



Volume 58
Issue 1
THE TOWER

THANK YOU

Early in the Advent season, we were aided in our preparation for Christmas with the preparations that we made for the Birthday Party for Jesus. The Solon and Bainbridge church choirs joined ours in a cantata. And our children and youth recreated the story. Thank you to Lisa Mayer and Megan Barr from Christian Education, to Claudia Lillibridge and Bruce Krejci from Music Committee, and to Chrissy Sterling and Dan Barber and the choir for bringing the Christmas story to life in the Birthday Party for Jesus.

Thank you to members of the youth Sunday School and to Andrea Bennett for assembling the small straw bundles that were distributed Christmas Eve. These might be hung on the tree or be part of a table centerpiece that remind us of our part in receiving Christ. We are the manger in the story. We receive the Christ and our lives show the world the love that Christ brings. Thank you to the Mayer family for the new candle cup holders. They are safer and offer a beautiful glow in the Candle Light Service.

Thank you to the Adult Choir and friends who enjoyed caroling at Dick Sunderland's residence, Kent Ridge at Golden Pond. Thank you to Women's Fellowship for packaging and delivering home-baked cookies for our homebound members. Thank you to the Youth Group for offering the church the opportunity to give through the Angel Tree. These gifts will go to our women and men serving in the military and to residents of Malachi House.

Thank you Lori Bensie for directing our Children's Choir especially for this season.

Thank you to Rich Bissell, Dan Richner, Bruce Krejci, Larry Schmidt, Kathy and Sara Lessman, Bob Hewett and Judy Eisenberger, Dick and Mary Lou Sheller for the extra church cleaning –getting ready for the Christ coming.

Thank you to Lisa Downor and her helpers in assisting children in the Wiggle Church with their family gifts.

Thank you to those who have participated in building and monitoring the construction of the ELEVATED SIDEWALK. Thank you Rich Bissell for all your work in this project's development.

A STAR IS BORN

Days are getting longer. Darkness recedes. What has been hidden is being revealed. The sun returns. The Son comes again. The star shows the way. The Christ is revealed. Christmas gives birth to a new season of Epiphany. Epiphany means appearance, manifestation, revelation. Wise ones know to watch and follow. Wise ones pay attention to signs about alternate routes.

While Epiphany Day is January 6, we will celebrate the arrival of the Magi on Sunday, January 8. We will follow the Magi's lead to the Christ Child. Legend names these three Caspar, Balthazar and Melchior. But our three this year are named Vi Downor, Rheta Patti and David Schilling.

In worship, we will remember the gifts that they brought and offer the gifts we bring. We will share in the meal at Christ's table (Holy Communion). We will sing praises of the joy that has come for the whole world.

Following worship, the Magi or kings will host a reception in Fellowship Hall serving the King's Cake. Hidden in the cake are three beans. Those finding the beans become the magi for the next year's Epiphany celebration.

Blessings
Kay Krejci

From the Church Library



NEW IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY – A recently donated book to the church library is *Sunday in America*. The book contains 150 captivating images taken by 75 photographers and celebrates the faith, love, and devotion of families as they observe Sundays in America. The book will be featured on the library cart in January along with other books

dealing with the history of our church and faith.

Church Fellowship News

Evening Women's Fellowship will meet on Monday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. A survivor of the Holocaust will be the speaker. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Thursday Women's Fellowship will not meet in January. Our next meeting will be February 2. Please plan to attend and bring a dish to share.

Men's Fellowship will begin again on Saturday January 14 at 10:00 a.m. They will meet in Fellowship Hall. All men are welcome to attend as they begin discussion on their agenda.

The Knitwitters meet at 10:00 a.m. until noon on the first and third Thursdays of every month. Anyone interested in learning to knit or crochet can attend. Anyone wanting to join in the fellowship is invited to attend. Please see the recap of items knitted / crocheted and donated on page 5.

DRIVERS NEEDED: Drivers are needed to provide rides to worship and various church activities such as soup suppers and Women's Fellowship. Please leave your name in the church office if you are able to help with this ministry OR if you need a ride.

Memo from the Financial Secretary:

Once again we prepare for the New Year. As we do so, I would like to explain what has become, the standard operating procedure for this position. It has been a long time policy that all contributions and Estimates of Giving to the church should be confidential between only the Financial Secretary and contributor unless otherwise directed by the contributor. I take this very seriously and do all possible to adhere to that policy. For this reason, you will not get an acknowledgement, other than the Quarterly Statement of Giving. The only exceptions are Memorial contributions that are acknowledged to the family of the beneficiary.

I make every effort to be sure any notation or direction to a specific fund or purpose stated on a check or envelope is followed. Any regular contributor, if they have submitted an Estimate of Giving should receive a Statement of Giving quarterly. If there are any discrepancies to your intent shown on the statement they should be reported to myself or the Church office. Any contribution that has no designation on your check or envelope will be credited to the General Fund. This is the case regardless of how you may have indicated your intent when you submitted an Estimate of Giving. I have found that people, sometimes, alternate between funds making it almost impossible for me to know for sure how to apply their contributions unless it is stated when the contribution is received.

Each year we seem to discard many sets of church envelopes. It is increasingly common for people to use bank transfers, Bill Pay programs or just pay by check to make contributions to the church. Their contributions are made monthly, quarterly or at other intervals and prefer not to use envelopes. If as we start the New Year, you prefer NOT to use envelopes please advise me of your preference and I will not issue envelopes to you. I try to "guesstimate" your preference and will not issue envelopes if it seems to be your preference not to use them. If my guess is wrong and you would like a set and do not find one in the narthex please advise me of that fact. I am NOT trying to discourage the use of envelopes rather it is an attempt to reduce needless waste and expense. If your contributions are made in cash, envelopes will provide you with a record which will be helpful for tax purposes.

It is not necessary to submit an Estimate of Giving or be a member to receive a set of envelopes. Please just notify myself or the church office of your request. Any questions or comments regarding any of the information contained in this memo can be directed to me personally or a note dropped in the collection plate on Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Sheller

Telephone — 330-425-4517

**Lockup Trustee for the
month of January -
Dan Richner**

This is a long standing tradition in the Twinsburg community. Beginning Monday evening, January 16 the area churches observe this time together. The Theme for this year is **WE WILL BE CHANGED BY THE VICTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** (1 Corinthians 15:51-58) We will host the community on Thursday evening, January 19. Please check the January bulletins for the full week's schedule.

Monday, January 16

Host: Ss. Cosmos & Damien
10419 Ravenna Road

Wednesday, January 18

Host: Christ Community Fellowship
10900 Ravenna Road

Friday, January 20

Host: Sanctuary of Praise
8788 Hadden Road

Tuesday, January 17

Host: Christ the King
10285 Ravenna Road

Thursday, January 19

Host: First Congregational Church UCC
9050 Church Street

Speakers for each service will be announced later. All services will begin at 7:00 p.m. Please plan to join us for these services.

NEWS from DIACONATE

The Diaconate will be serving Communion to shut-ins and dropping off a copy of the Sunday service to people who are interested. Please call the office (330-425-2181) if you are interested in receiving either of these services.

Don't forget the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 29 after worship service. Annual Reports will be available for review on Sunday, January 22. Any questions, please call the office, 330-425-2181.

News from our Youth Group

On Sunday, January 22, immediately after worship, the Youth Group is planning a "Thank You" luncheon for the church. This is thanks for sponsoring our many young people at Camp Christian. It will be a camp like atmosphere. There will be a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up if you plan on attending. Please indicate how many will be attending in your group.



Sub sales will begin again on January 15 during Coffee Hour. Please place your order with a member of the Youth Group. The price of subs unfortunately will be higher this year. The final price has not been determined. This is a fund raiser held by the Youth to raise money for Camp Christian. The subs are always delicious. It is a great way to support our Youth and have ready made sandwiches for the Super



Scrap Booking Friday January 20, 2012

6:00 p.m.—midnight
in the Fellowship Hall

**Donated to the Metro
Health NICU:**

YTD	Item
411	Hats
481	Blankets
197	Pairs of Booties
39	Sweaters
2	Sweater Sets
7	Head Bands

**Donated to Blessings of
Summit & Portage Counties:**

YTD	Item
14	Crocheted or Knitted Blankets
2	Tied Quilts
5	Sweaters or sets
37	Children's hats*
20	Children's scarves*
6	Head Bands*

*Donated to Battered Women's Shelter

**Donated to the Hospice of
The Western Reserve:**

YTD	Item
132	Lap Robes
25	Pairs of Bed socks
3	Pairs of Adult booties

Bissell / Wilcox Schools:

YTD	Item
74	Hats
40	Scarves
10	Head Bands

**Valerie Walker's class
at Head Start:**

YTD	Item
64	Pairs Children's Mittens
30	Hats
18	Scarves

**St. Vincent DePaul
(Father Osmond Ctr, Akron):**

YTD	Item
37	Hats
20	Scarves
7	Head Bands

Donated to Dr. Shaw for Akron Children's Hospital:

YTD	Item	YTD	Item
56	Preemie Blankets	9	Children's Scarves
87	Preemie Hats	3	Baby Sweaters
45	Pairs of Booties	3	Large Baby Blankets
18	Pairs of Mittens	3	Tied Quilts
17	Children's Hats		

**256th Combat Support Hospital
(yarn donated by Millie Frieling)**

YTD	Item
100	Scarves

USO (yarn donated by Pat Catans)

YTD	Item
48	Scarves

Servers—January 2012

Lynn Schmidt Russ Griffin
 Ken Prentice Aaron Mayer
 Rick Herrilko
 Marge Heston - Bread

Communion will be

Sunday, January 8th this month
Communion will be served in the
Sanctuary and the library

Acolyte Schedule - January 2012

January 1 - Candles lit already
 January 8—**Brooke Dolfi**
 & Tori Holzwarth
 January 15—**Jason Powell**
 & Seth Richner
 January 22— **Kala Mansfield**
 & Rick Mansfield
 January 29—**Walter Sterling**
 & Eleanor Sterling

Lay Reader's Schedule January 2012

January 1—
 January 8—Claudia Lillibridge
 January 15—Rick Sheehan
 January 22—Dan Richner
 January 29—Chrissy Sterling

The families of the names in **bold** have Acolyte Coordinator Duty and should light the sticks and assist the acolytes. Please see the instruction sheet posted on the wall next to the sticks.

Children's Sermon Schedule January 2012

January 1—
 January 8—Change Sunday
 January 15—Gayle Davet
 January 22—Tom Holzwarth
 January 29—Terri Bissell

Coffee Hour Schedule January 2012

January 1—
 January 8—Diaconate
 January 15—
 January 22— Youth Thank You lunch
 January 29—

Flower Schedule January 2012

January 1—
 January 8—
 January 15—
 January 22—Dave & Liz Murch
 January 29—

Welcomers / Ushers Schedule January 2012

January 1- Rick & Denice Sheehan (W)
 Senior High Kids (U)
 January 8- Betty McKnight
 & Doris Turnbull (W)
 Russ & Peggy Davis Griffin (U)
 January 15—Wanda Mikula
 & Bonnie Williams (W)
 Bob Hewett & Judy Eisenberger (U)
 January 22 -Joyce Harney
 & Bev Hegedish
 Need Volunteers for Ushers
 January 29-Ken Prentice
 & Rich Bissell (W)
 Doris Turnbull & Bev Hegedish (U)

If you are unable to serve as Lay Reader, Children's Sermon, or Acolyte on your assigned week, please find a replacement and notify the church office of the change. Thank you!

Happy Birthday to:



Mike Geither

01/02

Andrea Bennett

01/02

Brandon Miller

01/06

Peter Weiss

01/07

Bonnie Williams

01/08

Irwin Turnbull

01/09

Jared Verbic

01/11

Terri Bissell

01/11

Will Sheehan

01/15

Gail Herrilko

01/15

Gordon Weiss

01/16

Stewart Lessman

01/17

Jane Gant

01/19

Donna Miller

01/20

Ashley Pratt

01/21

Kalem Sokolowski

01/23

Janet Hanzel

01/24

Chloe Wentz

01/26

Audrey Turner

01/26

Rich Bissell

01/28

Joel Pietrantozzi

01/29

Rheta Patti

01/30

Happy Anniversary

to:

Doris & Irwin Turnbull

01/10/1953



If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please call the church office so we can update our records.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday School Worship Service

Nov. 27 th	22	86
Dec. 4 th	30	85
Birthday Party for Jesus		146
Dec. 11 th	26	95
Dec. 18 th	22	86
Dec. 24 th	Christmas Eve	150
Dec. 25 th	None	46

Thank You!

Thanks to the Adult Choir, Chrissy Sterling, Claudia Lillibridge, Aaron Mayer, Lisa Mayer, Judy Turk, Megan Barr, Rev. Kay Krejci, Bruce Krejci, Missy Mansfield, Tara Schilling, and Kathy Lessman for all their hard work for the Birthday Party for Jesus program. If you missed it, there are several copies of the program available in the library. Please return it when you are finished viewing.

**We need
volunteers for
Coffee Hour!!!**

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. (Oprah Winfrey)

Happy New Year to each of you! I hope 2012 brings you good health and a good life. As we turn the corner on another year, there will be a lot of “newness.” My journey as moderator will end at the annual meeting January 29 and the church will have new leadership. I look at change with mixed feelings because there’s unfinished work to be done, but then again, the work of the church will not be done until Jesus returns. I have trust that the two people proposed to take my place will serve you well. Of course, the new moderators will have the support of a new council and many new committee members.

I am excited about the “new” sidewalk out front now that phase one is done. Hopefully it will be functional by the time you read this, but it will not be done until spring when the finish work can be done including Kevin Powell’s Eagle Scout project for landscaping. The railing should be done soon as phase two. I encourage each of you to support this project financially as best you can since it will offer accessibility to the front door for a broader range of users. Another recent step in accessibility to address another type of access need is to offer a “fragrance free” section in the sanctuary for those that have a true sensitivity to fragrance. There is more work to be done to prioritize and deal with other types of access issues within the church environment. There continues to be multiple needs for physical and other barriers so no one solution would be a cure-all.

This will be my last message as the moderator to all of you. I can’t end by thanking all of you that helped these past two years in so many ways- by a kind word of support, an extra hand with a task you didn’t have to do, or you did without someone asking you to do it, showing up consistently at council so I didn’t have to worry about having a quorum, or by a variety of other methods. Even I as a member that was heavily involved before I became moderator, I became aware of how many people routinely just take care of various little jobs within the church that have no official label but are crucial to the ongoing mechanics of our church.

Before I go, I’ll leave you with one more quote for the New Year and new leadership.

“Another fresh new year is here . . .
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!

This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest . . .
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!

I have the opportunity
Once more to right some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!”

William Arthur Ward (American scholar, author, editor, pastor and teacher)

Faithfully yours,
Terri

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**Come worship with us
and bring a friend!**
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

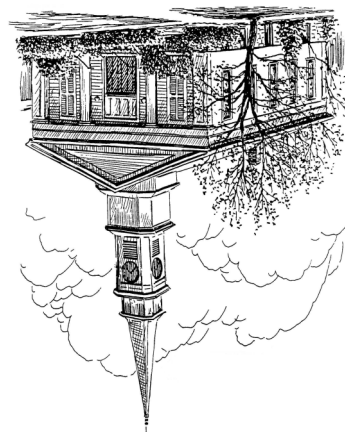
Tower Submissions

Articles for the *Tower* may be e-mailed directly to the church at firstcongregational.church@windstream.net. Hard copies, CD's, or diskettes may be dropped off at the office.

Tower deadlines are posted on the monthly calendar and in the Sunday worship bulletin. For questions, or to be added to or taken off the mailing list, please send an e-mail or call the church office at 330-425-2181.

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*On the square in Twinsburg
 since 1848*



**Dated Material—
 Please Rush!**



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