



God  
is still  
speaking,

January 1, 2012

## From the Pastor's Desk...

*Ezra 7:10 (MSG)*

*10 Ezra had committed himself to studying the Revelation of God, to living it, and to teaching Israel to live its truths and ways.*

A new year means setting new goals for myself and for all of us together. This is what his Ezra passage says to me. So after 7 years with basically the same phone I have made the leap. Sitting in its neat little box is the new technology to get my calendar, my contacts, my directions, my every communication with the world in order. Yes, I have joined iPhone generation. Like usual I am late to the party. In the 1990s I reluctantly caved in to the pressure to be available by cell phone. Not long after having one I was amazed at how relieved I was to be available to the church members without having to be at the church or the parsonage. Of course, that phone was too big to fit in my purse and had the unnecessary walkie talkie function. Glad that Steve Jobs took care of my size issues with technology. Wonder what other great tool I will slowly approach only to be relieved by its entry into my life?

Sometimes coming to a study at the church is like my reticence toward upgrading to new technology. I am comfortable where I am, the way I think about things, the schedule I already keep. Usually I am pleasantly blessed when I do the hard work of preparation and join with others to study the Bible, consider our response,

and care for one another on our spiritual journeys. What is it about making commitments to our own spiritual growth?

Many of you have already been on the Disciple I journey through the entire Bible. In 2012 I would like to invite those

of you who have graduated to join me on the Disciple II path. This study looks at Genesis and Exodus, Luke and Acts. The emphasis is on living out our faith in the world. If we have enough students for two groups, one would meet on Wednesday mornings and the other would meet on Thursday evenings. Are you interested? Give Beth a call in the church office.



**"Peace on Earth"**  
a painting by Ed Baranski

The Comma Conversations (our adult CE Sunday offerings) will deepen and diversify in 2012. The Green Ministry will jump in to teach us new ways of looking at our stewardship. Visioning for our future with God's guidance will continue to be discerned on January 29. Don't miss the update on our progress of listening to God and one another.

As we continue our walk as individuals and as a community, may we be committed to study and to act as God's catalysts for peace and joy and love in this world!

*Happy New Year!*

*Pastor Louise*

Happenings

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*New Year's Day is a Sunday!  
Come start the New Year singing  
and praying and celebrating the  
gift of life! Party hats and  
noisemakers welcome!*

## **CCB Budget Meeting January 22, 2012**

CCB Members' presence is requested at the **2012 Budget Meeting**. This meeting, taking place immediately after worship, will include voting on the 2012 CCB Budget. After the meeting, all are invited to partake in the **Brunch Bash** hosted by the CCB Women and new members.

I thank you in advance for your participation on **January 22nd**.  
**Cindy Hill, Moderator**

## *Adult Education Opportunity!*

**"If God Is Great and God Is Good, Why Do We Suffer?"**

A Discussion Opportunity will be offered in the Library on Tuesday Evenings, January 31 – February 21, from 7– 9 p.m., led by Bill Fish

Based on a discussion of Bart Ehrman's book, *God's Problem...Why We Suffer*, HarperCollins, 2008; available from Amazon or Bill Fish for \$7.00

Held in Library from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

January 31: The Prophets: Suffering is a punishment for sin

February 7: Job: Suffering is a test &/or beyond comprehension

February 14: Ecclesiastes: Suffering is in the nature of things; accept it

February 21: Apocalyptic texts: God will make right all that is wrong

If the Bible has no Answer, what is the Answer??

Please call Bill Fish (248-647-9341) or the Church Office to register. Previous suffering not required, just relentless inquisitiveness.

# Christian Education...

Check Out the January 2012 Christian Education Sunday Morning Schedule!

We have many educational opportunities for children, youth and adults on Sunday mornings 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!—Sara

## Christian Education Schedule for January, 2012

Date/Group	Infants & Toddlers	Preschool- 4 <sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School	FROGS (5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> ) & CoffeeMates (9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> ) Sunday School	CCB Music Programs	Comma Conversations (Adults)
<b>January 1- New Year's Day, Family Worship</b>	10:30-12:15 Nursery Services	10:30- Family Worship. Creation Stations does not meet today. Happy New Year!	10:30- Worship	Youth Music is not meeting today. Happy New Year!	Comma Conversations is not meeting today. Happy New Year!
<b>January 8- Communion Sunday</b>	10:30-12:15 Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Opening Activities & Music in Arlund Room 11:30- Creation Stations	10:30- Worship 11:30- FROGS in "The Pad," CoffeeMates meets upstairs	10:00- Youth Music Program 11:00- Youth Bell Choir & Children's Music	11:30- Comma Conversations: Green Movie "Off the Grid" in the Sanctuary
<b>January 15</b>	10:30-12:15 Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Opening Activities & Music in Arlund Room 11:30- Creation Stations	10:30- Worship 11:30- FROGS in "The Pad," CoffeeMates meets upstairs	10:00- Youth Music Program 11:00- Children's Music	11:30- Comma Conversations: DIA Presentation in Arlund Room
<b>January 22- Brunch Bash Sunday &amp; Annual Meeting</b>	10:30-12:15 Nursery Services	We invite children to participate in a shortened Creation Stations Sunday School after Children's Time. Preschool-4 <sup>th</sup> grade classes will not meet after worship today. We hope you enjoy Brunch Bash!	FROGS and CoffeeMates students will not be meeting after worship today. We hope you enjoy the Brunch Bash and the Annual Meeting!	10:00- Youth Music Program 11:00- Youth Bell Choir & Children's Music	Adults will not be meeting for Comma Conversations. We hope you enjoy the Brunch Bash and the Annual Meeting!
<b>January 29</b>	10:30-12:15 Nursery Services	10:30- Worship 11:00- Opening Activities & Music in Arlund Room 11:30- Creation Stations	10:30- Worship 11:30- FROGS in "The Pad," CoffeeMates meets upstairs	10:00- Youth Music Program 11:00- Children's Music	11:30- Comma Conversations: Visioning Meeting in Arlund Room

## HOLIDAY GIVING AT CCB

During the holiday season, **CCB's Board of Outreach** sponsored several opportunities to support those in need. . .

**Lighthouse Thanksgiving Baskets:** Our collection of canned and nonperishable goods was **equivalent to 50 family dinners valued at \$2,000** and we raised **\$1,315 in cash** for the purchase of turkeys. This program supports 1,200 families in Pontiac and allows them to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner in their home. Thanks to our FROGS Youth Group for delivering this bounty of food.

**The Veterans of the Cross Offering** was collected at CCB's Christmas Eve services. These funds 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.



**TSM Toy Box:** CCB's Sunday School children made beautiful suggestion tags to decorate our "Giving Tree". Our High School Youth Group delivered **12 huge bags** of toys, games, sporting goods, craft & science kits and gift cards to Trinity Saint Marks, UCC where they were distributed to more than **800 children** in southwest Detroit.

In these challenging economic times, the need continues to grow. Thanks to all of you for being so generous!



**Toys donated by CCB members under the Giving Tree outside our sanctuary, above. At right is a delighted Rev. Steven Archer of Trinity-St. Mark's UCC in southwest Detroit, pictured with the donated gifts from CCB and others. Over 800 children benefited.**

## Outreach Project for January—Share the Warmth



As the temperature continues to get colder, the Board of Outreach will be collecting warm winter wear for the **Baldwin Center in Pontiac**. Please bring new or gently used winter coats and new hats, gloves & mittens to CCB **Sunday January 8 through Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**.



## ATTENTION ALL CCB CAMPERS!!!

Believe it or not, it's that time again. Time to start planning for our 12<sup>th</sup> annual CCB camping trip. The CCB camping trip is scheduled for the weekend of Friday Aug. 3<sup>rd</sup> thru Sunday Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>. This year we are headed back to the shores of Lake Huron to Harrisville State Park. It has a beautiful beach and a short little walk into town for an ice cream cone. We have a great group of campers and it's always a fun experience! I hope you can join us! If you are new to camping, this is a great way to start. There are lots of helping hands and someone always has whatever you forgot.

I will be making the reservations on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> so please let me know by Feb. 1st if you are interested in going. Approximate cost per campsite for the weekend is \$56. If you decide to go up a day or two early it really makes the trip relaxing.

Can't wait to hear from you!

Thanks, Ranger Lee Maloney 248-813-8803  
or email at [lmaloney1@marykay.com](mailto:lmaloney1@marykay.com)



## CCB WOMEN Present A TRIP TO THE DIA featuring the special exhibit



### *REMBRANDT: THE FACE OF JESUS*

Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Leaving from CCB at 10:00 am

Expected cost: \$12.50

Followed by lunch at the DIA cafeteria  
(on your own)

*Signup is limited and begins January 4<sup>th</sup>*

# The Red Comma Café



Proudly presents our annual



As with all Red Comma Café shows, bring non-perishable food items or new school supplies and be entered in a drawing for a free CD! (Items donated to Lighthouse of Oakland County).

Sick to death of winter? Counting the days till summer?  
*Get a Head Start!*

Join us for the annual **Red Comma Café**  
***Winter Beach Party!***

**Saturday, February 4**  
**Chili and cornbread 7:00 PM**  
**Music at 7:45 PM**  
**with SOUTHPAW ISLE**  
**Steel Pan Ensemble**  
**featuring CCB members Mark and Lesley-Anne Stone**



Frozen virgin daquiris!  
Frozen virgin pina colodas!

We promise to crank up the furnace, so wear your Hawaiian shirts, Bermuda shorts and dress flip-flops and *get ready to dance!*

Proceeds after costs are covered will be donated to help an uninsured member pay medical bills.

**ADMISSION FOR DONATION!**

◀ *Southpaw Isle performs at the 2010 Winter Beach Party*

# January, 2012

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](http://ccbucc.org/calendar)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1 <b>New Year's Day</b> 10:30AM <b>Worship</b>	2 <b>Holiday-Office Closed</b>	3	4 6:30PM Handbells	5	6	7
8 <b>Winter Wear Collection Begins</b> 10:30AM <b>Worship w/ Communion</b> 11:30AM Sunday School & Comma Conversations: Off the Grid 11:30AM Bldg. & Grounds Meeting	9 7:30PM Council	10	11	12	13	14 9AM Choir Rehearsal
15 <b>Winter Wear Collection</b> 10:30AM <b>Worship</b> 11:30AM Sunday School 11:30AM Comma Conversations: DIA Discussion	16 <b>Holiday-Office Closed Martin Luther King Day</b> 6PM Finance Committee	17 7:30PM Board of Worship	18 9AM Disciple Bible Study 7PM Green Screen: Life & Debt	19 10AM A Trip to the DIA 7PM Disciple Bible Study	20 3PM- <b>Happenings Deadline for Feb. issue</b>	21 11:15 AM CE Board Meeting
22 <b>Winter Wear Collection Ends</b> 9:45AM FROGS Mission Trip Meeting 10:30AM <b>Worship</b> 11:30AM Annual Budget Meeting 12PM Brunch Bash	23 7PM Boards & Committees	24 <b>Happenings Printing-Feb. issue</b>	25 <b>Happenings Mailing-Feb. issue</b> 9AM Disciple Bible Study	26 7PM Disciple Bible Study	27	28
29 10:30AM <b>Worship</b> 11:30AM Comma Conversations: Focusing the Vision 11:30AM Sunday School 2PM Service of Ordination	30	31 7PM "God's Problem" Adult Ed. discussion group	1 February <b>CCB Campers Reservation Deadline</b> 9AM Disciple Bible Study	2 7PM Disciple Bible Study	3	4 7PM <b>Red Comma Café</b> Winter Beach Party

The Congregational Church of Birmingham,  
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Place Label Here



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*Scripture: Job 29:24*

*I smiled on them when they had no confidence; and  
the light of my countenance they did not extinguish.*

*NRSV translation*

## 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.