



BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – FEBRUARY 2024

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

INTRODUCING THE REVEREND SAMUEL G. MOCK



On Sunday, January 21st, College Hill Presbyterian Church had the privilege of participating in the ordination of Samuel G. Mock as a Pastor in the church's denomination, The Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO), and in his installation as CHPC's Assistant Pastor of Discipleship and Evangelism.

The ceremony has deep biblical and historical significance. It is a witness to the Church and to the State of Ohio that Samuel has met the requirements of the ECO and is prepared to be a "faithful minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

EXCITING WAYS TO EXPERIENCE BLACK HISTORY

BY ROSA BRINKMAN, CINDY CARLSON AND BRENDA CLARK

February 1st marks the beginning of Black History Month. In 1926, Carter G. Woodson envisioned a time when African American achievements would be celebrated. Black educators and students from Ohio's Kent State U. proposed a national month-long focus in 1969, which led to President Gerald Ford's signing it into law in 1976. Canada has joined the U.S. in adopting February for celebrating — in honor of the births of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas. The United Kingdom and Ireland celebrate in October.

This year's theme is African American Artists & Arts that have helped to preserve history and community memory. CHPC's celebration reminds us that Black history is not just limited to people of African descent. Black history is American history! As believers, we see racial and ethnic diversity as an expression of God's manifold beauty. No single race or culture can display his image, so he gave us differences to help

us honor his gracefulness. One day, when Christ returns, we will understand God's design for ethnic diversity. On that day, we will all look back at the history — not just of a single race but of people from every nation, tribe, and tongue — and see his glory!

Features of the 2024 Black History celebration are *Musical Arts*:

- Feb 4—"Lift Every Voice and Sing;" (take some time to watch the excellent videos on youtube.com)
- Feb 11—"Every Time I Feel The Spirit" sung by the African Heritage Choir;
- Feb 18—"Give Me Jesus," Orchestra;
- Feb 25—"Peace in The Valley" and Jesus U. ballet "Wade in the Water."

Plus Culinary Arts and Words:

- Sat. Feb 24— Learn to Cook Soul Food
- Sun. Feb 25—"A Taste of Honey" food.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



INTRODUCING REV. SAMUEL MOCK

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

by proclaiming the good news, teaching the faith, showing the people God's mission, and caring for the people."

Portions of the event were held in each worship service. At the 9 AM service, CHPC's ordained leaders (Elders, Deacons and Pastors) laid hands on Samuel and prayed for him. During 10:30AM service, CHPC's Mark Klusmeier represented the denomination and the Great Lakes Presbytery and asked the questions found in the *ECO Constitution* of both Samuel and the Covenant Partners (members) of the church. A special "charge" was given to the newly ordained pastor. Enjoy these glimpses of the whole event.

CHARGE TO SAMUEL

BY REV. MICHAEL JORGENSEN,
former CHPC pastor, preacher of the day, mentor and friend

Samuel is one of those people who was hired on my watch, and like several others, made me look like I knew what I was doing (thanks for that). I've got a few affirmations for you (Samue) that I do not say to flatter you but to remind you of all the good gifts that God has entrusted to you.

You are upbeat and encouraging in a cold and cynical world. People need this from you now more than ever. You are a magnet for genuine community. In the age of the mantra "I can't vibe with everybody," I have never seen a person that Samuel does not find a way to connect with. The world is starved for deep and genuine relationships and I believe he has equipped you and your wife Liz to create community wherever you find yourselves.

You are wise - You have a natural gift for discerning the truth and a great vision for the best path forward. You seek out wisdom from God and others and this will serve you, your family, and those in your care. You are teachable and have an eagerness to learn. Everyone in this room can attest to the way that you've grown as a preacher, teacher, and leader.

Those are all the things that make Samuel a good candidate for the job of pastor. You have many titles: husband, son, son-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, and now pastor. But what we're celebrating today is not merely another title, but a divine calling to ministry. To be clear, neither CHPC nor ECO is giving you a call to ministry, today we are acknowledging the call that God has placed on his life.

In light of that, I have a charge for you in several parts:

Good News for You

There will be many great moments for you in a life of ministry! It is good to pause and celebrate wins, but the challenge is this: celebrate the right



REVERENDS SAMUEL MOCK, MIKE JORGENSEN,
DREW SMITH, AND ELDER MARK KLUSMEIER

things. Big crowds are fun, a beautifully produced video will get attention, but these aren't the wins that Jesus celebrates.



Bad News For You

Ministry is hard! Some of you may not remember this, but when I started here in 2017 I had a full lush head of hair (don't research that). In the midst of these hardships you may doubt yourself, you may doubt your calling, you may find yourself doubting God.

But remember this: Failure in ministry is not an empty service, a shrinking budget, a botched live stream, or a poorly crafted sermon. It is an omission to preach the good news and to love others. Stay true to that calling and you may have mistakes but never failure. The task of ministry is simple... It isn't easy, but it is easy to remember.

When Jesus is asked to summarize all of the law and the prophets, he says that we are "to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself." Whatever titles you obtain, no matter how many people you put in the seats, whatever else you may accomplish in ministry, you never outgrow that calling.

Samuel, cultivate your gifts, grow in wisdom, do great things, but never abandon your first calling to love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. Do this and your ministry will flourish in truly meaningful ways. Amen.



BLACK HISTORY: CULINARY ARTS

BY THE TASTE OF HONEY FELLOWSHIP: ROSA BRINKMAN,
CINDY CARLSON, AND BRENDA CLARK

Much of the history of mankind is a history of eating and tasting. Yet at the same time, eating and food preparation have always been a cultural manifestation. We invite you to take a closer look at the history of taste.

African American food is American food. Years of enslavement and servitude, followed by a bustling invention and reclamation of soul food and Southern cooking, build on African cooking traditions dating back centuries. Black Americans haven't just contributed to American food, they are central to it. African immigrants across the globe have brought their own traditions with them.

Food is a universal love language, and in the Black community, this love runs deep. It comes from a desire to nourish others, spend time together, maintain traditions, and stay within their means. African American food, known as "Soul Food," is closely related to the cuisines of both Africa and the American South.

- **COLLARD GREENS** have much history and significance within America's culinary traditions. These greens date back hundreds of years. Additionally, they've likely been a part of Black culture for even longer. During the years that African Americans were under enslavement,

collard greens were among the few vegetables that Blacks could grow and harvest to feed their families. Consequently, it was enslaved Black people that made Southern collard greens gain popularity.

- **THE YAM** is a staple in African culture. Enslaved Africans were adept at preparing yams and sweet potatoes due to their physical similarities. While enslaved Africans no longer had access to the African yam, they were able to substitute sweet potatoes for yams in meals due to the physical and textural similarities between the two vegetables. Sweet, sugary candied yams were served with a taste of honey.

Slaves who were taken into the plantation owner's house as cooks and household servants learned to combine their own food with their master's food. African American cuisine also grew out of the slaves' resourcefulness in using the cast-off ingredients of the master's meals.

In spite of emancipation, urbanization, and migration to the cities of the North, African Americans have preserved their foods and cooking methods which have been passed down through generations.

Join us Sat., Feb. 24, 2024 (8:30AM to noon) and learn why Black cuisine is a "taste of honey."

You're Invited

A Taste of Honey
Cooking Demo & Fellowship

LEARN TO COOK SOUL FOOD!

Sat., Feb. 24th

8:30 AM TO NOON

(in the CHPC kitchen off the Atrium)

Register at chpc.org/Honey

Southern cooking "from-scratch" can be downright intimidating. We hear ya! We'll be right beside you, walking you through each tried-and-true step! Let's cook!

You are invited to come cook some delicious "Soul" food on Saturday morning, February 24, 2024, in the kitchen at CHCP. We will fellowship through singing and cooking! Bring your favorite apron and come join us starting at 8:30 AM. so we can be done by noon!

Questions? Brenda (brenda.clark.bc16@gmail.com), Rosa (mad327848@aol.com) or Cindy (ccindy53@gmail.com).



MAYA ANGELOU QUOTES

(MORE INFO ON PAGE 5)

- "Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud."
- "The desire to reach for the stars is ambitious. The desire to reach hearts is wise."
- "Hate, it has caused a lot of problems in the world, but has not solved one yet."

- "I can be changed by what happens to me. But I refuse to be reduced by it."
- "Nothing can dim the light which shines from within."
- "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

- "We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated. It may even be necessary to encounter the defeat, so that we can know who we are."
- "Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently."

HARRIET TUBMAN and OTHERS USED MUSIC LYRICS TO TEACH
ESCAPING SLAVES HOW TO MOVE NORTH TO FREEDOM



BLACK HISTORY: MUSIC & DANCE

Music has always been a powerful tool for communication, bearing messages and emotions. In the African-American community, spirituals and gospel songs have played a critical role in expressing faith, hope, and durability in the face of adversity.

On Feb. 11th, CHPC's Chancel Choir and the African Heritage Choir will lead worship at the 9AM service using the following spiritual.

"Every Time I Feel the Spirit" explores the powerful combination of Spirit and prayer as indicated in the key words of the refrain. This song which reminds us that we have received the Spirit of adoption, bears witness with our spirit that we are

the children of God.

"Every Time I Feel the Spirit" is deeply rooted in African-American spiritual traditions. It draws from the rich heritage of gospel music, which served as a comfort and a renewed sense of hope even in the face of adversity. Many can identify with it. The song's spiritual nature and the emotions it evokes create a sacred space for reflection, meditation, and connection with God. The song holds a special place in the history of African-American musical contributions.

Of all the spirituals, this song is one of the most touching in its prayerful suggestion and quiet reverence. In the poetic imagery of its verse, couched in a few words, elemental

in their simplicity, somehow conveys the grandeur of the vision of God on the mountaintop and the dazed soul beholding heaven.

On Feb. 25th, CHPC's Jesus University Ballet will dance to "Wade in the Water" a powerful Gospel song.

"Wade in the Water" originated in the Southern U.S. in the mid-1800s as a spiritual sung by enslaved African-Americans. "Wade in the Water" has a rich history and a profound meaning. It is one of many spirituals with secret codes embedded in the lyrics. It gave guidance to the slaves as they embarked on their journey to freedom through the Underground Railroad.

"Spirituals were more than just expressions of religious devotion. The phrase "wade in the water" is a metaphorical expression that encourages individuals to move forward in their faith and trust in God, despite the challenges they may face" (McQuarrie, 8/6/2021).

The song's title and lyrics refer to the biblical account of the Israelites' escape from Egypt. In the book of Exodus, when Moses led the Israelites out of enslavement in Egypt, they came to the Red Sea. God parted the water to allow them to pass through on safe, dry ground. "Runaway slave" and Underground Railroad "conductor" (1850's-1860's), petite, courageous Harriet Tubman used the song "Wade in the Water" to tell escaping slaves to get off the trail and into the water so they did not leave a scent for the slave catchers' dogs to sniff their trails.

"In slavery times, my master whipped me terribly, especially when he knew I was praying. He was determined to whip the Spirit out of me, but he never could, for the more he whipped me, the more the Spirit made me happy to be whipped." (Testimony of an unknown slave)



Are you kidding?
It's cold enough to snow!

We believe that God has called us to teach students of all ages to enjoy the water and swim. In faith, we have begun planning for our 48th summer. The dates for lessons are below. We have also applied for grant money for scholarships.

Please pray for the Swim Ministry...

for those leading the ministry and those who will be on the swim staff; for the North Hills Swim Club's board and the Twin Towers Wellness Center staff; for preparation of the pools; for swim students; and grants & donations for swim scholarships so more students will be safe in the water.

DATES for SWIM LESSONS

Children (age 5 and above) & Teens lessons

At North Hills Swim Club.

Mornings —10 AM, 11 AM or 12 Noon

Week #1 July 15-19

Week #2 July 29 to Aug 2

Adult lessons

Twin Tower's Wellness Connection Pool

6-7 PM—Week A July 8-12

Week B July 22-26

Student Online Registration begins Monday, April 1, 2024

at www.chpc.org/swim

QUESTIONS ABOUT JOINING THE STAFF?

Contact Katy Verhagen at

Katy.Verhagen@gmail.com

Have an idea for Bell Tower News? Feedback? Something to submit? A photo of an event? Contact the BTN Editor, Sharlyn Stare, 513-382-5902 or email starecvg@aol.com.
Deadline is the 15th of each month.

BLACK HISTORY: WRITTEN & SPOKEN WORDS

THE GIFTED MAYA ANGELOU

Perhaps you received a greeting card or a gift item with a text by Maya Angelous. She was one of Hallmark's most prolific artists. She was a multi-talented poet and author known for her acclaimed 1969 memoir, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. In spite of a traumatic childhood, she became a voice for the Black community and spoke to people's hearts around the world. Here is a sample of her prophetic writing:

"THE BLACK FAMILY PLEDGE"

Dr. Maya Angelou wrote this pledge for the Black Family Reunion celebration held by the National Council of Negro Women May 14, 1986.*

BECAUSE we have forgotten our ancestors, our children no longer give us honor.

BECAUSE we have lost the path our ancestors cleared kneeling in perilous undergrowth, our children cannot find their way.

BECAUSE we have banished the God of our ancestors, our children cannot pray.

BECAUSE the long wails of our ancestors have faded beyond our

hearing, our children cannot hear us crying.

BECAUSE we have abandoned our wisdom of mothering and fathering, our befuddled children give birth to children they neither want nor understand.

BECAUSE we have forgotten how to love, the adversary is within our gates and holds us up to the mirror of the world shouting, "Regard the loveless."

THEREFORE WE PLEDGE to bind ourselves again to one another, to embrace our lowliest, to keep company with our loneliest, to educate our illiterate, to feed our starving, to clothe our ragged, to do all good things, knowing that we are more than keepers of our brothers and sisters. We ARE our Brothers and Sisters.

IN HONOR of those who toiled and implored God with golden tongues, and in gratitude to the same God who brought us out of hopeless desolation, we make this pledge.

* Permission to use: PresbyterianMission.org

MORE QUOTES BY MAYA on Page 3.

LOVING LENT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

For those of us who observe the discipline of giving up something for Lent, perhaps we can start by giving up our resistance to the love of Father God. Why do we resist? Maybe because it is a love that can come crashing in, nosing about, getting all up in our business, changing us, completing us, undoing us and remaking us to be more than we ever imagined. It is what we've most wanted all along and what we might be most afraid of. But when we give in, there is nothing sweeter or more life-giving.

What about Lenten repentance? Nothing brings us to whole-hearted repentance faster than the security that is formed in us by knowing ourselves to be completely, irrevocably loved; loved not in a one-size-fits-all generic way, but a love that knows each of us perfectly and loves the exact us that it knows. He also loves us too much to let us remain unchanged.

One practice that strengthens our perception of God's love for us is to ask Him, every day, to open our eyes wider to see the evidence of His love. Then it is our job to look for what He brings (think of this as a treasure hunt!) in the truth of Scripture, in the natural world around us, in the circumstances and interactions of the day—and acknowledge them with thanksgiving. As we develop the habit of noticing and gratefully receiving, our perception will grow and confidence in our belovedness will take root. As we better know ourselves as loved ones, we are increasingly able to love God in return, and love those around us—the heart of all God's commandments.



VISIT COLLEGE HILL'S NEWEST RESTAURANT

It is located at 1620 W. NorthBend Road, the west end of the HaNoBe Apartments. Known for its made-to-order macaroni and cheese bowls and grilled cheese sandwiches, I Heart Mac & Cheese has garnered a national following with over 40 locations across the United States. The restaurant offers a diverse menu with a variety of bases, proteins, vegetables, cheeses, and

signature sauces, ensuring there's something for every palate, including gluten-free, vegan, and plant-based options.

MEET THANG VO & NAMTHU NGUYEN—the guys in the hats, the franchise co-owners

- *Thang* (2nd from the left), a former data scientist, is passionate about creating a space for shared memories and comforting meals. He may

look familiar to folks at CHPC. He is Beth and Tom Dryer's son-in-law (Deborah's husband). Warmly welcome Thang & Deborah and their family.

- *Nam* (to the right of Thang), with a background in business operations, is excited to make Cincinnati his new home and connect with College Hill's vibrant community.

The restaurant's regular business hours are 11:00 AM to 9:00 PM Monday through Saturday, and from the same for Sundays.

TAKE A MOMENT

and visit the church's website: CHPC.org. To request prayer for yourself, others, God's work in the world, etc., contact Joanne Cornelius. Go to the button marked NEW HERE and click on it. You'll see PRAYER REQUEST AND SIGN UPS. Fill in the form to be added to the CHPC ePrayers List. You'll receive regular emails about prayer needs of others. You can also request prayer for a specific need. Celebrate as prayers are answered,



JOANNE

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn." CHECK IT OUT! There's lots online.

SAVE THE DATES

FIRST Tuesdays of the month, February to November at 7 PM.

The Gardeners (CHG) meet at CHPC. If 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.



GREAT LAKES PRESBYTERY ELECTS REV. DR. ANDREW SMITH AS MODERATOR AND ELDER JANET DUMFORD AS STATED CLERK

Our ECO Presbyterian denomination has 22 Presbyteries across the U.S. In ECO's form of governance, presbyteries exist "to support, encourage and be a resource for the local congregations." ECO presbyteries are "designed to be flexible and to cultivate connection and community among member churches." CHPC is one of 13 churches in Michigan and Ohio, reaching from Mackinac Island, Michigan to Cincinnati, Ohio that form the Great Lakes Presbytery (GLP). This year, Drew Smith became the fifth GLP Moderator, and Janet Dumford became the fifth Stated Clerk. They will serve two-year terms.

A Moderator serves as liaison to ECO's national leadership (the Synod); attends national and regional meetings in person; and is the presiding leader of the Presbytery Governing Council. The Council implements the mission of ECO within the presbytery and supports ECO congregations, church plants, pastors, elders, and lay leaders as they "make disciples of Jesus Christ."

The Stated Clerk acts as Secretary of Presbytery: takes minutes of meetings; provides notices as

required; serves as communications liaison; keeps a registry of the contact information for each congregation, pastor, and member of Presbytery Council and teams/committees. Others on the Council are Vice Moderator Mike Horst (Pastor, Bethel in Columbus), Ministry Partnership Team Chair Mark Klusmeier (CHPC), Ordination Team Chair Nancy Dumford; Nominating Team Chair Kurt Hopper (Lay Pastor, Ripley OH), and Church Planting Team Chair Earl Dunbar (Pastor, New California, OH).

PRESBYTERY HOLDS TWO MEETINGS EACH YEAR.

Pastors, elders, and covenant partners (church members) are encouraged to attend. The theme for this year is *Sabbath*. The SPRING MEETING is Sat., April 20, Ripley First Presbyterian Church, Ripley OH.

PRAY NOW & HELP OCT 11 AND 12

The FALL Presbytery meeting is Friday, Oct 11 & Saturday, October 12. CHPC will host. Start praying now. Mark your calendars – we'll need teams of volunteers to welcome, feed and house 40+ guests from other GLP churches. We'll have dinner on Friday night, lunch on Saturday, worship, teachings, break-out sessions, and an annual meeting.



But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:3-4 (NIV)

If I "give up" anything for Lent, it will be the word: SHOULD. One ought to either do it or not, and not live with the burden of SHOULD. If a thing needs to be done, then do it. If not, let it go without regret or penance. Instead for Lent, perhaps it would be fun to take Jesus's words to heart and every day do something in secret to bless someone. Maybe the Holy Spirit would guide me and give me the very eyes of Jesus to see a need and the means to fill it. Not just gifts or spending money, but an ear to listen or a hand to help. A gift of myself given quietly so it is something Jesus and I are doing together—in secret.

Father God, in this Lenten season may I participate in Your journey to the cross by getting my eyes off myself and on You. Please show me what's going on around me, and what small thing I might do or give or be that would be a blessing to someone YOU love. Guide me, Father, and together let's be a blessing during this Lenten season. Be glorified in both the giver and the receiver in Jesus. — CHRIS ROEDIGER

Deacon and Elder elected in October 2023 came before the congregation and took the ECO vows of service in ministry.

CHPC SESSION & DEACONS UPDATE

The first weekend of January was a busy one for CHPC's new officers. Friday night, Jan. 5th, Deacons, Elders, and Staff gathered at CHPC for dinner together. There were also a couple of fun team-building ice breakers followed by worship, teaching, and prayer in groups.

Sat., January 6th, Deacons and Elders came back together for a time of worship with prayer in the morning. Then each group had a separate agenda for the day. The Session spent time seeking spiritual direction from the Lord for our congregation.

Sunday, Jan. 7th, was Ordination/Installation Sunday, when each



Mark 1:15 *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.*

Jesus called his followers to “follow HIM” in every aspect of life, much as apprentices do with a master in any field. Our journey with Jesus constantly gives us opportunities to choose the *better way* of His direction. Repentance is not a one-time event but a lifelong journey of redirecting our lives according to Jesus’s way every day. Each Sunday of Lent we will look at passages in Mark that highlights different aspects of Jesus’ “Better Way.”

Feb 18 - BETTER PURPOSE

God the Father has a good plan for our lives. Following Jesus provides the training and corrections that are needed to redirect us to that purpose. When we follow Jesus as “Savior” we open ourselves to an amazing journey where our personal relationship and interactions with him matures us to know him as “Lord.”

Mark 8:27-38— Jesus foretells his own death and corrects Peter, who, in turn, tries to correct Jesus.

Feb 25 - BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

Jesus calls us to a *better way* of

relating to one another. He leads us to new relationships with all of his followers and he guides us in ways of love for all people.

Mark 2:13-17 – Matthew and Jesus hang out with all kinds of different people (Jesus’ model for “the Church”). Jesus declares that his family are those who do God’s will.

March 3 - BETTER HABITS

Jesus leads us to new ways of living in obedience to God. We don’t just fulfill religious obligations, we take on habits that reorder our hearts and minds in Jesus’s ways of love and humility, grace and change.

Mark 7:1-23 —Jesus says rituals are not important anymore. and that even the Gentiles are welcome. Jesus’ highest priority is what is happening on the “inside” of people — their heart. Speaking in parables, he challenges his followers to listen carefully and to act upon what they hear.

The season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14th and leads to “Holy Week” —Palm Sunday , Holy Thursday–The Last Supper, Good Friday, Vigil Saturday, and then Easter Sunday, the wonder full celebration of God raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

LOVING LENT

BY PAM DOLLARD

The 40 days of Lent are often associated with discipline, repentance, and waiting. This year, we have another very appropriate association as well. The beginning of Lent falls on VaLENTine’s Day. We can take their coinciding as an invitation to see Lent as a season of love. Not the affection accompanied by red hearts, candy, flowers and candlelight, but the strong,

determined, unshakable, intimately tender, Fatherly love of God.

Please don’t be put off by the



word “Fatherly.” While many of us have not known a truly good human father’s love, all of us instinctively want and need it. For some, that claim will seem like a stretch – whether because of hurt or neglect, some may feel as though they’ve gotten along just fine without that kind of love and have no desire for it. But the very fact that this is what our heavenly Father offers tells us otherwise. After all, He made us and sustains us and knows what we need.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)