

BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – APRIL 2024

513.541.5676 | 5742 Hamilton Ave. | Cincinnati, OH 45224 | chpc.org

IT'S ABOUT TIME

BY SHARLYN STARE, BTN EDITOR

“What time is it?” was a question asked long before Time Zones or Daylight Savings. Since Creation, God’s people have been challenged to worship, remember, and pass on to succeeding generation, the knowledge of their God, who operates outside of time.

In the Old Testament, God was very prescriptive—defining times, seasons and worship for believers. After the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ, Christ’s Church continued to equip believers to “Glorify God and enjoy Him forever,” and to develop liturgy to *make the life of Christ more real and contemporary to believers*. So for centuries, the Christian Church has created a memorable reply to the question, “What time is it?”

On page 5 is a much-simplified calendar or annual framework that has developed to guide the “life of the Church.” There may be different facets of life emphasized by churches around the world. But I always learn something from the overall layout. Find out the “current time” by referring to page 5.

EASTER: RESURRECTION OPTIONAL?

BY PAM DOLLARD

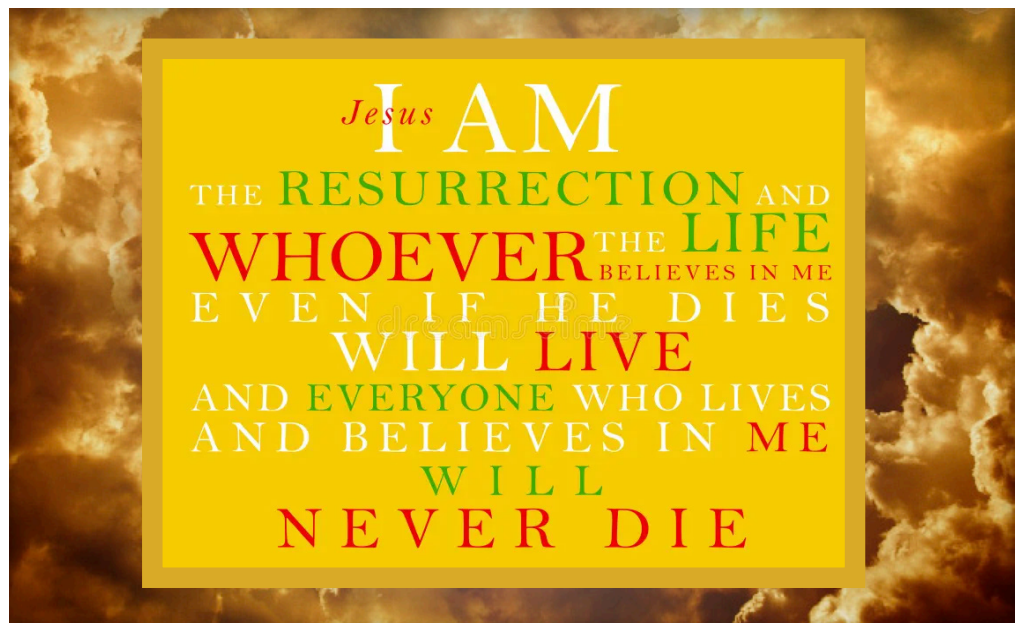
A recent survey in the UK found that 25% of self-identifying Christians do not believe in the literal Resurrection of Christ.¹ Yet, the Apostle Paul lists the Resurrection among the things of “first importance”—Christ’s death for our sins, burial, Resurrection, and bodily appearance to many. This is the gospel in a nutshell.

Lest we think, as some do, that the Resurrection really is optional, Paul makes it crystal clear: “If Christ has

not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.”² Everything that we believe and hope for rests on the fact of Christ’s Death and Resurrection!

C. S. Lewis, in his book *Miracles*, tells us that for the fledgling church “to preach Christianity meant primarily to preach the Resurrection.” Being an eyewitness to the Resurrection was a requirement for the first apostles.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



VISION BECOMES A DREAM WHICH IS A REALITY

In the Fall of 2023, the CHPC Global Outreach Team shared a Vision for two trips to Kenya to serve others: MAY 18-31, 2024. Both build upon relationships developed over many years. As people prayed, the “vision” grew into a special “dream” for eight people: Dave and Maggie Smith, Barbara McMullen, Kelley Foresman, Rev. Erwin Goedicke, Jill and Michael Gaines and Catherine Sanders. Here’s how Jesus is working in the lives of Dave & Maggie Smith and how we can support them in prayer.



BY MAGGIE & DAVE SMITH

Dave and I have been planning to celebrate our 45th Anniversary in a memorable and meaningful way. This past October, our church (College Hill Presbyterian in Cincinnati OH) had a zoom-call with one of our global workers in Kenya. Shortly after that another global worker visited our church to talk about her work in her home country of Kenya. As we listened, we felt the Lord nudging us to go to Kenya with a team—to learn and help.

Our assignment will be to visit the Children’s Hope Center located

north of the capital city of Nairobi—a home for the many children adopted by Mama Lucy Gachero. For 25 years, she has adopted and raised hundreds of street children, giving them the good news of Jesus Christ, the love of a family, a good education and the opportunity *to make a difference in the world.*

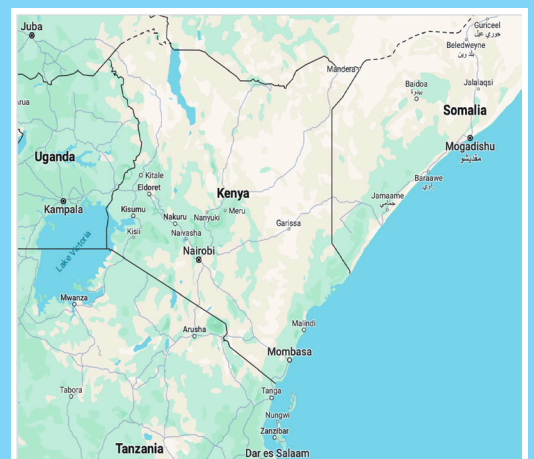
We are learning about ways we can help when we go. We are to prepare to lead devotions at meal times and help Mama Lucy in any ways Lucy desires. Maggie may get to know and work with students who are learning to be

tailors. Dave may get to know and work with young people who want to learn to play golf (seriously).

Maggie sees herself growing in spontaneity as she will go with the flow and not always know what to expect or what she may be asked to do. We both want to be prepared to share our faith clearly and personally with individuals and with the larger groups we may be asked to address. We are learning some of the cultural practices so we can communicate well and respectfully. There is much to do and learn before we go, and we trust that God will help us each step of the way.

WOULD YOU TO PRAY FOR US AS WE PREPARE AND GO TO KENYA MAY 16-26?

We will be developing a list of prayer points that you can use. It would mean a lot if you would be willing to take a particular day to cover us in prayer. If you would consider fasting (from something that is important to you) and praying, it would be a tremendous gift and blessing to us as we go. Thank you for considering our request! If you are willing to pray for us, please let us know by email (maggiesmith205@gmail.com) or phone (513.885.6147) so that we can send the prayer requests. We are excited to go with God and would love for you to be a part of Christ’s work there, too. Love & Blessings, Dave and Maggie Smith



EASTER: RESURRECTION OPTIONAL?

BY PAM DOLLARD

(CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT COVER)

Later, Jesus appeared to more than five hundred people between his Resurrection and Ascension, so there were many people who could lend their witness to the gospel that the apostles preached.

But our personal spiritual destination is not the only implication of the Resurrection. Stan Mast, in an insightful commentary, says, “Easter is more than a single death and resurrection that gets us to heaven. It is the great new thing that inaugurates a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness will dwell.”³ In other words, Easter, which celebrates the Death and Resurrection of Christ, is the beginning of a new phase of God’s work in the world, one in which all the wrongs in the world will be made right.

Isaiah 65:17-25 is a beautiful passage that describes the satisfaction, joy, and wonder we will experience in the resurrected creation. [SEE THE NEXT COLUMN.] When this world looms dark and futile, we can think about what is promised to us in the future: new heaven, new earth, no memory of pain and hardship, rejoicing in God and he rejoicing in us, no distress, no weeping, no death or loss, enjoyable and fruitful labor, nature in perfect harmony – the very picture of delight.

We have our part to play in this in-between time as we partner with God to work toward this just, righteous, and beautiful world. “What God did once and for all in raising Jesus from the dead has immense future results, but those future results are developing

now.”⁴ There is still grief, frustration, and discouragement at times because God has not yet brought the results of his work fully into view. But we can be certain that God will finish this work because Christ’s Resurrection certainly happened!

ISAIAH (65:17-25)

Is. 65:17 “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

19 I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.

20 “Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.

21 They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They will not labor in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them.

24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,” says the LORD.



CONSIDER NOW THE BLOOMERS...

BY PAM DOLLARD

What is the first things new visitors notice about our church? The beautiful atrium? Friendly faces greeting them? Our worship spaces?

NO. Actually, it’s the grounds and parking lot! Have you noticed the spring flowers, new plantings, weed-free parking lot or mulched beds around our campus?

CHPC does not employ a full-time groundskeeper, so much of the maintenance and improvement is done by volunteers. We call ourselves “The Green Team.”

OPEN TO JOIN OUR BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS?

Simply contact Kelly Hibbett (hibbettkelly@gmail.com, or text 513-482-1624) or Michael Gaines (mgaines@chpc.org) to be added to our volunteer list. We have monthly work days but you can also volunteer for a specific task, such as weeding, picking up litter, pruning, edging, or watering to be done at your convenience as the need arises.

We’d love to have you join us!

¹ Andrew-Hamilton Thomas, “Why the 25% of Christians who deny the resurrection aren’t true believers”, Premier Christianity, 5 April 2023. ² 1 Corinthians 15:17.

³ and ⁴ Stan Mast, Center for Excellence in Preaching, Isaiah 65:17-25 Commentary.



Memories of a Taste of Honey

In February, CHPC's celebration of Black History Month included a new event. On Saturday, February 24, *A Taste of Honey* cooking fellowship taught preparation of soul foods, such as collard greens, candied yams, mac and cheese, corn bread, and peach cobbler "from scratch." Celebration Planners, Rosa Brinkman,

Cindy Carlson and Brenda Clark invited men and women to signup, show up with a favorite apron, and learn to cook up goodies for the congregation to eat between services the next day, Sunday, Feb. 25. "Mummm" was the consensus.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRINKMAN & CARLSON



Note: WRITTEN BY ROSA BRINKMAN

From my perspective, there is no better way to celebrate Black History Month than to recreate and preserve the traditions that have been passed down through many generations. In preparing for "A Taste of Honey," there were no recipes to follow. Even



if someone had scribbled one down at the insistence of another relative, it was just an approximation. No piece of paper can tell us how to turn food into love. Our ancestors' recipes are secured in our memories. I remember my grandmother telling me to add a handful of cheese, a stick of butter, to season in sprinkles or dashes, and "just enough." To prepare the meal for "A Taste of Honey," we spend so much time in the kitchen, around the counter or stove, mixing and stirring along with fellowshiping... those memories are endless!

Coming together during Black History Month to prepare food, gave others a taste that we have a rich history to celebrate and, "A Taste of Honey" is just one aspect.

SAVE THE DATE FOR 2025— Saturday, February 22 (for the cooking fellowship) and February 23 tasting between worship services.



BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO CLEAN UP AFTER COOKING, FOR THEY SHALL ALWAYS BE INVITED BACK!

IT'S ABOUT TIME

(CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT COVER)

The Church's "calendar" is unique. You'll notice that the center is an X with a P superimposed, a Chi Rho. This symbol for Jesus Christ used by the early Church was adopted by Roman Emperor Constantine after a miraculous intervention by "the One God," Jesus. It's central placement declares that all time revolves around Him.

Many of the other words may be familiar. **ADVENT** (color purple) - preparation for the birth and 2nd coming of Christ.

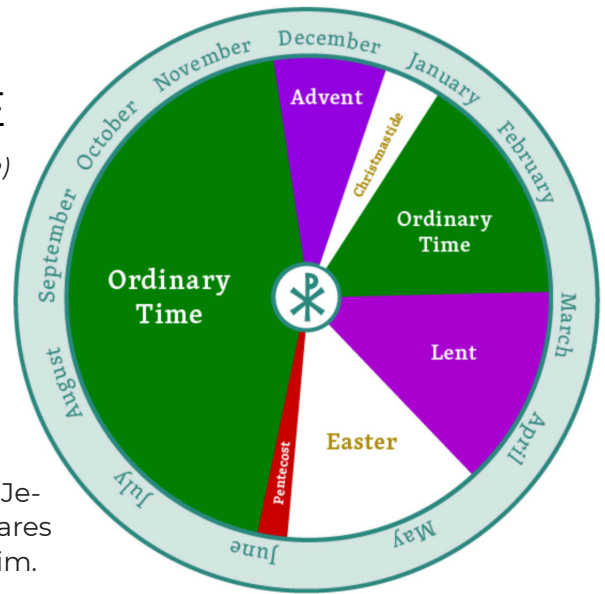
CHRISTMASTIDE (color white)- the 12 Days of Christmas - reflections on the incarnation of the Son of God. The coming of the Magi, the revelation of Christ to the non-Jewish world.

ORDINARY TIME (color green)- the first season when the church focuses on the earthly life and ministry of Christ - His water baptism, and declaration of the Holy Trinity "this is my Beloved Son."

LENT (color purple) - the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday (not including Sundays and non-fasting days) for preparing new converts and personal reflection and change. During Holy Week, the church journeys with Jesus through the final moments of his life, his death on the cross, and his resurrection of from the grave.

EASTER (color white)- we participate in the glory of God's victory over sin and death as we "hasten to see the stone rolled back, and even the angels perhaps, and Jesus himself." Christ is risen—and we are raised with him with him into the newness of eternal life.

EASTERTIDE (color white) is a period of fifty days, between Easter and



Pentecost (meaning fifty), fulfilling the promise to send the Holy Spirit to his Church. From Easter to his ascension, Christ spent forty days with his disciples, teaching about the Kingdom of God. Christ's Ascension is about the enthronement of Christ, his coronation as King of kings, and Lord of lords. Before ascending, he tells his disciples to wait for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, whom he will send. Ten days after the Ascension, the promise was given, poured out on all flesh, fulfilling the prophecy of Joel 2, during the Jewish feast called Pentecost. Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost.

ORDINARY TIME (color green)- The season between Pentecost and Advent emphasizes result of Jesus passing on to His mission to His earthly body, the Church—now alive and embodied by God's Spirit.

NOW WHEN SOMEONE ASKS YOU, "WHAT TIME IS IT?" you will be able to check your watch, your phone and read the liturgical calendar—the way the Church tells time. With the advent of Jesus, all time is centered on him: (A.D. is Latin for "in the year of our Lord"). The liturgical calendar is also a way the Church sanctifies time with Christ-centered worship, and the raising up new generations of believers.



CSO's CLASSICAL ROOTS COMMUNITY CONCERT TICKETS ON SALE

ON APRIL 19, 7:30 P.M. at Music Hall, John Morris Russell will conduct the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in the Annual Concert and Celebration of the Black Musical Experience. For over two decades "Classical Roots" has been a Cincinnati community staple. What started as a small concert series has grown into a diverse community of music lovers united in celebration of the rich legacy of African American music.

At the center of the event is the all-volunteer Classical Roots Community Choir made up of 150 singers from over 50 churches. Vital to the choir are the volunteer choral music leaders, clergy leadership, church partners and a collection of passionate supporters and leaders who represent the rich diversity of the Greater Cincinnati region. Several CHPers will be singing.

Conductor Russell said, "The confluence of talent we have brought together for this year's concert is inspirational, and together, expresses the enduring power of the spoken word. From Biblical texts of King David to oratory, poetry and rap, we celebrate the broad and sweeping story of the Black experience set to extraordinary music and the brilliant musicianship of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. It will be a concert of eloquence and joy!"

TICKETS FOR CLASSICAL ROOTS are currently on sale with tickets starting at \$15. To purchase tickets, visit cincinnati-symphony.org or call the Box Office at 513.381.3300, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Free Livestream —In addition to the in-person performance, the concert will be livestreamed for free on the CSO's YouTube channel, as part of the Orchestra's mission serve the greater community and provide greater access to CSO performances and programs.

Have an idea for *Bell Tower News*? Feedback? Have something to submit? A photo of an event? Contact the BTN Editor, Sharlyn Stare, 513-382-5902 or email starecvg@aol.com.

The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month.

CCM OFFERS LESSONS IN THE ARTS

and scholarships as well

BY ROSA BRINKMAN —There is a musical program in our city called the College Conservatory of Music Prep New Horizons Orchestra. It's a musical program for people over age 50, including those with no musical experience at all and adults who were active in school music programs, but have been inactive for a long period.

CCM Prep's *New Horizons Orchestra* offers ensemble instruction under the direction of experienced teacher Dr. Betty Anne Gottlieb. There are 3 classes: beginner, intermediate and advanced. Music making is great for mental and social stimulation, physical fitness, releasing stress and stimulating creativity along with fellowship with other believers on a Saturday morning at Indian Hills Presbyterian/Episcopal Church. There are need-based scholarships available! Questions? Contact CCM Prep New Horizon Orchestra at 513-556-6638 and online at ccm.aspconnected.com.



SISTERS BARBARA MC MULLEN (VIOLIN) & ROSA BRINKMAN (CELLO) LIVE OUT THEIR MUSICAL DREAMS TOGETHER THRU NEW HORIZON ORCHESTRA.



MEETS AT CHPC THE FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, FEBRUARY TO NOVEMBER AT 7 PM.

Think you have a “black thumb?” (no disrespect intended). Come and meet neighbors who can help your garden bloom. Have a “green thumb?” Enrich your gardening experiences and build relationships with fun folks who share your interest. Expect great programs, enrichment projects like the Spring Plant Sale, the College Hill Garden Walk, and the Wee-Patch Fall Festival for families.



If we've been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Romans 6:5-7 (NIV)

We've walked the Lenten Road and have celebrated the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus together on Easter – so now what? What is it to be Easter People, alive in Christ yet still living in this world of challenge? Well, it might be simple, but not always so easy to live out in families and jobs and church and wherever we find ourselves. The Christian life is simple in that we simply say YES to Jesus' offer of salvation and gift of His righteousness. WOW – what an offer. Not so easy because within me still lurks impatience, big fat opinions, a tongue that is quicker than my brain, and a memory that stores a hurtful past.

“Almighty God, let me live as an Easter Person in you. Grant me Your joy, Your patience, Your eyes to see and hear the people around me, and Your heart to genuinely love. When I said YES to You, I meant it. Please make my life reflect that commitment and transform me so that somehow, I resemble You more than this crazy world where we live. In You perhaps I might become an Easter Person that ministers hope and reconciliation where You plant me. In the Risen Lord, Amen.”

— CHRISTY ROEDIGER



WHEN: From 9 AM to 12:15 PM
Mon., July 29th to
Thurs., Aug 1st,
in the 3C's Wing of the CHPC
Learning Center.

COST: \$70/first child.
\$10 Discount for each additional
sibling (\$60, \$50, \$40). Discount
is calculated at bottom of form.
All children must have emergency
information on file before
attending the 3Cs' Camp.

FULL PAYMENT IS DUE AT
REGISTRATION. Cancellations before
May 31st will receive a refund less
any processing fees.

This 4-day Summer Day Camp is designed for children ages 3-8 and will have an Olympic theme.

DATES for LESSONS

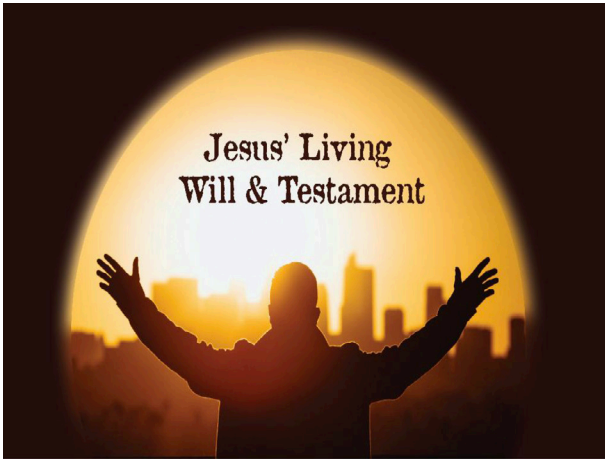
FROM THE CHPC SWIMMING MINISTRY

Children & Teens lessons
(age 5 and above) at North Hills Swim Club.
Mornings —10 AM, 11 AM or 12 Noon
2 separate weeks
Week #1 July 15-19: Week #2 July 29 to Aug 2

Adult lessons
6-7 PM Twin Tower's Wellness Connection Pool
2 separate weeks
Week A July 8-12; Week B July 22-26

OUR ONLINE BROCHURE
is available at www.chpc.org/swim

REGISTER NOW...SPACE IS LIMITED.



Jesus' Living Will & Testament

basketball tournaments have started, and coaches all over the country inspire, encourage, and challenge their teams to play with excellence and energy. When the games are close near the end, coaches call a timeout to give the team some crucial closing instructions so that the team will play well all the

way to the end.

In John 13-18, Jesus pauses to give some final instructions to “the Team” on his journey to the cross and the empty tomb. Traditionally, these selections have been called *Jesus' Farewell Discourse* and his *High Priestly Prayer*. but we will call them *Jesus' Living Will and*

Testament. It's not his Last Will because Jesus is STILL ALIVE! In these passages, Jesus shares with his disciples then now the crucial life messages as a Jesus follower.

Each Sunday, we will explore his living words for all who join him on this lifelong journey with God. Jesus does not hold back. He challenges, comforts, explains, and instructs us with an explicit declaration of the core necessities of living life with God in the power of Jesus' resurrection.

Here are Jesus' *Living Words*:

- John 13 — Love;
- John 14 — Believe;
- John 15 — Abide;
- John 14 & 15 — Holy Spirit;
- John 15 — Persecution;
- John 16 — Joy;
- John 17A — One; John 17B — World.

PREACHING AFTER EASTER

BY REV. DR. ANDREW SMITH, PASTOR

The essence of testimony is to inform others of the ability and power of God to deliver on His promises, in order to encourage those already trusting in Him, and those who express confidence in the counsel of His Word. Our testimony encourages others.

It's March Madness time. The NCAA

It's the time of year when the CHPC Congregational Nominating Committee, CNC, solicits names of potential officers – elders, deacons, a trustee administrator, and members of the CNC for 2025. God uses this process to help the Church and those nominated to “learn to discern God's will for their lives.”



THE CNC DEPENDS ON THE STAFF AND THE CONGREGATION FIRST TO PRAY AND THEN TO CONSIDER WHOM THEY KNOW WHO MIGHT BE EMERGING AS AN OFFICER.

The Officer Roles & Responsibilities and the Officer Nomination form can be found at CHPC.ORG/NOMINATE. Paper forms are available in the literature racks at the Sanctuary front door and the Atrium entrance. You may also contact any of the CNC members directly: Nitha & Ken

Elu, Janet Johnson, Ann Klusmeier, Bonnie Mack, Rebecca Ott, Nate Smith, Elena Stothfang, and Barry Stare (chair - 513-382-5897).

The process has been designed to *actively listen* to God. People who are recommended do not know who has suggested them. [You may even propose yourself.] CNC members then call each person to say: “Your name has come to my committee. Would you be willing to pray with me about what God may be doing in

your life and what He might be leading you to do?”

If the answer is “Yes,” that begins a longer conversation between the CNC contact, the person suggested, and the Holy Spirit—that helps all to learn to grow in discerning God's leading.

The process is a wonderful example of “Christ's Body-building”—a way to discover our spiritual gifts and stirring each other up to use them within and beyond the Church.

In September, the CNC will announce a slate of officers to be elected at the October Congregational meeting. But the greater value of the service of Congregational Nominating Committee is to help all of us to grow as “God's talent scouts” for the Church, and to grow in our own personal ability to discern God's loving voice calling to us.