



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

Perspectives



Lift High the Cross

Perspectives
is a publication of
First Christian
Church (Disciples
of Christ) of
Ashland, Kentucky

Rev. Ike Nicholson
Senior Minister

Rev. Larry Sivis
Associate Minister

Ryan Evans
Office Manager

Wayne McCulley
Custodian

Jacque Parlato
Youth & Young
Adult Ministries

Joyce Kiser
Financial Secretary

Ron Geis
Financial Secretary
Assistant

Rev. Ike Nicholson
Senior Minister


There is a joke that is common among clergy. It starts with a \$20 bill having a conversation with a \$1 bill. The \$20 bill tells the \$1 bill about all the places it has been: restaurants, theaters, Vegas, etc. Finally, the \$20 bill asks the \$1 bill where it has been. The \$1 bill responds, "You know, the same old same old, church, church, church." The purpose of the story is to bring to light what is important in our lives. In our preparations to celebrate Easter, we spend the 40 days prior focusing on prayer and the cross. The New Testament writer, St. Paul, writes in the book of Romans that when we allow God's Spirit to lead us, our focus changes from what glorifies us, to that which glorifies God.

What are you doing with your life? Too often, people assume that the only way we serve God is in "official God jobs" like pastors or missionaries. This issue we feature one of the members of First

Christian Church for whom the Spirit has led to change the lives of pregnant teens in public school. You can serve God wherever you are and in whatever job you are doing. Our culture screams in our ears that the goal of every person should be happiness. Happiness is defined as the accumulation of wealth, clothes, prestige and admirers. This is a lie.

In 1 Timothy 2:3-4, we read, "This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (ESV). Every kind of Christian agrees on the point of our true purpose. In the Roman Catholic Catechism you find the purpose of human life is "to know and love God." The Westminster Confession of the Reformed churches proposes that the chief aim of humanity is to "love God and enjoy Him forever," a quote from St. Augustine who was a bishop living in the fourth century. This is true joy and can be known in any profession and everyone's life. It is universal.

You don't need to change jobs or move to another country. You just need to reorient your mind so that it is consistent with the Spirit's mind. Look at life from God's perspective. Offer a prayer as soon as your feet hit the floor in the morning. "God, show me how to serve you in everything I do this day." Keep saying it throughout the day and be aware that as you go about your duties for your business, you are also attentive to God's business. The Rev. Mychal Judge, a New York City Fire Department Chaplain who died in the collapse of the Twin Towers, offered this prayer every day: "Lord, take me where you want me to go; Let me meet who you want me to meet; Tell me what you want me to say, and keep me out of your way."

As we near the life changing celebration of Easter, may we share God's love and lift high the cross! 



Joan's Perspective

by George Wolford

Reaching out to expectant teens and new mothers – without being judgmental over their condition – is a constant thread through the life of Joan Reed of Bellefonte, who attends First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Ashland.

Reed is a specialized home economics teacher in Lawrence County, Ohio, schools. As an itinerant covering 10 local school districts, she and a colleague have 50 students this year who are either new parents or expecting soon. Six of those students are fathers; the others are girls learning about labor, delivery and parenting.



Graduation is the goal and the class is called GRADS. Nationally, 40 percent of teen mothers achieve diplomas; Lawrence County has a 94 percent graduation rate.

Having two daughters of her own plus 28 years of experience with the class, “you...learn, look at each individual and figure out what she needs. Some of them are upset, their parents upset. Others are happy and got pregnant on purpose. If the baby is to be welcomed in the family, I feel...justified to simply offer them what they need, not judge them.”

Teens have already chosen to keep their babies by the time they get to her, so abortion is not an issue. Because hers is a four-year program with carry overs, some of those babies are four years old by the time their mothers graduate. Some teen-mothers are second-generation. Marriage is not often an element of instruction, and few of the teens choose that option. Neither Kentucky nor West Virginia offers similar classes, although Boyd County and Fairview middle schools will start pregnancy-prevention programs next school year.

Unlike most other states, Ohio does not prescribe home-schooling for mothers-to-be. “They need to be in school until they are 18. We teach them how to calm a crying baby, nutrition for infants and toddlers, breast- and bottle-feeding, discipline. My colleague and I apply for grants and get safety kits to distribute during that phase of class work, thermometers while studying medical issues.”

Classes focus on fetal development, healthy pregnancy, labor and delivery. The program does not stress prevention of pregnancy, but like the teacher, accepts students who need help getting to parenthood. Healthy pregnancy means, in part, avoiding tobacco, alcohol and drugs; only tobacco seems to be an issue for teens and is usually abandoned after pregnancy is discovered. It's Joan's faith that leads her to love people regardless of their situation so that they may have hope for tomorrow.



Opportunities to Worship & Serve: *Holy Week & Easter*

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:45 a.m.
 Children's Church and Nursery provided
Vespers: 6 p.m. Wednesday (mid-week prayer service)

“A Place for You” television ministry
 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Adelphia channel 9,
 Armstrong channel 30

“Not a Sermon, Just a Thought” devotionals:
 B97.1 FM and WKEE 100.5 FM.

For a complete list visit www.fcc-ashland.org

Maundy Thursday Sacrificial Supper
 April 21, 7 p.m.

Good Friday Service - First United Methodist Church (1811 Carter Ave.), April 22, 7 p.m.

Holy Week Services - Daystar TV Studio
 April 18-22, 12-12:30 p.m.
 (Rev. Ike will preach on Friday)

Easter Sunday School Celebration (grades K-5)
 April 24, 9:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday Service
 April 24, 10:45 a.m.