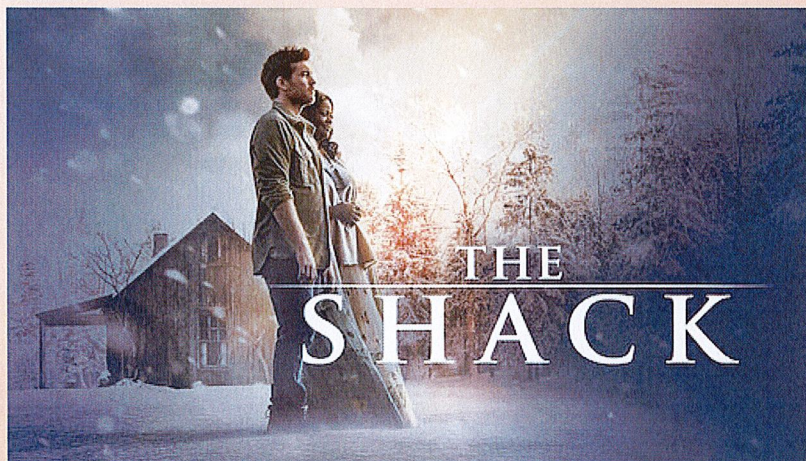
*Pastor Jason*

#### 50-YEAR MEMBERS

Each November, we celebrate those who have been members of our church for 50 years and longer. This year's celebration takes place on Sunday, November 6.

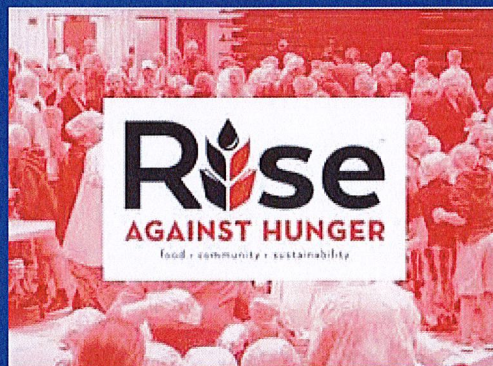
#### MOVIE NIGHT

Movie night is back! Join your church family and friends on Friday, October 14 from 6:30PM—9:00PM for popcorn and a movie in the church sanctuary. We will screen *The Shack*, a 2017 film that highlights God's love for humanity and ancient insights on the Trinity. ALL ARE WELCOME.



#### RISE AGAINST HUNGER

We are excited to again partner with our friends from Christ United Methodist Church and Rise Against Hunger for our second annual meal packing event. We will gather in Bartter Hall on Sunday, November 20 from 1PM to 3PM to pack thousands of meals! The meals will help feed students in underserved communities facing food insecurity. Last year, we sent over 10,000 meals to a school in Haiti. This is an intergenerational service opportunity with jobs for all mobility levels.



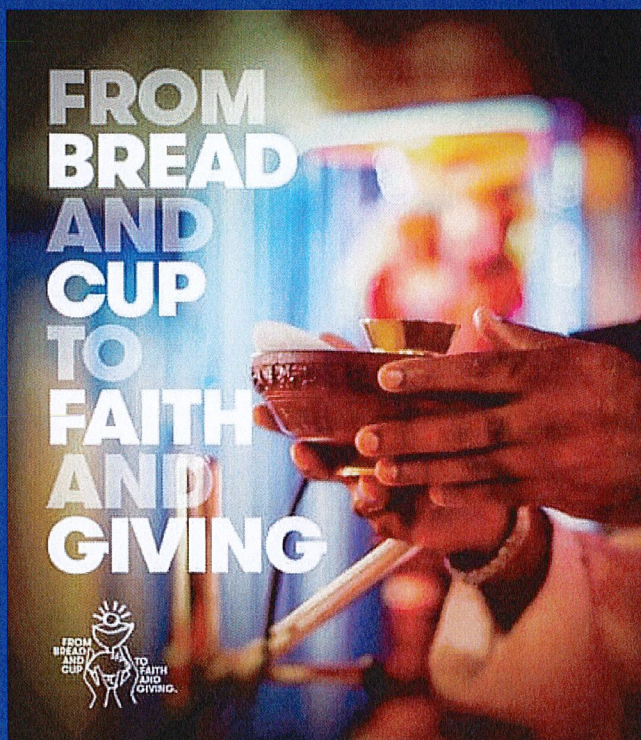
#### WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Christians around the world celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We recall the teaching of Jesus when he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Sunday, October 2 is designated as *World Communion Sunday*. During this special communion service, we will remember the sacrifice of Christ for us all and celebrate the Sacrament in solidarity with the worldwide community of Christian believers.



## FALL STEWARDSHIP

This year's annual stewardship campaign theme is *From Bread to Cup to Faith and Giving*. In the coming months, we will strive to highlight the connection between our experience of God and our generosity as the disciples of Jesus Christ.



Where is God calling you during this season? How is God's Still Speaking Voice beckoning you to give? We will celebrate Consecration Sunday on November 2 and dedicate to God our pledged financial gifts and offerings of time and talent. You may offer your gift in person, by mail or online at [WestParkUCC.org/Give](http://WestParkUCC.org/Give).

## MODERATOR'S CORNER

Margaret Owens



Hi everyone!

I hope everyone had a wonderful summer. I enjoyed mine since I retired on July first. As we enter a new season of fall and the leaves begin to fall, may we all renew our commitment to God and our church. I have learned over the past year how much work it takes to keep us moving forward.

Sincerely,

Margaret Owens

## LADS AND LASSIE'S BOWLING LEAGUE

The 2022-23 season will run Sept. 18th -- April 30th on every other Sunday. We bowl at 3:00 at The Roll House (Buckeye Lanes) in North Olmsted. It's a fun way to get through the colder months in Cleveland! Anyone wishing to join or who knows someone looking for a fun league, please contact the church office.



6th Annual West Park UCC Fundraising Dinner & Gift Basket Raffle

## BELIEVELAND!

Cleveland loves its professional sports teams and tailgating before the game!

Join West Park UCC as we celebrate Cleveland's rich sports history and enjoy some of the best stadium foods in America.



### TICKETS

Adults: \$20

Children Under 12: \$5

**Saturday, Sept. 10**

**5:00-9:00 p.m.**

**Bartter Hall**

Bid on custom gift baskets created by West Park UCC members and friends.

**TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE. SEE YOU THERE!**

Contact Gail Kenney if you would like to donate a gift basket for this year's fundraising dinner.



### DINNER MENU

Game Day Nachos  
Yankee Stadium Cobb Salad  
Chicago Cubs  
Italian Beef Sandwich  
Deconstructed Potato Skins  
Stadium Pizza  
Pierre's Ice Cream Sundae Bar

### We Will Rock You!

Including a sing-along of popular sports songs.



# BELIEVELAND



## LAITY SUNDAY

What goes into planning a worship service? Is there something you would like to change? Do you have ideas on how we might worship God in new ways? Well, this is for you! Our laity are invited to lead worship on Sunday, November 13, 2022. There are many opportunities to participate: writing prayers, planning the order of worship, sermon preparation, leading our pastoral prayer and more! If you are interested in taking part in this year's service, please plan to join for a planning session after worship on Sunday, October 16. ALL ARE WELCOME!

# LAITY SUNDAY

Priesthood of All Believers

## CHANCEL CHOIR

Our choir members had a few months to rest their pipes and are eagerly anticipating a return to weekly singing. Have you always wanted to sing but were too shy to join the group? Did you take some time off from choir last year? This is your chance! If you would like more information about how to participate in our chancel choir, please see Minister of Music Susan Keserich.

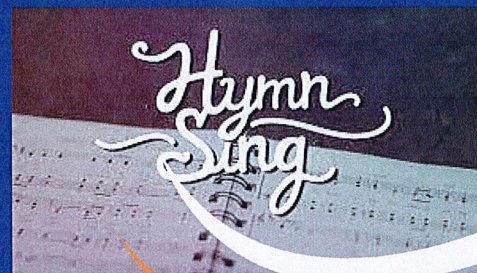
## WHAT TIME IS IT?

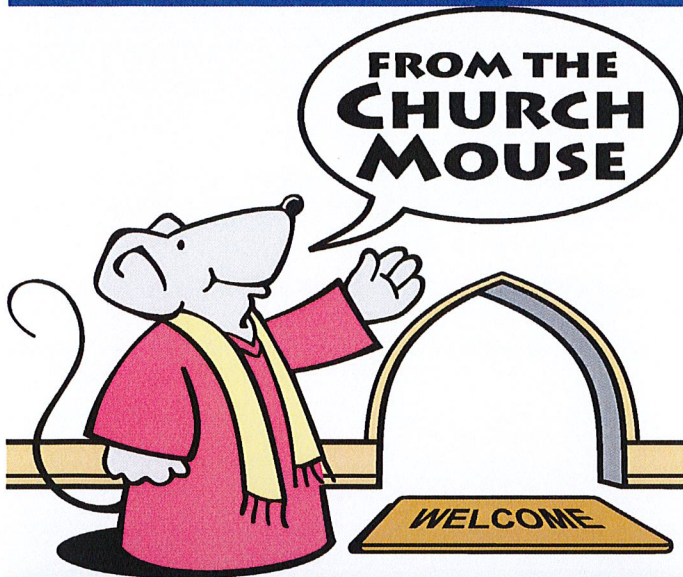
Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour on Sunday, November 6. If you show up early to church, that's okay too!



## HYMN SING SUNDAY

Is there a favorite hymn you are dying to sing? Want to lift up your voice in praise to our God with song? Our annual hymn sing will take place on Sunday, September 18. All are invited to pick a hymn and sing along. What song will you choose?





*A lot of things happen around our church that few ever notice. The Church Mouse sees all! Here are some recent excerpts from her diary.*

#### **May 7, 2022**

Some folks from our neighbors at Bethany English Lutheran Church were in the parlor today. At first I thought they made a wrong turn on Lorain Ave, but I figured out they were having a special meeting. Good to see them here.

#### **June 16, 2022**

How did I end up in Alabama? I took a nap in the projector bag and somehow ended up in Pastor Jason's suitcase. I am learning a lot though and even got a chance to walk (scamper?) across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

#### **August 1, 2022**

Linda hasn't been here in days! I think I heard her say something about vacation and spending time with her family. She forgot to tell the office volunteers to give me treats. Otherwise, the volunteers were terrific! Maybe next time I'll get some snacks.

## **PINK ENVELOPE SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

### **SEPTEMBER: Rise Against Hunger**

Rise Against Hunger is an international hunger relief non-profit organization that coordinates the packaging and distribution of food and other aid to people in developing nations. They are working to eradicate hunger through the implementation of community development projects and meal packing events.

### **OCTOBER: Neighbors in Need**

This is one of the five special offerings of the UCC. In 2022, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" offering focuses on economic justice. One-third of the offering supports Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Justice and Witness Ministries use two-thirds to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations and support various justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and service projects. WPUCC received a grant of \$5000 in 2020 to assist with our digital ministry.

### **NOVEMBER: Strengthen Our Church**

This offering helps underwrite our operating budget and outreach efforts by supporting programs for all ages and providing funds for maintaining our buildings and grounds. It also sends the God is Still Speaking Ministry's message of extravagant welcome throughout our neighborhood and beyond.



# CHURCH NEWS

**BIBLE STUDY:** Our weekly Wednesday night Bible study resumes on Wednesday, September 21 @ 6PM in the church parlor. You may join in person or online. All are invited to join as we kick off our new year. This is a great place to learn more about our sacred scriptures and ask the really hard questions.

**FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** will take place in person (with an online option) after worship on Sunday, November 13.

**9/11 COMMEMORATION:** On Sunday, September 11, we will spend some time in worship offering our laments and grief to our God as we remember the lives lost and the tragedy that changed our world forever.

**MITTEN LINE PARTY:** In preparation for the cold winter months, volunteers are invited to gather after worship on Sunday, November 27 to help pack mittens, gloves, scarves, socks, etc. to be placed on our mitten line throughout the winter.

**INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE RETURNS:** After two years' hiatus, our annual community worship celebration returns on Tuesday, November 22 @ 7PM. Worship will feature six communities of faith including Jews, Christians and Muslims. A meal will follow in Bartter Hall.

## TRANSITIONS

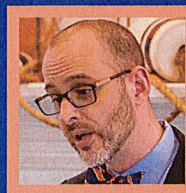
Rachel and Maxwell Miller moved to the Dominican Republic. Maxwell has taken a job as Dean of the Æni Art Academies Dominicana. Rachel will expand her role in their business.

Joan Banak transitioned to eternal life on June 27, 2022.

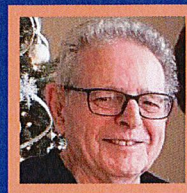
Tim and Sharon Thomas welcomed a new grandchild: Stella Marie (7lbs, 10oz.) born August 21, 2022.

## SAVE THE DATES

December 18, 2022 — Christmas Choral Cantata  
December 24, 2022 — Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
December 25, 2022 — Special Christmas morning worship



Jason Thompson  
Senior Pastor



Jim Furry  
Associate Pastor



Sue Keserich  
Minister of Music



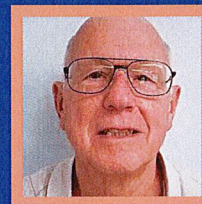
Linda Ferro  
Church Administrator



Jennifer White  
Director of Digital  
Ministries



Sara Jovanovic  
Food Pantry  
Coordinator



Bob Arcuri  
Director of Maintenance

*God is still speaking,*  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# MEMORY LANE

