



ECHO

Issue 5-11

May-June
2011

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**The Articles for
July August are
due June 26**

You can email them to Eileen Fletcher or put them in the Echo box in the hanging folder mail box.

Email address is on back of this newsletter

May 30th is Memorial Day, Please remember those that have given their lives for us .

Be sure to thank a veteran for serving to preserve our freedom. Pray for those serving all over the world.

Thanksgiving is a day when we pause to give thanks for the things we have.

Memorial Day is a day when we pause to give thanks to the people who fought for the things we have.

June 14th is flag day. Fly our Flag Proudly and Thank God that we are able to so.

From the Pastor's Desk

Martha Grace Reese is the director of Unbinding the Gospel, a project on evangelism aimed at mainline denominations. She writes in her recent book, "Evangelism books (and workshops) presume everyone in church wants to do evangelism, so these books and workshops tell you how to do evangelism. Six years of national, Lilly Endowment funded research in nine mainline denominations have demonstrated conclusively that most Christians would rather get a root canal than think about evangelism. Reese writes that you can tell Christians to "go be missional" until the cows come home. They just won't do it until they *want* to."

Reese explains, "If we answer the WHY share my faith? Questions, we'll start wanting to know HOW can God use me to move people into faith? "Our churches can't share their faith until they're in loving, relational communities where people (1) pray together and (2) talk comfortably with each other about their own faith experiences. Reese states, "Once our churches make this shift, we'll want to know HOW to share our faith."

I couldn't agree more. I have attended countless evangelism and church growth workshops. Most of these workshops give good information on ways of sharing our faith and how to grow our churches. These workshops assume people want to share their faith – they simply don't know how. However, Reese is right. Most Christians would rather have dental surgery than talk about their faith not only with strangers but with one another. It's probably safe to assume most Christian families spend little time talking about their faith experience with one another. It's no wonder that most churches are declining. How can we grow in faith if we don't talk about faith? More to the point, how can we guild people toward God if we don't talk about God?

SO WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

PRAYER: Churches grow in faith when they pray together. Prayer is how we communicate with God. Prayer includes talking to God, being silent and listening for God's still speaking voice and reading the Bible in a way that allows God to speak to us through scripture. When we pray together as a community we become a stronger community. Honest prayer includes confession of sin, an openness to the Holy Spirit, and a reverence for God's word. When we pray as a community we will naturally become more forgiving and more loving toward all of God's children.

TALKING COMFORTABLY ABOUT OUR FAITH: Faith communities that are healthy and vibrant talk openly about God's impact on their lives. In healthy churches people share their joys and sorrows with one other. People listen with non judgmental ears. Healthy churches are safe zones, free from gossip and harsh judgment. A healthy church is where you want to go on the happiest day of your life. It is also the place you want to go on the worst day of your life. At both times you will be loved and accepted. It will be your home.

Once you find a church that prays often and talks openly, you will never need to attend an evangelism workshop again. People will not be able to stop you from shouting from the roof tops about what God has done for you. **LET'S CREATE THAT TYPE OF CHURCH.**

May is Home and Family Month

Unfortunately some individuals do not have a safe, stable, loving home or family. The Center for Family Solutions strives to bring stability and healing to such families. While waiting for counseling and services at the center (located in the former Kroger on Rt 4), clients are offered a snack, bottle of water or maybe a quiet puzzle, book or game. Children range from pre-school through teen.

During May, we will accept items like the ones to the right every Sunday for the Center for Family Solutions. There will be a mission moment on May 1.



Dove House



Dove House is a safe haven for abused women and children in Butler County. After years of abuse and being told they are worthless, many women begin to believe it. Sometimes, though, when you look better in the mirror, you feel better about yourself.

Cosmetics can help the process of rebuilding self esteem. During May, we will also accept donations of new, unopened makeup and hair products for the women at Dove House.



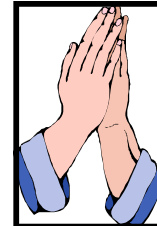
May

- 2 Dorothy Rawlings
- 9 JoAnn Bennett
- 10 Karen Dalton
Harold Betz
Connie Wyatt
- 12 Ruth Vanlieu
Zach Robertson
- 15 LaVada Fletcher
- 22 Melissa Gettler

June

- 4 Don Ortolf
Rodger Hoppe
- 5 Ford Sandlin
- 8 Marion Reed
Dan Hartleb
- 9 Roy Horstemeier
- 12 Mary Gamstetter
- 14 Kathryn Lindner
- 16 Barb Bogan
- 24 Megan Sullivan
- 29 Bob Fletcher
- 30 Virginia Kurtz

May Prayer Circle



Karen Alfrey
 Eloise Andrews
 Vernon Arnold
 Jan Ash
 Ada Mae Begley
 Jack Berling
 Harold Betz
 Gary Booth
 Sherri Brannon
 Payton Cauchran
 Linda Chalk
 Jim Conyers
 Jack DuVall
 Anna Dudley
 Kyle Phelps
 Norma Foster

Nellie Garland
 Fred Gaw
 Rachel Gonde
 Barbara Hammon
 Vicki Howard
 Caroline Kerby
 Alex Kip
 Doug Little
 Jackie McKinney
 Virginia Ramdler
 Michelle Schoonover
 Griffin Shea
 Marsha Smart
 Karen Spencer
 Marie Wurzbach

U.S Armed Forces &
 Their Families

Please leave a message for the prayer circle with Shirley. Include the following information: name of person, illness. Then pass the same message to Carrie so both are informed of the names. Thanks, Shirley M. Lovely, 726-6223 and Carrie Hann, 867-1505

Please check names carefully. If there are any names that need to be removed call Shirley M. Lovely.

Alternative Gift Ideas from Heifer

Don't know what to get your mother for Mother's Day?

Give your Mamma a Llama

What about Father's Day?

Give your father an old Goat (from the kids)

The June graduation gift?

A hive of bees because they'll be busy.

The newlyweds?

The gift of Promise.

You can order online at www.heifer.org or from the Gift Catalog.

SALAD LUNCHEON AND WORKSHOP

Following the worship service on Sunday, May 22nd, we will have a salad luncheon and informational workshop entitled "Before the Need Arises - Planning Your Exit Strategy". Although death is not a surprise, the timing of it may be decisions that need to be made at the time of your passing. Who is notified of your death? What about the disposition of your remains? What kind of funeral service do you want? What about the expenses? What music would you like at your service? Are there any special words of comfort or someone you would especially like to speak at your funeral? You will leave this workshop with a document that you can complete and leave for your family so that they know exactly what your wishes are. Even if you have a prepaid funeral plan, this may help you clarify other issues.

So bring a salad to share and plan to join other First St. John members and friends on Sunday, May 22nd after worship. Feel free to invite family members and friends to join us. See you there!



140 Ross Ave.
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Mission:

To use our individual and congregational gifts,
talents and resources to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ,
and to bring to all His word, His healing, His compassion and
His forgiveness by being a warm accepting and loving faith community.

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Sunday Schedule:

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Ballroom Second Floor
Fellowship Time 11:00-11:30

Church Office: 140 Ross Ave.
Hamilton OH 45013
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Monday-Wednesday-
Thursday

Office closed Tuesday & Friday

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