



# Tidings

January 2023

## COMING EVENTS

Sunday, Jan. 1—Online worship only

Saturday, Jan. 7—Men's Square @ 9 AM

Sunday, Jan. 15—Youth lunch, movie, & fun

Thursday, Jan. 19—Tidings deadline





## GREET THE DAY

As the year winds its way to a close and a new year readies itself to begin, we who have lived through these last three hundred and sixty-some days are prone to reflection. We think most of the missed chances and mistakes, at least I know I do. I compile my list of resolutions and goals for the coming year by looking back at the wreckage of the previous year's aspirations. As an example, I was going to read the entirety of *Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* last year. Three pages were read. I was going to learn a new language in 2022. I am no closer to speaking Danish, Swedish, Ukrainian, or Haitian Creole than I was the day I was born. I was going to lose 50 pounds and run a 5k with Megan. Those didn't happen either. Good Presbyterian Midwesterner that I am, I find myself pursued endlessly by the shame of that which I did not do. My successes I brush off and forget with ease, but sometimes my failures chase me and haunt me for days, weeks, months and even years.

*"Abba Arsenius began to prepare for the glory of Sunday on Saturday evenings. He turned his back to the sun and stretched his hands toward heaven in prayer. He continued this posture all night until the light of the rising sun struck his face. Then he sat down."*

In this story of an ancient Christian mystic greeting the Lord's day, I see an opportunity for myself, and all people of faith, to live a life of less shame and more grace. Most especially as we seek to change our individual and communal lives. The sun that set behind Arsenius

was not the same sun that warmed his face in the morning. The light that had illumined him the previous day was gone and yet, regardless of his successes or failures, the sun returned with fresh rays of warmth and light for him the following morning. To me, this is a beautiful description of the grace of God made new every morning.

As I think of this beautiful story of a man immersed in God's goodness, I think of my resolutions from last year and the years before. Each resolution focused on an entire year and all that it contained. With thinking like this, the sum at the end of 365 days (good, bad and ugly) would define my success or my failure. But what if... what if my focus, our focus together, is to greet each day as Arsenius greeted each Sunday? That is a battle that is easier to win, a failure easier to forget, and a journey easier to manage over the long haul. Even more incredible is the grace of allowing each day (good, bad and ugly) to dissolve into history as the sunlight switches to night and the morning brings fresh grace with it.

Perhaps this is what Jesus intended for us as he commanded us to ask God to "Give us this day our daily bread." So often we become fixated on our grand plans and massive undertakings that we forget that none of the greatest achievements in history happened any faster than one day, one hour, one minute, and one moment at a time. That one bad day is simply that... one bad day. God will give us that daily bread each day regardless of how we choose to

use the bread that came the day before.

My resolution for this coming year is simple. I will greet each day as the gift of God that it is, while allowing the losses of the previous day to set with the sun on the horizon, never to be seen again. My resolution this year is to receive with gratitude God's daily bread each morning and let my failures sink into the dusk along with the sun each night. Whatever this last year has meant for you, let it sink away with the sun on December 31 and wake up ready to receive God's grace anew on January 1 and every day thereafter. May God give us this day our daily bread...

-Pastor Blake



# C-PSAN

## Clerk's Parma-South Action News

Quarterly coverage of your Session at work

Here is your 2022 fourth quarter Session news recap. I'm Audrey, your Clerk of Session.

October's Session meeting brought reports filled with lots of positive plans. Weekly coffee hours were scheduled to return. Mission's *Care and Share Store* was ready. The balcony was to be slightly remodeled & devoted to recording media. Holiday worship services were planned and gluten-free communion elements were voted in as the new standard. *Trunk or Treat* had over 50 participants registered already. Children's activities for November and December were in the works. Rev. Debra Cerra returned as Parish Associate. The church directory was at the printer. Headphones and covers were on order for the Sanctuary. A full slate of officers was presented for 2023. Church surveys for assessing Parma-South's strengths, weaknesses, and expectations had been mailed.

In November, the Mission Study Team shared that the congregational assessment (the current step in the process toward seeking a new permanent pastor) was well underway. About two-thirds of surveys were returned. One town hall event took place and a second was scheduled. A position for nursery caregiver was posted. Acoustic panels for the Sanctuary were approved and additional media options will be discussed in the Spring.

A December meeting was held to discuss and approve the 2023 budget. The budget was approved with one amendment. The daycare lease of our building will reach the end of the grace period on 12/31. An eviction will be filed in January, but given the daycare has purchased another facility, a smooth separation is expected. A candidate for nursery care has been selected and will be on-boarded. Convergence Network provided a report from the completed congregational survey, which Elders will read & discuss in January. While breaking bread together at the meeting, and with joy in the season, Session concluded with hope and optimism in Parma-South's future.

Every Session meeting is, of course, begun and closed in prayer. We pray for the joys and challenges of our entire congregation. Please pray for your Session members, and their governance of your church. Tune in again next quarter for more Session news.

\* \* \* \* \*



\* There will be **NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP** on New Year's Day. The service will be available to watch online, provided by Pastor Blake and Pastor Debbie. Go to [www.parma-south.org](http://www.parma-south.org) and click WORSHIP.

\* The Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Happy New Year! Looking for something new to do in the New Year? Please consider meeting some of our youngest members by volunteering in our Nursery or Sunday School classroom once a month or whatever fits your schedule. This is a great opportunity getting to know our very special members! If you have any questions, please call Lisa Profio at 440-773-2993. Wishing you all peace and much love in the New Year !



## lunch, fun, & a movie

Calling all youth and anyone else that wants to join us!! Join us January 15th after church in the gym for an indoor snowball fight, lunch, and a movie! Wear your pajamas and be ready for some fun! All are welcome!!



## MEN'S SQUARE

The next meeting of Men's Square will be Saturday, January 7, at 9:00 AM. We plan to gather as usual for breakfast at Pappou's Restaurant located on the corner of Snow and Pearl Road. At this meeting, we will discuss our plans for the coming year. After the discussion, we will head over to the Church for our group activity. Anyone needing more information, please contact Ed Walker. Hope to see you there.

## CARING CORNER



The Care Team has varied missions under its umbrella. One is providing for a medical alert call button used in emergency situations to call 911. Caring Team funds are available for the monthly payments if needed by the congregant. Call the church office or a Care Team member for more information.



# (440)885-2652

## CALL TODAY!

# HELP WANTED

A current or past elder to serve as commissioner to Presbytery.

### TIME COMMITMENT

Attend six (6) meetings per year in person or by zoom

### RESPONSIBILITY

Vote on behalf of Parma-South's congregation on matters addressed by Presbytery

### COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Report (drop an email post-meeting) to session about what occurred at the Presbytery meeting

CALL # ABOVE OR SEND AN EMAIL ON OUR WEBSITE: [www.parma-south.org](http://www.parma-south.org)

## NO FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

but get a glimpse of the church's big picture! (seriously, tho... a steady liason between Parma-South & Presbytery of the Western Reserve helps PSPC stay current and have a voice)



## KIDS AT CHRISTMAS

We were not be able to participate in our annual Kids at Christmas party at Buhrer Dual Language Academy this year, due to Covid-19 issues. Instead, based on children's needs of uniforms, underwear, socks, toothpaste and toothbrushes, our Mission Committee donated \$1200 for needed items, and we also collected toothbrushes and toothpaste for the children.

*A THANK YOU from Buhrer's Dean of Student Engagement:  
We were able to buy very cute things for our kindergarten students. We placed the needed items in boxes. Students received the gifts at a party on December 14th, and we ordered pizza, cookies and juices as well!*



## OFFICE NOTES

- Please call the office to request that you receive your monthly Tidings newsletter via email. We would love to accommodate you!
- Please let Sara Ekkens in the office know when your meetings are scheduled so that they can be entered onto the church calendar. Equally important is letting us know when you cancel or reschedule meetings.
- Please call the church office to confirm that you and your family have an emergency contact card on file.

## MITTEN TREE



Thank you to everyone who donated items to our Mitten Tree – it was FULL! These items were donated to the Parma Heights Food Pantry. Thank you for your continued generosity and support!



Contribution envelopes are available for pickup in the Narthex until the middle of January. Those not finding a box for themselves and desiring one, please call the church office at (440) 885-2652.



Articles for our monthly Tidings newsletter are due the day after the regularly scheduled monthly Session meeting. Therefore, note that articles for the February Tidings will be due **no later than Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**.



# Tidings

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Visit our website: [www.parma-south.org](http://www.parma-south.org)

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## MEMORIAL CARILLON

Carillon music during January will be played in loving memory of:

### January 1

Marilyn Weiss  
Phyllis Goode  
Hedra Harrison

### January 8

Martin Bowman

### January 15

Wilbur P. Henninger

### January 22

Jack E. McGuff



- 01/01 Richard Salisbury
- 01/02 Ruth Fay
- 01/05 Sandy Kardamis
- 01/05 Ralph Moody
- 01/07 Shirley Arnold
- 01/08 Dr. David Topor
- 01/13 Joanne Coleman
- 01/13 Godlove Mbah
- 01/15 Judith Cardillo
- 01/17 Thomas Kidd
- 01/18 Shirley LeViseur
- 01/20 Tyler Stapf
- 01/23 Robert Abbott
- 01/26 Lori Kowel
- 01/29 Mary Sue Murphy
- 01/31 Cynthia Cubbison