

BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – November 2022

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

THANKS-GIVING: NOT JUST A NOVEMBER THING

Crisp weather, falling leaves, shorter days, and shopping catalogs are reminders that Thanksgiving will soon be upon us. The *Bell Tower News* staff asked people to share a time for which they were thankful and were surprised at the responses.

ANN PEACOCK is thankful for memories: “My late husband Richard and I went on a mission trip with Project Partner—women cooked and men worked on the building of a multi-purpose building. When the men came home for lunch, I told Dick that I wanted to work on the building, as I wanted a break from cooking. He took me with him after lunch to the work site, and I got to work on the building. I really felt like I was doing what God had sent me there for. It was a very rewarding time.

JACOB ZHOU IS one of the section leaders in the Chancel Choir and a professional opera singer. He is
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



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NOVEMBER PREACHING SERIES GREAT PREPARATION FOR THE HOLIDAYS

A lifetime of great relationships with God, yourself and others begins with “listening”—a learned behavior. Sounds easy, but the Bible is full of examples of people and nations who failed to listen. However, holiday times with family and friends provide opportunities to practice listening well and to cultivate the relational peace God promises.

NOV. 6 – LISTEN WELL

Guest preacher, Rev. Dr. Gary Sweeten, is the former CHPC Pastor of Discipleship, founder of Sweeten Life Systems, and architect behind Relational Peace University. *

Listening to another with genuine



*See Gary Sweeten’s BLOG on page 2.

concern, respect, empathy, and warmth is hard work.

Yet, keeping our attention on the other person and seeking to hear “their story” instead of focusing on ourselves moves interchanges from polarization to peace.

NOV. 13 – WHEN WE DISAGREE: THE APOSTLE PAUL’S ADVICE

—Romans 14. We humans will always have disagreements. As Jesus followers, we have non-negotiables central to our faith, but we also have many disputable matters. A crucial element about disagreeing agreeably is to understand together the issues while respecting and loving one another. Half the battle is agreeing on what we disagree about. Paul’s

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)





11/01/2022 3-MINUTE READ

BY DR GARY SWEETEN

As humans, it is our nature to become angry. Anger and reactivity can go hand in hand. The way we manage our anger may depend on the person we are interacting with at the time.

For example, I am a second child with one brother who was always older, bigger, and smarter than I was. So, when I am with a first-born brother who acts like my own big brother, I am more reactive than if I were with a second-born. I tend to be defensive and reactive any time a person lectures me as if I were a little boy.



Similarly, a friend of mine is highly structured and orderly. She loves it when everything is in its rightful place. When her family doesn't clean up after themselves — as her brother did when they were children — she tends to be quite reactive.

Do not be surprised if some folks push our buttons more than others. It all comes back to how we have been created and treated.

The following exercise will help you find the differences in your level of reactivity and find ways to be more mindful in your responses. In answering these questions, think about people with whom you have disagreed in the past.

• ARE THERE ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WITH WHOM YOU CAN DISAGREE WITH WITHOUT FEELING THE NEED TO ARGUE?

- 1.
2.

• ARE THERE ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WITH WHOM YOU LIKE TO ARGUE AND SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITHOUT ATTACKING?

- 1.
2.

• ARE THERE ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WHOM YOU'VE WANTED TO ATTACK AND PUT DOWN (WHETHER YOU ACTUALLY ACTED ON YOUR FEELINGS

OR NOT)?

- 1.
2.

What are the differences among these various people and the relationships you have had with them?

How do you try to cool your reactivity and your desire to attack?

LEARN MORE about identifying and overcoming emotional triggers in your life. WWW.relationalpeace.org is an online source to help you grow in your relationship with God, self, and others . . . and to help others.

WELCOME REFUGEES FOR THANKSGIVING

BY TONY STIERITZ

Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio (CCSO) has been busy resettling new refugee families. Recall that this ministry was instrumental in bringing families to CHPC after World War 2 and the Vietnam War.

Before a family arrives, work begins securing housing, furnishings, and food. After arrival, refugees are connected to the social services that build self-sufficiency. These include medical screening, employment programs, job coaching, ESL classes, registering children in school, and temporary cash assistance. CCSO also brings the families community support that is vital to helping the refugees in their journey toward self-sufficiency and feeling at home.

Families come with hope and a sense of relief that their journey away from war, persecution, violence, extreme poverty, and the stagnation of refugee camps will soon give way to a much brighter and more certain future.

These families still face challenges — learning English, accepting jobs different from what they did before, and enrolling their kids in schools that reflect a different culture. Just imagine yourself in this situation.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

By prayers, donations, advocacy and volunteer service, you extend a welcoming hand to families who now have to adjust to our community.

WE CAN PRAY FOR THEM. This makes a big difference.

WE CAN LEARN ABOUT THEM and from them. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

THANKS-GIVING: NOT JUST A NOVEMBER THING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



JACOB ZHOU: . . . thankful to God for the gift of music. “A song that holds deep meaning for me is “Our God is Greater.” In 2013 when I lived in

Atlanta, Georgia, I heard a concert at Mt. Paran Church of God. The power and joy in the choir drew me in. I decided to audition for the choir and rode my bike quite a distance to get to the church. I used “Our God is Greater” for my audition. I sang with the choir for a year, and I was baptized at that church. I’m thankful for another anthem recently sung by the CHPC Chancel Choir: “The Power of the Cross.” The lyrics are comforting and encouraging as well as motivating to me. As I get closer to God, I feel relieved. When I’m doing God’s work, I experience “the chains falling off.”



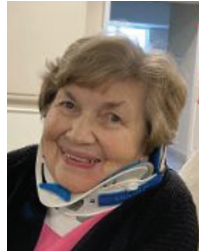
JOYCE HENSEL turned 90 on October 3. She lives at the Evergreen Retirement Community. Her love of family and friends is always evident. “I

am thankful that I know the Living Lord in a personal way. My prayer is that many would learn to know Him.”

SUE WADE also celebrated a special birthday in early October (check out the tiara). She is most thankful for the fall season. The changing colors at this time of the



year remind her of God’s beautiful world and his faithfulness.



ANN BASS has been a member of CHPC for many years, served as an Elder and was part of Ron Rand’s Evangelism Team with her husband George.

She now lives in Fairfield Township at StoryPoint Village. Ann is thankful that God is using her in new ways and enabling her to meet new folks where she lives. (No doubt she’s introducing them to Jesus.)

THOMAS PAGLIARO, grandson of Tim and Jan Johnson, is a first grader at Hilltop Elementary. He turned 7 on Oct. 13. He said he is “most thankful that he can read because he loves books!”



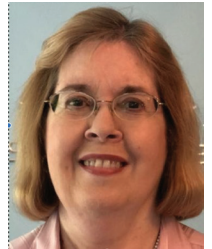
CINDY CARLSON taught English as a -Second-Language overseas several times. “I am thankful to God that He broke down “dividing walls of hostility” within

me before I was ready to serve Him and witness to Christ as a teacher in China. Christians loved on me there and gave me examples to follow here in Cincinnati. International students and scholars who come to the U.S.A. need friendship and community. I’ve found that I can be the hands and feet of Jesus to welcome them and “make the world feel at home.”

BECKY ALLF, newly elected CHPC Trustee Administrator, is thankful for the way God preserves his Word. “When I first went to Turkey, we held Sunday church services for the ex-pats at a local restaurant. The building caught fire one week. The interior was scorched beyond use. The only thing salvageable and barely touched by the fire was a stack of Bibles that we used each week. The Bibles remained amidst the destruction.



NANCY SHRYOCK “On Remembrance Sunday the year my dad died, the CHPC choir sang “Be Still and Know That I Am God.” It’s a beautiful anthem and it really spoke to the hurt in my heart.



Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I will comfort you
When you come to me in your hour of need.
Be still and know that I am here for you,
And I will wipe your tears.
You will be renewed.
Come unto me, my child, be still
And know that I will give you rest.
I am present in your pain,
And I always will remain
Your Comforter and friend.
Peace I leave with you.
My peace I give unto you.
Peace.

BE STILL (BY FROMBACH/MCDONALD)

THANKS TO JAN JOHNSON, CINDY CARLSON, AND THE MISSION COMMITTEE FOR COLLECTING THESE RESPONSES. Watch for more of them in future editions.

A NEW OLD CALLING

BY MARY SUE VERHAGEN

When Jesus ascended to heaven just a few weeks after rising from the dead, he instructed his followers to continue building the Kingdom of God by “making disciples of all ethnic groups (nations)” and “teaching them to observe all that [he has] commanded you.” This kingdom-building still continues today. At CHPC we have long believed that our congregation of Jesus followers has been called to join this work. Some of us GO to other ethnic groups, some PRAY for their work, some GIVE, and some SEND and SUPPORT those who go.

This work has had a variety of names in the past, most recently Cross-Cultural Mission and World Missions. But to reflect current culture, the new name is GLOBAL OUTREACH. To know more, join the monthly Global Outreach Gathering, usually held third Sundays from 11:45 AM– 1 PM in the Fireside Room. A light lunch is served.

We have visits from our Global Workers when they are in town or

available by Zoom and hear updates on each of the workers. If you are part of this congregation and would like occasional email updates with Global Outreach prayer requests, please email missions@chpc.org.

Our ministry leader is Pastor Darryll Davis. He has set several long-term goals for this ministry:

1. Continue quality support of our seven current Global Workers; at least two couples will be retiring in the coming years.



2. Increase our congregation’s knowledge of and engagement with our workers.

3. Encourage our younger generation in outreach, both locally and globally – especially African Americans, who are under-represented in cross-cultural work.

4. Encourage short-term cross-

cultural experiences both inside the U.S and overseas.

5. Seek ways to connect with other ECO congregations for mutual support of these goals, especially encouragement of young African-American workers.

The new 2022-23 budget maintains our seven Global Worker “units” (six couples, one single) at the same support levels as last year. Additional funds have been designated for youth and adult short-term cross-cultural experiences; an application process will soon be in place.

We will continue support of our new workers Gabriel and Sharleen Howard, a young African American couple originally from Atlanta who currently work with refugees in Nairobi, Kenya. They have recently begun organizing short-term groups who can profitably assist with their work for a week or two at a time.

CHPC has a long heritage of God calling men and women from our congregation to serve him internationally. Our own Luke and Molly Verhagen, a young white couple, have begun the process of preparing to work with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Watch for more info.

MONTHLY GLOBAL OUTREACH MEETING

The 3rd Sunday of the month
11:45 AM in the FIRESIDE ROOM

PRAYER FOR GOD’S WORK IN THE WORLD

Global Missions and Global Workers
The 2nd Sunday of the month from 10:05 to 10:25 AM

REFUGEES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

WE CAN VOLUNTEER with them. WE CAN DONATE to support their journey in this new land. Financial gifts are needed to support housing solutions, computer instruction, and education programs. Robust support for refugee resettlement is

a sure sign that Greater Cincinnati is a welcoming, international, first-class region. For more details: Daniel Sarell, Dir. Mission Advancement, Catholic Charities Southwest Ohio, 7162 Reading Road, Suite 600, Cincinnati, OH 45237.



WORK AT LIVING IN PEACE WITH EVERYONE, AND WORK AT LIVING A HOLY LIFE,
FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT HOLY WILL NOT SEE THE LORD. HEBREWS 12:14

“WELCOME HOME” JOHN AND LAURA SHINDELDECKER

BY ROBIN RIECHEL, CHPC MISSION TEAM



John and Laura are global workers commissioned by CHPC in 1979. They have lived and served in the Middle East for over 25 years and in Europe for over 10 years. They specialize in discipleship, leadership development, and biblical conflict resolution. As trainers, coaches, and consultants for international ministries, Christians, and even non-believers around the world, they realized that the *pursuit of peace* was a universal need.

Their “masterwork,” *The Peace Pursuit Handbook*, has finally been translated into Spanish. The title is *El Manual de Procurando la Paz*.

John and Laura are most thankful to everyone who prayed for and assisted in

making this possible— supporters, translators, editors and proofreaders on both sides of the Atlantic. College Hill Presbyterian Church sponsored the translation with money from the REGENERATION FUND that was designated “for a global ministry project with a large impact in the world.”

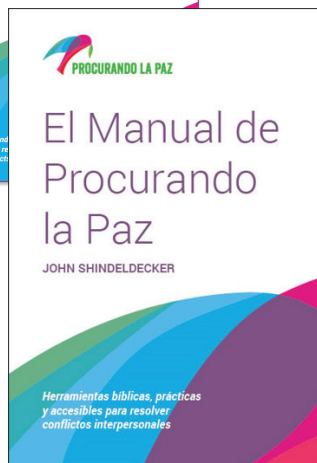
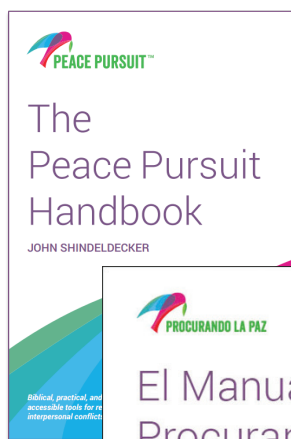
Given the number of Spanish-speaking Christians in the world, this new translation of *The Peace Pursuit Handbook* is a “significant contribution to peacemaking and discipleship among Spanish-speakers around the world.”

The Spanish version is available in paperback and Kindle formats at Amazon.com. In July, the Spanish translation was used for a strategic training conference of 200 Spanish-speaking cross-cultural workers in Spain.

For more information on biblical peacemaking resources, check out peacepursuit.org. *The Peace*

Pursuit Handbook’s “Quick Start Guide” is now available in 20 languages. Look for copies of the *Quick Start Guide* in the display holders on the Mission Wall in the foyer outside CHPC’s Contemporary Worship Center.

While you’re there, look for other outreach information. Don’t miss the videos of other ministries—who knows, God may be calling you to serve Christ across the street or around the world.



MORE GOOD NEWS PRAY FOR PEACE PURSUIT

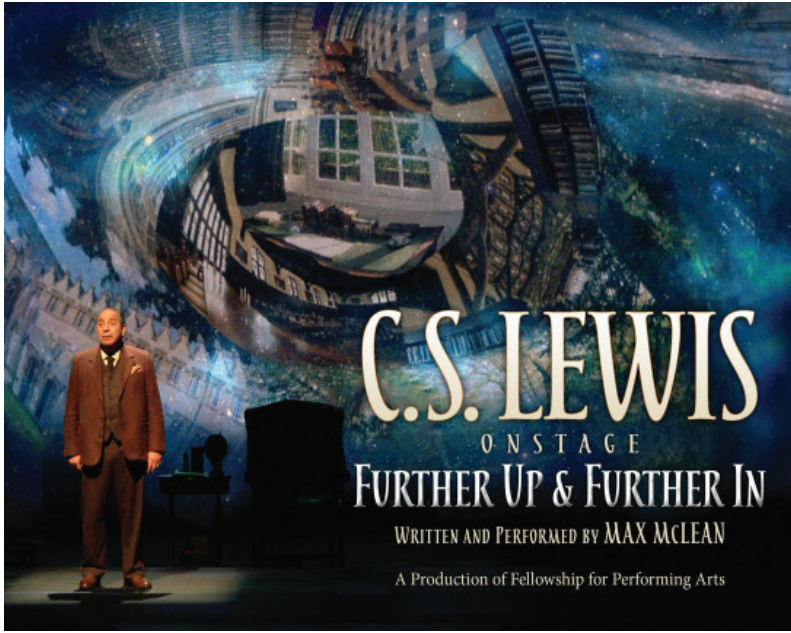
Peace Pursuit International (PPI) has been incorporated in the State of Ohio. They have a 3-member Board of Directors with John Shindeldecker as Executive Director and President. Their U.S. 501 (c)(3) application has been submitted but can take as long as 2 years to be processed. Please pray for PPI to be granted non-profit status much sooner.

Also, pray for John and Laura as they continue their responsibilities and travel with *FRONTIERS*, while working to get PPI organized and meet the demands for training. They are thankful for Janeen, who has been working with them as a trained Peace Pursuit Practitioner for the last few years.

DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER,
AS LONG AS IT DEPENDS ON YOU, TO
BE AT PEACE WITH ALL.

Romans 12:18

That time is now! Exciting men’s fellowship. Life-giving Bible study and discipleship. 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursdays (6:15 AM). Worth getting up! Where? CHPC Fireside Room or on Zoom.com. Info? Barry Stare, bzuthr@me.com.



When C. S. Lewis came to faith in 1931, it wasn't obvious he would become the most influential Christian writer of the 20th century. How did that happen?

MAX MCLEAN'S MULTI-MEDIA SEQUEL TO "THE MOST RELUCTANT CONVERT"

DECEMBER 3, 2022 8 PM

LIVE ON STAGE: ARONOFF CENTER'S JARSON-KAPLAN THEATRE

THE C. S. LEWIS INSTITUTE OF CINCINNATI and ARTS REVIVAL OF COLLEGE HILL bought

100 premium orchestra tickets for sale at \$60/ticket—a 17% savings over boxoffice prices

RESERVE TICKETS NOW! Email LewisTics@aol.com (Indicate the number of tickets to be reserved, name, email.)

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD AND YOU

BY SHARLYN STARE, SWIM MINISTRY FOUNDER

Included in this issue of the *Bell Tower News* is a special insert "The 2022 Scrapbook for the Swim Ministry." It was created as a gift to say "Thank You" to the many who made the ministry possible. Here is a partial listing:

The board and staff of North Hills Swim Club and Dustin Bishop and the Life Safety personnel of Twin Towers, who provided the perfect pools for our needs.

HEATHER LETHANDER, who developed the ministry's website, online applications and financial support.

THE SWIM MINISTRY PRAYER TEAM who undergirded the ministry with intercessory prayer to God.

ROGER WILLIAMS and his service team who made the mulch fundraiser possible, and to all from the College Hill community and the church who bought mulch and had it delivered and spread.

OUR FOUR BUSINESS MANAGERS who maintain the records for swimmers and teachers. They are our "public face" for swimmers'

family members and guests.

THE PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AND GUARDIANS, who entrust their children to us and do homework with them.

THE MANY DONORS, including some staff, who trust us to use God's money to serve others.

THE ORGANIZATIONS WHO PROVIDE GRANTS so that we can offer free swim lessons to children and teens who otherwise would not learn the skills to keep themselves safe around water:



FINALLY, THE SWIM STAFF, who taught and were changed in the process. Claire Snyder writes:

In early May I felt God leading me to do Swim Ministry. I love to swim, and I teach people how to do their own dialysis in my job – how hard could this be? After the first night of training, I questioned why God had called me do this ministry.

He had things for me to learn this summer: DEPENDENCE on Him to provide when I felt inadequate; SUPPORT of other staff who showed me new ways to work with a child and give me encouragement;

REMINDERS to praying boldly and watch for God's answer. We prayed for the children we would be working with. I prayed specifically for braveness for one of the boys. He had cried and refused to put his head in the water on previous days.

By the end of his lesson, he was putting his head in the water and making great progress. What fun it was to see him succeed. My own faith was strengthened by seeing God answer our prayers!

SESSION UPDATE

BY SHARLYN STARE, Session Elder

DIASPORA COMMUNION AVAILABLE
Session unanimously approved reactivation of Diaspora Communion as of Sunday, October 2, 2022, and reaffirmed Christ's call to "shepherd the flock" in their care. Session committed to serve Communion to the whole church, including those unable to attend worship. Session will actively prepare for and promote this Communion that was discontinued during COVID. Diaspora Communion is typically provided the first Sunday of the month as an extension of the worship services but can be requested anytime.

TO REQUEST COMMUNION OR A VISIT, contact Joanne Cornelius, (513) 300-0325; jcornelius@chpc.org ; or go to chpc.org > "New Here."

Elder Jan Johnson spoke of the importance of reinstating many of the other shepherding ministries with the blessing of the Session.

THANKS TO Heather Lethander, CHPC's Executive Director, for her excellent presentation of the CHPC budget, which Session approved. Heather, Bill Scheid, and Pastor Drew Smith prepared the documents for the Congregational Meeting Oct. 23, 2022. Look for a copy of the Annual Report in the rotating rack in the church atrium. It has exciting ministry information and the

Deadline for Bell Tower News submissions is the 15th of each MONTH to Sam Stare starecvg@aol.com.

PREACHING SERIES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

...advice to the Christians in Rome clarifies God's plans and provisions.

Nov. 20 – The Hard Work of Unity—Ephesians 4. As followers of Christ, we have been unified in Christ. Our unity is secure for eternity through the power of the cross and resurrection. However, God calls us to do the work of building that unity now. We will learn from the church in Ephesus about developing our oneness in Christ.

Nov. 27 – Advent Begins. We prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and seek opportunities to practice "listening well."



To the end that my tongue and my heart and everything glorious within me may sing praise to You, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You for ever.

Psalms 30:12 (Amplified version)

BY CHRISTY ROEDIGER

As we consider giving thanks to God this year, I wonder if we can somehow demonstrate something different as Christians?

Giving thanks when we succeed or our team wins or we get a raise is easy – and perhaps easy for anybody.

It's giving thanks in the midst of a challenge or a disappointment or a season of persecution that perhaps sets a Christian apart.

While I don't think God expects us to exactly give thanks for the tough thing happening to us, I am convinced we are expected to give thanks in the midst of those tough circumstances.

Giving thanks is another way of relinquishing my will to Almighty God and demonstrating that my hope is in God and in God alone.

May we give thanks from the deepest part of our heart's this year and demonstrate to our world that God is worthy of all the thanks that we can offer.

2022 IN REVIEW BEYOND THE PRESCRIPTIONS
Prescriptions were approved by the congregation in October 2019. The prescriptions were for a 3-year period, ending October 2022. This report is structured according to the prescriptions approved in 2019. As we move beyond the prescriptions, here is a snapshot of our successes, and where we will focus our efforts in future years.

THE GREAT COMMISSION
Be intentional about fulfilling the Great Commission and increase the number of people becoming new disciples of Jesus Christ.

COMPLETED STEPS

- Hold services of prayer & repentance
- Offer church-wide Alpha for 8 weeks
- Offer evangelism training to all church attendees
- Enlist all prayer groups to focus on evangelism

CONGREGATIONAL GOALS
Our prescriptions called for the church to track more closely how we were increasing the number of disciples of Jesus Christ. One way we did that was by encouraging the congregation to others to attend CHPC events, CHPC and its community, and to meet in smaller, discipleship groups such as a Growth Group. We asked the congregation to set goals and then to report back in October. We still have room for improvement, both with setting goals and reporting our progress.

GOAL RESULTS

- 177 new people invited to CHPC Events
- 2,620 times people prayed for CHPC
- 1,784 Times people met in growth groups

ALPHA
Alpha is a place to explore the Christian faith with others. It's a series of conversations focused on the questions of life, faith, and meaning. Each session includes a time to connect with others, hear a talk on some element of faith, and then a chance for people to share their own questions and perspectives with the group.

We hosted an Alpha Branch this summer with about 20 participants including leaders. Members of the congregation provided a brunch for the participants each week. This format seemed to work well. Going forward, we plan to offer 2 Alpha experiences each year.

CHPC GROWTH IN 2022
We were excited to have 4 Baptisms (2 adults and 2 children) and welcome 7 new members.

MANY THANKS TO Session's Clerk, Janet Dumford, who organized the luncheon for the congregation and mobilized the volunteer servers.

BE PART OF THE TEAM
Have something you'd like to write about? Have an idea for a future feature? Email starecvg@aol.com.



Gingerbread Shoppe, 3C's Preschool's largest fundraiser of the year, depends on shoppers and diners to attend, the help of many volunteers, and YOU to invite others. Dress up in your Christmas attire. Join the fun!

3C'S PRESCHOOL PRESENTS...

GINGERBREAD SHOPPE & CRAFT FAIR

HELP SUPPORT 3C'S NURSERY & PRESCHOOL

- RAFFLE BASKETS
- BAKE SALE
- LUNCH (11-2)

PIZZA & CHICKEN SALAD
CROISSANTS FOR SALE

- 60 CRAFTERS & VENDORS FOR ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

11/19
10 AM TO 3 PM

LOCATION:
COLLEGE HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5742 HAMILTON AVENUE



CHPC is supporting Christ's Community in College Hill by providing needed items for area Thanksgiving Baskets. We would like to encourage you to donate online towards a turkey, and bring other food items needed for hungry families to CHPC.

Suggested Turkey Donation \$20

Family Thanksgiving Dinner Donation \$50

DONATE ONLINE by going to www.chpc.org/food

IF YOU MAIL IN A CHECK, please make it out to CHPC with DEACONS' FUND in the memo line.

Drop off canned food in the CHPC Atrium on Nov. 6, 13, 20.

3 large cans of yams or sweet potatoes

3 large cans of evaporated milk

. Thank You for Your Support!

Mark Your Calendars

Light Up College Hill

December 8, 2022, from 6 pm to 8 pm

HOSTED BY COLLEGE HILL COMMUNITY URBAN REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

This event will transform the entire business district into a magical winter wonderland for kids of all ages —with the 3rd annual tree lighting in Patrick's Park, a train ride for kids, Santa, live reindeer, activities at various businesses, and much more!

COME JOIN THE NEIGHBORS

SUMMER 2022 SCRAPBOOK

by Sharlyn Stare, Founder & Administrator



*swim lessons with
an eternal difference*

- The summer ministry of College Hill Presbyterian Church has completed its 46th season. American Red Cross learn-to-swim program is one of the largest in the Tri-State (OH, IN, KY).
- 573 swimmers and staff were involved during the 3 weeks of day lesson and 2 weeks of evening lessons for swimmers ages 5 to 68.
- The 89 paid staff ranged in age from 10 year old helpers to 85—*every age equipped and equipping for ministry.*
- Over \$10,000 in swim scholarships was given this past summer, many to “underserved” children and teens.
- The ministry has a budget of \$30,000 fully funded from fees, donations, four major grants and an annual community service fund-raiser, *Mulch Madness.*



The heart of the ministry is the Staff.

Pictured is the Week #3 Staff being zany. The Staff is diverse in age, size and personality. Many are “home grown” having been raised up through the ministry. Their commutes range from Hamilton OH and Burlington KY to Finneytown. What brings them together is a shared vision of *Delivering the Joy of Living Water.* World-wide more than 400,000 people drown each year—11/day in the U.S.A. Children under age 14, African-Americans, Hispanics, and immigrant children are at the highest risk. Swim lessons reduce the risk of children drowning by 88%. The staff knows they are making an eternal difference in the lives of their students and generations to come.

We teach in two wonderful pools:

North Hills Swim Club, a large outdoor pool with a diving area,

and Twin Towers Life-Enriching Community's indoor heated pool.

(Pictured: end of Staff training in the giant hot tub.)



Classes begin with roll call, thanksgiving and Philippians 4:13. Then the pre-work matching swimmers and teachers pays off.

The challenge for the ministry's Leadership Team is to match each student with the best staff person to will help them learn swimming skills and have fun as they do. It's a logistical nightmare, but *trusting* relationships are vital to the learning process, and aid in developing habits that enable both staff and students succeed in swimming and in life.

Each day there are big group experiences (left) and small group ones (below) Novice swimmers have "their own teacher." This allows personalized, instruction within the American Red Cross standards.

Swim students learn more easily from



someone they know and trust. Supervisors lead small groups so teachers and students get to know one another. Safety training, breathing, "humming," land drills and laughter follows.



Listen well!

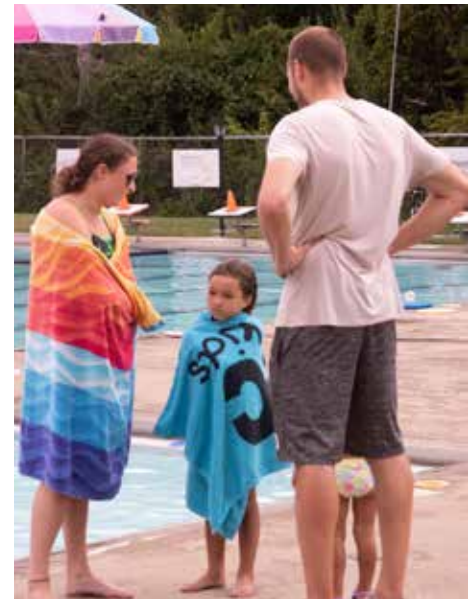
Each teacher, swimmer and family is unique. However the ability to build warm, caring relationships— even with young, non-verbal, fearful children—can be learned. Also, building respectful relationships with “parent partners” can provide valuable clues about how their swimmer learns best.

Our annual Staff Training in June focuses on relationship-building tools and prayer. Supervisors expect and individually evaluate each staff person on how well they



practice *Active Listening* and model being a professional teacher—with swimmers, parents and other staff. These evaluations affect the staff person’s paycheck.

Partnering with parents/ care-givers to do homework each



day builds teacher-swimmer-parent relationships. Homework inspires and equips parents (even non-swimmers) to practice skills beyond class, with other children...and even themselves.

Learning never stops...

To qualify for Staff, a person must be working at ARC Level 4 and be willing to interact with children, teens and adults. Staff are paid to take lessons until they complete ARC Level 6. The Ministry will pay for the staff to take extra training as a Life Guard and a Water Safety Instructor. Experienced teachers learn to mentor, manage, train and coach other staff. Serving swimmers’ needs stirs up everyone’s creative gifts. The daily staff meetings before and after lessons provide a place to share teaching ideas and to pray for one another and the swimmers. The result is a healthy *interdependence* among staff and a spirit of joy that’s infectious.



“Superman’s water entry.”



“Teach the kick on land... then add water.”



“Give ‘em earmuffs” to position the head.



“Safety day—a great time to work on wide-mouth breathing and *humming*.”

Fridays are awards days, times to celebrate.

Our Swim Ministry brochure promises: “We seek to catch students doing something right. We are committed to affirming the swimmers’ personhood and abilities rather than motivating performances by techniques that tend to devalue them in their own eyes and in the eyes of others.” During the weekly awards ceremonies every swimmer receives a “FROG card” to remind them of their skill level and teacher(s). The staff lines up to present American Red Cross and special Swim Ministry awards, and to thank the swimmers and families for their hard work.

What a privilege

to love on swimmers for a week (or more). The staff long remembers the patience, perseverance and answers to prayer they experienced when working with a reluctant 10-year-old or a fearful 5-year-old. Some memories are hard to forget. Others make us smile all winter long.

