St. Paul's Epistle

Volume 32, Issue 2 February, 2009

St. Paul's United

Methodist Church

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Spirituality

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Dear Friends,

As I watched our new President take the oath of office in January, and listened to his speech on Inauguration Day, I couldn't help but listen with ears for the church. I heard that some things remain the same. I heard that some things must change. I heard that it takes everyone to make a good thing better. I heard that we cannot let those who would try to destroy us win. I heard these points that President Obama made for the country as points that are just as relevant for the church in today's world.

Some things must remain the same in the church. We must continue to rely on God's grace, and on Jesus the Christ as the only one who can bring us salvation. God's grace is all that will allow us to be more than we could become in our own human self-seeking. By God's pouring out grace to cover all of our straying, we are able to continue to represent Christ through the church. And we come to understand, day by day, that Christ is our salvation, not any person, not any program, not any philosophy, not any one theological slant.

Some things must change. While God's love and willingness to offer grace to us never changes, the way we offer God may need to change in this changing world. Our young people aren't like we were in our youth. We didn't have access to the technology they have, and therefore the influences they have in their lives. I would never advocate keeping them from the technology. The world is at their fingertips. However, we need to find ways to connect with them in their context, and help them connect in the name of Christ.

It takes everyone to make a good thing better. Sometimes, when we've put so much energy and time into the church for so many years, we get

(Continued on page 4)



Thought for the Month:

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

- Mother Teresa



February Youth Calendar

February 1 Serious Talk

February 8 Movie

February 15 Mad River

Mountain

February 22 Pastor Todd—

Kenton



Congratulations to **Cody Warris**, a senior, who was chosen as **October's Shining Star** at Elida High School.

The following St. Paul's youth made the **honor roll/dean's list** at their schools:

Torie McAdams—7th grade, Elida Middle School

Aric Thompson—8th grade, Elida Middle School

Reggie McAdams, Kelsey Smith—9th grade, Elida High School **Alex McAdams, Audrey Fox, Michele Theodore, Tahler Sdao**—10th grade, Elida High School

Derek Bible, Jacinda Fletcher, Cory Stewart—11th grade, Elida High School

Cody Warris—12th grade, Elida High School **Cody Smith**—11th grade, Shawnee High School

Megan Bible, Jenni Theodore—Ohio State University **Lindsey Reiff**—University of Findlay

Jenessa Fletcher—University of Northwestern Ohio Aaron Thompson—Washington University at St. Louis

Congratulations to all!
We are proud of our youth!

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's



St. Paul's Epistle

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Editor:	Judy Chaffins
Secretary:	Gail Fessler
Secretary:	Jone Lane
Music Director:	Mary Kaye Pease
Organist:	Linda Holman
Pianist:	Lois Cook
Youth Director:	Ruth Solo
Custodian:	Dave Decker

UPCOMING YOUTH ACTIVITIES:

The youth are looking forward to some exciting times coming up in February and beyond:

Feb. 1 — serious talk night. Come draw a topic from a jar and talk about it from a faith perspective.

Feb. 8 — We'll have a movie night, where the girls watch a 'chic flick' with Pastor Ruth, and the guys watch a guys action movie with Doug Fox.

Feb. 15 – We go to MAD RIVER MOUNTAIN in Bellefontaine, OH. We'll leave at 1:30 for Mad River Mountain Ski Resort. We're looking for people to up our numbers to 15 so that we can get the group rates:

Lift	\$37 adult	\$27 junior (12 and under)
Ski Rental	\$18	\$14
Snowboard	\$25	\$25
Tubes@3 hrs	\$25	\$25

If you'd like to go on a fun day outing with the youth, please sign up outside Pastor Ruth's office. Your money would be due the day of the trip. We'll plan to return to Elida by 6 pm. A stop for dinner might be possible.

Feb. 22 – The youth will go see Pastor Todd at Kenton. Will leave at 2 pm.

Mar. 1 – We'll begin planning and working on Youth Sunday skits to be held March 22.

February 2009						
S	М	Т	W	Т	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 21
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Newsletter deadline: the **20th** of each month



Growing Disciple Makers

910 E. Third St., Ottawa, OH 45875 Telephone: 419.523.9901 / 800.589.7828 Fax: 419.523.3479 Email nwplains@wocumc.org

The Power of Asset-Mapping

led by Luther K. Snow

The Leipsic Lecture Series

The Leipsic Lecture Series is funded by a grant from the Leipsic United Methodist Church and administered by the Northwest Plains District of the West Ohio Conference.

SCHEDULE

Saturday, February 21, 2009 At Leipsic UMC Leipsic, Ohio Saturday, March 14, 2009 At Trinity UMC Van Wert, Ohio

9:00 AM — 2:00 PM

8:30 AM Registration

9:00 AM

Workshop begins in Fellowship Hall

Cost: \$5 per person

(includes coffee break and lunch)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

Leipsic ~ Monday, February 9, 2009 Van Wert ~ Monday, March 2, 2009

Questions??? Call the district office at 1.800.589.7828

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's

St. Paul's Book Club will meet on Saturday, February 7th, at 9:00 AM in the church library to discuss their current book selection, Time Stops for No Mouse by Michael Hoeye.



Ash Wednesday Service at St. Paul's UMC February 25, 2009 7:00 PM

The Ash Wednesday mark upon the forehead "provides an unmistakable opportunity – even obligation – to witness."

> ~ Writer and theologian Lauren Winners

Pssst: Joanna Hurd's coat is still missing. Please check with family and friends to see if they might unknowingly have it.

The **Relay for Life Team** is happy to announce that we are on the way to meeting our 2009 goal of \$2500. Thanks to your support of the Pampered Chef Party and the Gifts in a Bag, we have nearly \$1000 in the bank. Our next fundraiser will be a soup and sandwich luncheon after church on February 22nd. In addition to delicious homemade soups and sandwiches, we will be featuring cherry and chocolate desserts, among others. Come and join us for good fellowship, good food, and a good cause.

The Heart of Church

February 1 Susan Nartker February 8 Jerry & Becky Bean February 15 Brian & Angie Nartker February 22 Ron & Mary Steiner

Nursery Volunteers			
February 1	Volunteer Needed		
February 8	Corinne Piper		
February 15	Slone Nagy		
February 22	Jan Wyant & Molly Fessler		

(Continued from page 1)

tired, and we begin to feel that we've done our part. We feel like it's someone else's turn. But, God calls each of us, to use the gifts we've been given to further the kingdom, preparing for the harvest. Our giftedness may change with age and life circumstance, but we are still gifted in some way. As our gifts are used differently because of life changes, our church may change. It's inevitable.

Finally, we cannot let those who would destroy us win. We have God on our side. There are forces in the world that would make the church irrelevant. There are forces in the church that would try to keep things "the way it used to be." But, to live in the past is to die to the future. To live in the present, in Christ, is to live for God's future.

I just thought I'd share some things that came to me the other day, as I watched the new president, that made me think of what God would want for the church in this new day of change. See you in church.

Peace,
Pastor Ruth Solo

One Sunday morning, a mother went in to wake her son and tell him it was time to get ready for church, to which he replied, "I'm not going."

"Why not?" she asked.

"I'll give you two good reasons" he said "One, they

reasons," he said. "One, they don't like me, and two, I don't like them."

His mother replied, "I'll give you two good reasons why you should go to church. One, you're 54 years old, and two, you're the pastor!"

Children's Worship
(Conducted During the Worship Hour)

(Conducted During the Worship Hour)		
1st Sunday of Each Month	Pastor Ruth—Story	
2nd Sunday of Each Month	Steve Moser—Story Slone Nagy—Children's Church	
3rd Sunday of Each Month	Pastor Ruth—Story Angie & Brian Nartker— Children's Church	
4th Sunday of Each Month	Corinne Piper—Story & Children's church	



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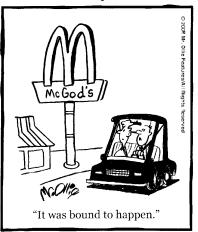
The Business of Church

Thank You to Doug Fox for Years of Service as Youth Director

Doug Fox stepped down as youth director at St. Paul's Church at the end of 2008 to pursue other ways to serve our God. Doug has recently felt a calling to pursue other mission work and will be prayerfully exploring mission fields. He will other still be active on our mission's committee and will assist with the youth program during the transi-Doug has been youth director at St. Paul's Church for over seven years and has touched the lives of many of our youth and their parents. Our high school graduates still maintain contact with Doug, a tribute to his positive influence that he has had shaping our children as they explore their Christian walks. He has seen many of our youth come to walk with our Lord and has counseled them during the difficult teenage years.

We express to Doug our "well done, good and faithful servant" and wish him well as he pursues other ways to serve our Lord.

Book of Timothy



Food Pantry Giving is Incredible

Praise God for all of you that have been donating food to the 5-Loaves Food Pantry. We have been partnering with Allentown and Immanuel United Methodist churches for almost a year now and have made a difference in the lives of over 70 families in our area who are facing economic hardship. In January we collected 26 cans of soup, 14 boxes of cereal, 9 boxes of potatoes, 6 cans of fruit, 4 boxes of macaroni & cheese, 3 boxes of Kleenex, 2 packages of TP, 2 cans of tuna, 2 cans of spaghetti and one each of canned beef, spaghettios, hot chocolate, milk, peanut butter, deodorant, coffee, Lysol. The food bank wishes to thank everyone that has donated to help others make it through these tough times. They also have asked us to double-check expiration dates on food labels to make sure canned and boxed food is no more than 6 months old. May God bless everyone that has donated food or funds.

The Allentown-Elida-Gomer Ministerial Association's Christian Unity Service was held at St. Paul's UMC on January 25th. Rev. Sam Payne of New Creation Lutheran Church had a very inspiring message concerning peace. The choirs of Allentown UMC, Immanuel UMC, and St. Paul's UMC, along with our St. Paul's Praise Team, provided music enjoyed by all. Thanks to our Nurture Committee who served refreshments in the Fellowship Hall following the service. The offering of \$440 will divided equally between the Five Loaves Food Pantry and the AEGMA Emergency Needs Fund.

Committee Chairs	
PPR Chair	Linda Craft
Trustees Chair	Jamie Wyant
Finance Chair	Art Holman
Physical Plant Chair	Ron Steiner
Treasurer	Gene Craft
Education Chair	Steve Moser
Administrative Council Chair	Scott Fessler
Worship Setting	Ruth Solo
Nurture	Martha Vazquez
Stewardship	Bill McKinney
Missions	Maedene Holmes & Marty White

Faith In Action

Worship Attendance:

January 4, 2009 95

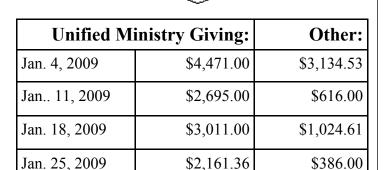
January 11, 2008 85

January 18, 2009 96

January 25, 2008 101

Financial Giving

Weekly Need for Unified Ministry Budget \$3,466.00



What if the cracks around our church windows are letting the Holy Spirit out as they let the wintry cold in?

– Will Braun



Flowers:		
Open		
y Grigg		
lathwig		
Steiner		
1		

Sunday School Attendance			
January 4, 2009	33		
January 11, 2009	45		
January 18, 2009	37		
January 25, 2009	38		

Visit The United Methodist Website at: www.umw.org

Consulting the Manual



The 40 days of Lent

Bible Readings for November

Revised Common Lectionary Year B

Week of February 1

Color: Green
Old Testament:
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
New Testament:
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

Week of February 8

Color: Green
Old Testament:
Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
New Testament:
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39





Week of February 15

Color: Green
Old Testament:
2 Kings 5:1-14
Psalm 30
New Testament:
1 Corinthians 9:24-27
Mark 1:40-45

Week of February 22

Transfiguration Sunday

Color: White Old Testament:
2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
New Testament:
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

For more detailed information on the Revised Common Lectionary, please visit: www.gbod.org

Ohio Benefit Bank

Ohio Benefit Bank Site at St Paul's

As part of its mission to see that those in need have access to available assistance, St Paul's has become a site for the Ohio Benefit Bank. The Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB) is a web-based computer program to connect low and moderate-income Ohioans with access to work supports such as tax credits and public benefits. The OBB is offered through a public-private partnership between the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks and more than 400 faith-based, non-profit, governmental and private-sector partners. Since beginning operations, the Benefit Bank has helped more than 35,000 Ohioans claim more than \$50.6 million in tax credits and other work supports --\$11 million in 2008 alone. However, more than \$1.6 billion in tax credits and other supports go unclaimed by eligible Ohioans who do not apply.

Shara Bowsher will be the administrator of St Paul's OBB site and has been trained as both a Benefits and Tax counselor. A session will take approximately 30 minutes and can be arranged by calling the church office at 419-339-3801. This service is confidential and free (including electronic filing of taxes).

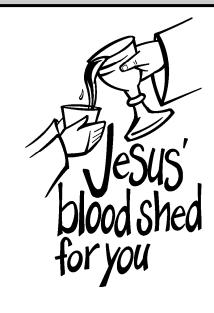


Table Grace

First the seed and then the grain: thank you, God, for sun and rain.

First the flour and then the bread: thank you, God, that we are fed.

Thank you, God, for all your care; help us, God, to share and share.

Amen.

Know Your Hymns

Dentist's Hymn
Meteorologist's Hymn
Contractor's Hymn
The Tailor's Hymn
The Golfer's Hymn
The Politician's Hymn
Optometrist's Hymn
Tax Payer's Hymn
The Gossip's Hymn
Electrician's Hymn
Shopper's Hymn
Realtor's Hymn
Massage Therapist's Hymn

Crown Him with Many Crowns
There Shall Be Showers of Blessings
The Church's One Foundation

Holy, Holy, Holy

There Is a Green Hill Far Away

Standing on the Promises

Open My Eyes That I Might See

I Surrender All Pass It On

Send the Light

Sweet Bye and Bye I've Got a Mansion

He Touched Me

The Great Physician



Doctor's Hymn

ReFocus

ReFocus Team Needed:

Pastor Ruth will be inviting people in the next few weeks to become part of the ReFocus Team. The commitment to be on the team varies depending on the roles you take. Some will be asked to become table facilitators for the Focused Living Retreat.

The Focused Living Retreat (FLR) is the first step toward refocusing your life and commitments. In the FLR, participants create a personal time line about their lives, look at the difficult times throughout life and find where God has been most active. They also define their personal core values, create a Personal Mission Statement, and develop a Personal Calling Statement. Buy the end of the FLR, participants will have a better understanding of who they are as children of God, and what God's calling for their lives may be.

The goal is to offer the Focused Living Retreat to everyone in the congregation who would like to participate. The table facilitators help with the table discussion and clarify terms and assignments for the participants at the tables. The ReFocus Team will be guided through the FLR by me, your pastor.

The other participants on the ReFocus Team will be doing some behind the scenes work to develop and gather statistics on our community and our current ministries. This information will be used to help the whole Team lead the congregation through three Summits where the congregation will take the Focused Ministry Retreat to develop the congregation's Ministry Calling Statement and strategic plan for ministry.

The ReFocus Team will be busy. My goal is to get six table leaders trained so that the work with the congregation can be divided. I would also like to get another four to six other members of the ReFocus Team to be about the work in preparation for the summit and Focused Ministry Retreats.

If you think you'd like to know more, or would like to participate in ReFocus, let Pastor Ruth know. There's a place for everyone to participate in ReFocus.









Sharing...

St. Valentine's Day (February 14)

Most of us know St. Valentine's Day as a time to send cards – and perhaps chocolate or flowers – to people we love. We often say things like "be my Valentine" and yet the original Valentine would probably be quite surprised to learn of the way in which we celebrate this day.

No one knows for sure just who St. Valentine really was. Early church histories list several different people by this name. One was a priest in Rome, and another was a bishop.

The most commonly accepted story, however, concerns a Christian from North Africa. Put in prison for his faith in Jesus Christ, Valentine was sentenced to die. While in jail he cured the jailer's daughter of blindness. On the day Valentine was to die, he sent a note to the young girl and signed it "from your Valentine" and from there the custom grew.

Yet another story relates to a Roman priest who was remembered for secretly marrying Christian couples at a time when Christian marriages were not supposed to be conducted in Rome. This may be where the connection between the saint's day and romantic love comes from.

Either way, when you celebrate St. Valentine's Day, why not think of these saints who courageously lived their faith, and do a few random acts of kindness as well as sending cards and gifts?

Here are some Bible passages related to love. Read them together during the week of Valentine's Day.

Deuteronomy 6:5

Psalm 18:1

John 3:16

Romans 8:28



Look at everything as though you were seeing it either for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory.

– Betty Smith, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

The children of our Sunday School began collecting money for the Heifer Project. Soon all the Sunday School classes and other church members were involved. Their goal was recently met: \$1,000 for two heifers. The following thank you was received:

Dear St. Paul's Church,

Thank you very much for your gift to Heifer International. Your gift will benefit those suffering with extreme poverty, not only now, but for years to come, as the families we serve pass on the gifts they receive. We appreciate your generosity and support.

Heifer International

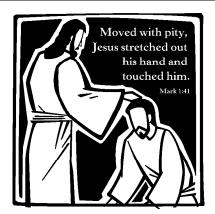
Are We "For God" or "With God"?

Are we "for God" or "with God"? That was the theme of the men's retreat that I attended on a Friday and Saturday in late January at the Marmon Valley ranch near Bellefontaine. The retreat was an awesome experience. It was organized by the men at The Church at Allentown but men from seven different churches attended.

There was praise and worship music with the Allentown Band, small group sessions. communion fellowship during the meals. The food was fantastic! The group of 36 men bonded during our small discussions and worship group services. We all were given a chance to "break the chains" of whatever it is that keeps us in bondage to sin and keeps us

Connecting With ...

separated from God. Only by breaking the bonds of sin can we be "with God" and follow his plan for our lives. It was truly an incredible experience. I hope other men from St. Paul's Church will attend this retreat next year.



Praise God!

The Journey class would like to thank the people of St. Paul's for the generous support we received for our New Year's Eve party. Your donations of refreshments were greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank those who came to the party as well. We had a great night of fun fellowship. If you were unable to attend, don't worry - We are planning a family fellowship night similar to the New Year's Eve party. Details will be forthcoming as our plans progress. Thanks again for all your support!

Dear St. Paul's,

Thank you so much for the gift card to Lock Sixteen. We'll enjoy a good steak when we need a break later in the winter.

Rlessings for the New Year

Blessings for the New Year, Pastor Ruth and Rich

For those who like to surpass the speed limit:

45 mph/70 km/h	God Will Take Care of You
65 mph/110 km/h	Nearer My God to Thee
85 mph/135 km/h	This World Is Not My Home
95 mph/ 150 km/h	Lord, I'm Coming Home
100 mph/160 km/h	Precious Memories

Recovering from Surger or in the Hospital

Adrianna Ellinger
Becky Ellinger
Dorothy Foster
Cindy Guess
Slone Nagy

Homebound Members

Rebekah Baxter Hazel Dunn Ruth Hurley Marie Lee Edna Osman Jean Redd Gladys Sherrick Ray & Helen Waldron

Those in Need of Healing, Support, Strength & Encouragement

Molly Fessler
Sara House
June Metzger
Rick Scholfield

Those in the Military

Jason Stanley

Visit The United Methodist Communications website : www.umcom.org

This website offers book reviews, music reviews, and web ministry information among other relevant and interesting links.

The People of St. Paul's

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for the flowers, the funeral home visitations, thoughts, and prayers of our St. Paul's Church family for the passing of my dad.

Thank you,

Dan and Margie Best

Where does one start in thanking church friends for all of the prayers, cards, and visits to me while I have been ill?

Many thanks to Pastor Ruth for her visitations and to Jerry Crates for snow blowing my walks and driveway.

Love to all, Wilbur Hurd

These past three months since my accident have been the most challenging of my life. Thank God for my church family who prayed for me daily, sent cards and good wishes, made goodies such as cookies and soup, shoveled walks, or just called to cheer me up. These acts of kindness sustained me through the worst times and continue to "keep me moving forward" toward a complete recovery. Christ's love is visible through you, and for that I thank God. Art Holman



Thank You, for the prayers and expressions of concern.
They are very much appreciated.
Rudy Segovia

Dear St. Paul's Congregation,

Thank you for the prayers, beautiful pot of mums, Pastor Ruth's visit, and cards after my recent surgery. Please keep praying for my upcoming surgery. God Bless All of You, Cynthia Guess



Prayer List Updates
Please Contact
Lavonne Segovia

February 2009 Meetings

No **PPR** meeting in Feb.

February 3, 2009 Trustees...7:00 PM

February 9, 2009 Finance...7:00 PM

Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sun

No **Ad Council** in Feb.

February 17, 2009 Missions...7:00 PM

February 24, 2009

Christian Ed7:00 PM							
Sundays Prayer9:00 AM	1	2 Megan Bible	3 Braylon Kimmet	4 Cyndi Smith	5 Don Irvin	6	7
Thursdays Chancel Choir7:30 PM		Barb Schade					
February 7, 2009 St. Paul's Book Club 9:00 AM			Trustees		Chancel Choir		Book Club
February 25, 2009 Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 PM	8	9	10	11	12 Ken Strayer	13 Gary Broshes	14

Anniversaries

Larry & Shirley Moser February 28

		Finance			Chancel Choir	
Jerry & Becky Bean February 14 50 Yrs.	15 Bill Weaver	16	17 Doug Fox Gladys	18	19	20 Fran Hall Ron Steiner
Gary & Janet Grigg February 18 43 yrs.			Sherrick			
Jim & Phyllis Hines			Missions		Chancel Choir	
February 23 52 yrs.	22 Andrew Piper	23	24	25 John Foster	26	27
Gene & Linda Craft February 25 42 yrs.						

Christian Ed

Ash

Wednesday

Chancel Choir

21 Jason Holmes

Tori Holmes

Eleanor Klingler

Mary Kaye Pease

28 Makayla Adkins

Kate Stengel

Sat

Featured Recipes from St. Paul's Cookbook

Egg Casserole by Ruthe Shaw **Ingredients Instructions** Gently fold ingredients together. eggs, beaten whole milk 3 cups Pour into buttered 9x13 inch pan. 1 1/2 tsp. dry mustard Set overnight. 6 slices bread, cubed and buttered Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes. 3/4 lb. shredded cheddar ham bits 2 cups May substitute sausage and onions, etc.



Spiced Nuts



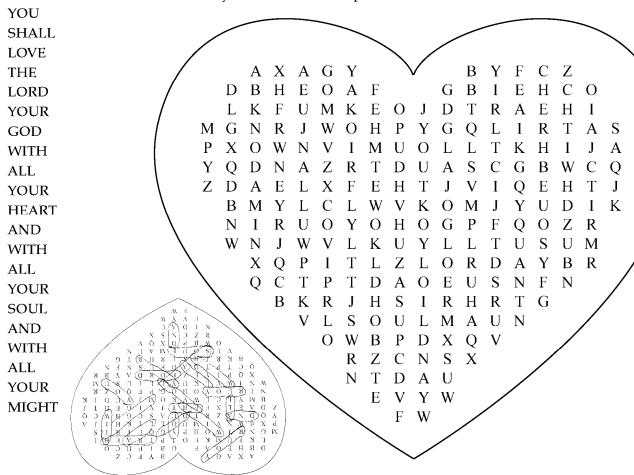
		by Jan Wyant
Ingredie	ents	Instructions
2 sticks	margarine	Melt margarine in large skillet. Add nuts.
4 cups	pecans or other favorite nut	Cook on low temperature for 20 minutes.
3 cups	powdered sugar	Sift manufacted august with anima. Damaya muta from heat and
2 Tbl.	cinnamon	Sift powdered sugar with spices. Remove nuts from heat and drain on paper towel.
2 Tbl.	ground cloves	Add nuts to sugar mixture while warm. Coat well.
2 Tbl.	nutmeg	Add hats to sugar mixture with warm. Coat well.
	L	Remove nuts from container and spread on paper towel to cool.



KIDZ KORNER

Word Find

Find the words from Deuteronomy 6:5 in the heart shape.



Unscramble

Read Matthew 22:39 and unscramble this commandment.

UYO	A S L H L	— O E V L
O R U Y	— — <u>Е</u> Б В R О Н	I N
S A	SYEOLUFR	

Answer: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:39

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

105 E. Main St. Elida, OH 45807



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February 2009



Living Our Faith

Ashes to Ashes

In the Hebrew Scriptures we read stories of people putting on sackcloth and sitting in ashes as a symbolic act of repentance. This was one of the major ways of saying "I'm sorry" to God, and indicating a desire to turn one's life around. While we may not do this particular practice today, a glimpse of it occurs with the beginning of Lent, and the observance of Ash Wednesday (February 25, 2009).

The season of Lent is often a time of renewing our spirits, of

trying to get a little closer to God. An excellent way to begin that process is by acknowledging what we have done that distances us from God and making a commitment to change. That is the gift of this Lenten season, and one of the symbols of Ash Wednesday: a reminder that we can start again, a reminder that no matter where we have journeyed, we can always turn and re-focus our attention on God's way.



