



God is still speaking,

December 1, 2011

REJOICE! REJOICE! REJOICE! REJOICE! REJOICE!

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice...**

Are you ready to REJOICE? Can you get your whole self involved? Might you even let a Christmas carol come tripping off your lips just because God has given you so much love and joy to share? Will you tell someone today how much they mean to your life? Will you thank God for people in such a way that they can hear your gratitude? This is the gift that we most need from God and from one another, to know that we matter, that we make a difference, that we are loved and lovable. And this is the message of God's unity with humanity. We are forever bonded together with God through the birth of Jesus the Christ. God cannot get any closer to us than to become one of us. For this reason we REJOICE!



ministries are teaching the children, caring for the properties, decorating the sanctuary, sewing new parameters for Advent, attending Comma Conversations, creating our Happenings publications, visiting the sick, singing in the choir, working on boards and committees, housing the homeless, or feeding the hungry we are privileged to share the joy of

God's presence with all people. So we do REJOICE! to celebrate the many ways that you have been a testimony of God's love and joy over the past year in our lives.

**Rejoice!
We are
"good
Christian
Friends".
Your church
staff gives
thanks to God for you!**

In the hope and peace of the Christ,

Rev. Louise R. Ott Beth Prevost

Tara Sievers-Hunt Guy Creasey

Alex Cave Sara Erickson

Ed Price Betsy Wilson

As your church staff here at CCB, we consider YOU to be our "good Christian friends" all the year through. But at this time of year we reflect on how each of you has been a reflection of God's light in our lives. Your ministry commitment to our congregation reminds us daily why we have chosen to be employed by a church at all. Whether our shared

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Happenings

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The CCB Visioning Process: Reaching In and Reaching Out

Contributed by Bob Maxfield

We are thankful for the support of the CCB family during the initial steps of the new visioning process building on this year's Rally Day theme, "Reaching In and Reaching Out." The discussion at the October 23 Brunch Bash generated 50 interesting and challenging suggestions for the future. Many of these are posted on the signpost in Fellowship Hall.

Subsequently twenty-five folks attended the focus group discussion on Saturday morning, November 5 (see photo below). After reviewing the 2005 goal setting progress and sharing their "favorite CCB moments", participants discussed their unique contributions to the church. This was followed by a discussion of the Brunch Bash suggestions. After some discussion, [the following four theme topics emerged](#):

Exploring our faith

Caring for each other so that we can care for others

Empowering our resources

Building authentic engagement with the world

We also agreed that the three broad goals adopted by the congregation in 2006 would continue as the foundation for our final visioning document.

An update on the process will be shared during the December 11 worship service and a copy of the meeting notes from November 4 will be posted on the CCB website. The next focus session to continue the visioning process will take place as a "comma conversation" after church on January 29.

Of course, we will welcome comments and suggestions. Feel free to contact Teresa Newman, Steve Olson, Toni and Kevin Wilson and Bob Maxfield.



CCB Goals and Commitments

1. We intend to become more intentional about living out our faith by reaching out to each other and through our mission in the region, nation and world.
2. We intend to become more inclusive, open and affirming in our approach to ALL people regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, ethnic background and sexual orientation.
3. We intend to become better stewards of the environmental and economic resources which are a vital part of God's creation.

Christian Education..

Check Out the December 2011 Christian Education Sunday Morning Schedule!
 This Fall we're mixing things up a little bit and we want to make sure everyone is aware of the new opportunities that we're offering at CCB. Check out the schedule below for more details. Please contact Sara Erickson with questions. We hope to see you at one of our many gatherings!

Date/Group	Infants & Toddlers	Preschool- 4 th grade Sunday School	FROGS (5 th -8 th) & Senior High (9 th -12 th) Sunday School	Youth Music Program (5 th -12 th)	Comma Conversations (Adults)
December 4- Communion Sunday	10:30- Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Opening Activities & Music in Arlund Room 11:30- Creation Stations: Pageant Practice	10:30- Worship 11:00- FROGS and Senior High meet for pageant practice in the Arlund Room	Youth Music with Tara meets during Sunday School after worship to prepare for Advent and the Christmas Pageant.	11:30- Comma Conversations: The Wired Word in Arlund Room
December 11 - Homemade Christmas and Pancake Palooza	10:30- Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Opening Activities & Music in Arlund Room 11:30- Enjoy your pancakes!	10:30- Worship 11:00- Youth Bells in the Little Sprouts Room 11:30- No Sunday School today. Enjoy your pancakes!	No Youth Music today. A dress rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant will be held at 1:00 p.m. on December 17	11:30- No Comma Conversations today - enjoy your pancakes!
December 18 - Christmas Pageant Sunday	10:30- Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Pageant students released to get ready in the Arlund Room.	10:30- Worship 11:00- Pageant students released to get ready in the Arlund room.	No Youth Music today. Please enjoy the pageant!	11:30- No Comma Conversations today - enjoy the pageant!
December 25 - Christmas Sunday	10:30- Nursery Services- Merry Christmas!	No Creations Stations today. We hope you enjoy our family worship time. Merry Christmas!	No FROGS or Coffee-Mates Sunday School today. We hope you enjoy our family worship time. Merry Christmas!	No Youth Music today. Merry Christmas!	No Comma Conversations today- Merry Christmas!

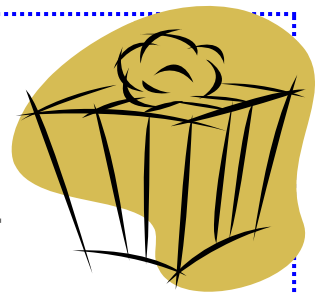


Christmas Gifts for Children



Trinity St. Marks (TSM) is a UCC Church in an impoverished Hispanic neighborhood in Detroit. Its minister, Reverend Steve Archer has developed a program to provide Christmas gifts for children that fall outside the financial guidelines of many other agencies. A Christmas tree is set up outside the sanctuary, and on 12/4, 12/11 & 12/18, unwrapped toys can be brought to church and placed under the tree. On 12/18 after worship, the toys will be delivered to TSM, and on 12/20 they are distributed.

The Christmas Offering for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income clergy and lay retirees and emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees. It provides a lifeline of hope to many lower-income active and retired clergy and lay employees in the United Church of Christ. Due to the lingering effects of the economic recession, there have been many instances in which gifts from the Christmas Fund have made a critical difference in the lives of people living literally on the edge. You can honor the Christ Child during this season by bringing gifts that will be used to support and honor those who have served, and are serving, this beloved church. Your gifts, collected on Sunday, December 18 and at both Christmas Eve services, will truly represent the nature of the church at its best.





To CCB Women of All Ages

Wednesday, December 7, 2011 ~ 6:30 PM

Christmas by Candlelight

an outstanding evening of

Music, Fellowship and Fabulous Desserts

featuring

The Cass Ambassadors Choir

Invite your friends! Reservations required. Contact Carol Feintheil TODAY!

Happy Congratulations and Best Wishes to *Elisabeth France and Robert Koenig*, who were married October 15th in Naples, Florida. Elisabeth is the daughter of Wayne and Margit France, and sister to Wayne France, III and Douglas France. May God bless this young couple as they begin their new life together.

Christmas and New Year's can be difficult for those of us who have lost loved ones dear to us.



*To help each other through these times of sorrow in the midst of celebration Ron Vander Meer will lead a **Blue Christmas Vespers Service** on Saturday, December 10 @ 5pm. Just come and be together in the presence of God and one another.*

And Also With You...

This month's interview is with Melissa Crook, one of our young adult members.

Tell us your full name.

Melissa Lynn Crook.

How long have you been a member at CCB?

About four years.

What brought you to this church?

We were born & raised in the UCC and our former congregation was "steeplejacked" by a more conservative congregation. We looked for an O&A congregation and found this one, and kept going because everyone's so wonderful.



Melissa and a friend, Halloween, 2011

Do you have other family members that attend this church? If so, who are they?

My mom Brenda Crook and my twin sister Kristine Crook.

What kind of work do you do?

Quality control in the automotive industry, but I am currently not working due to health issues. I got my job with the help of Kyoko Miyazaki and want to say thanks!

What is your earliest memory?

When we went to Arizona to visit our aunt who lived in Yuma, and walking over the Mexican border (you could do that then!), hearing mariachi music and eating Cabbage Patch cereal. I was about two and a half.

What is your signature dish?

I cook so much, how am I supposed to choose? (laughing) I guess pies...I want my own bakery! I am planning to start a vegan bakery but I need investors.

If you had to stay in one place, where would it be?

Detroit. I will never leave, unless I get the opportunity to live in Italy. My bakery will be in Detroit.

What does success look like to you?

Achieving your goals and learning from your mistakes, too. It's not money.

When did you last "let yourself go"?

I always have a good time! Saturday was our high school reunion (ten years). I'm a free spirit.

What do you want that you can't have?

I can have anything through God. The question is irrelevant. If it's right for me, God will bring it my way.

Which piece of music alters your state of mind?

If I'm having a not-so-good day, Paul McCartney or anything by the Beatles makes me feel better. Also Jewel makes me feel peaceful, and Pink makes me feel like I could do anything.

Where do you see God at work in your everyday life?

When I wake up in the morning! I have wonderful friends and a wonderful family, and my dog Duke keeps me going. To me, Duke is the image of God in a way, always faithful and loyal.

Tell us two more things you would like people to know about you.

1. At my 1st birthday party, I was dancing in the middle of the floor. There are pictures to prove it, otherwise it would just be hearsay from my mom. I guess I have loved to dance from the moment I could walk.
2. I am the Queen of Jeopardy, which is a name my brother gave me when he saw me getting a lot of the questions correct. I have tried out online but I type too slow. I will be on there, though.

December, 2011

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS for our Congregation—For more detailed calendar information including meeting rooms and outside groups using CCB, please visit the website ccbucc.org/calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<p>27 November 1st Sunday of Advent Hanging of the Greens 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Brunch Bash</p>	<p>28 Happenings Deadline-December 10:30 AM Moderators' Meeting Contractors' Evaluation</p>	<p>29 Happenings Printing-December Contractors' Evaluation</p>	<p>30 Happenings Mailing 12 Noon DMA Covenant Meeting 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal</p>	<p>1 December</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 9 AM Nursery Attendant Interviews 11 AM — 4 PM Parents' Day Out</p>
<p>4 TSM Toy Box Collection Begins 9 AM Choir 10:30 AM Worship w/ Communion 11 AM Pageant Practice 11:30 AM Sunday School</p>	<p>5 4 PM MAT Meeting 7:30 PM Council</p>	<p>6 12 Noon Womens' Event Set-Up</p>	<p>7 6:30 PM CCB Womens' Christmas Event</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 9 AM Choir 11A M Pancake Breakfast Set-Up 5 PM Blue Christmas Vespers Service</p>
<p>11 TSM Toy Box Collection 9 AM Choir & Adult Bells 9:30 AM Pageant Practice 10:30 AM Worship 11 AM Youth Bells 11:30 AM Pancake Palooza & Handmade Christmas Event</p>	<p>12 12:30 PM Staff Meeting</p>	<p>13 7:30 PM Board of Worship</p>	<p>14 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 Poinsettias Delivered</p>	<p>17 11:30 AM CE Board Meeting 12 PM Children's Chimes Practice 1 PM Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal (Youth Bells Practice after Dress Rehearsal)</p>
<p>18 TSM Toy Box Ends Christmas Fund Offering 9 AM Choir 9:45 AM Bells & Chimes 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Pageant 1 PM TSM Toy Delivery 3:30 PM CoffeeMates Cottage Meeting (@ Rev. Ott's)</p>	<p>19 6 PM Finance Committee 7 PM Boards & Committees (optional on a group-by-group basis)</p>	<p>20 9 AM TSM Toy Shop (@ TSM to 3 PM)</p>	<p>21 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal</p>	<p>22 Holiday Office Closes @ Noon 12 PM January Happenings Deadline</p>	<p>23 Holiday Office Closed</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Christmas Fund Offering 5 PM Worship 9 PM Worship</p>
<p>25 Christmas Day 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p>26 Holiday Office Closed</p>	<p>27 Happenings Printing - January Issue</p>	<p>28 Happenings Mailing - January Issue</p>	<p>29 Holiday Office Closes @ Noon</p>	<p>30 Holiday Office Closed</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>

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Place Label Here

Scripture: Psalms 5:11

But let all who take refuge
in you rejoice; let them ev-
er sing for joy. Spread
your protection over them,
so that those who love
your name may exult in
you. (NRSV)

