

A Letter from our Director of Children's Ministry:

We began examining our Children and Youth Ministry program two years ago (before the pandemic), engaging as many of you as we could in a process of identifying our current strengths and future opportunities, as we determine how to best minister to all of our children. One of the things that quickly became apparent was that while we had dozens of young children actively involved in our ministries, by the time we got to youth-age, we had suffered an attrition that left barely one dozen active on a regular basis. Something was happening in the middle years that we felt could be the beginning of this drop-off.

Previously, we'd created our 4th-6th grade U2 program - a shortened name drawn from the idea that "God loves YOU TOO!" This was meant to serve as a transitional program for students who were too old to feel comfortable with the "little kids" in the children's ministry, but too young to be a part of the activities and curriculum taking place in the youth ministry. U2 was an occasional, fun and fellowship gathering that was a shared secondary responsibility of both the Director of Children and Director of Youth Ministry, who both had other priorities in their roles. While all agreed that this transitional program was important, it could never be a primary focus for either of those who were responsible for it. Might this be where we were beginning to see a drop off in engagement? And if so, what could we do to turn that around?

When Hannah Tonn joined us in the role of Youth Director, we began envisioning more purposefully what a dedicated U2 Ministry might look like. The "old" U2 program was for fun and fellowship only; there was no intentional emphasis on faith development, Christian education, or mission and service - things that children both younger and older were receiving consistently. As Hannah was working to settle into her new role, she also began to outline a specific plan for a U2 Ministry. A small task force made up of staff, teachers, and parents then joined together to flesh out these goals.

In This Issue:

A Letter from Cindy Hughes	Page 01
A Letter from the Pastor	Page 03
Children's Ministry News	Page 04
Staff Contact Information	Page 09

Today, we are excited to be inviting you to help kick-off this new U2 Ministry! One of the things we think held U2 back in the past was that it was nobody's primary responsibility. To that end, Hannah—who has great passion for both the love of Christ and the love of our children—has agreed to lead this new ministry, under the oversight of our Director of Children's Ministry, Cindy Hughes. With Hannah's energy, enthusiasm, and education, combined with Cindy's experience in teaching and with our church and children's programming in general, we think we have the opportunity to engage these 4th-6th graders in meaningful ways.

Going forward, U2 will include some familiar aspects, and some new opportunities! Several parents have shared their concerns that the full worship service, with the accompanying sermon and topics, is too much for this age group. To address this, U2 will begin meeting for Faith Development/Christian Education on Sunday mornings during the 11am worship service. When the little kids are released to Rainbows and Dewdrops, U2 kids are also invited to participate in their own education time, using the age-appropriate component of the same curriculum we're successfully using with the younger children. As is the case with Rainbows and Dewdrops, it's completely up to the family as to whether a U2 kid leaves or remains in worship - whatever you feel is best for your child. These Sunday curriculum changes will begin on January 9th.

Additionally, the first Sunday of each month will now be designated "Family Worship" at 11am, with all children remaining in the Sanctuary for the entire service to take part in the traditional liturgy and hymns, and to receive Communion. Including this practice will allow all our children to more fully participate in our congregation, and learn from a younger age what it means to worship in community.

Thursday evenings will also include discipleship and fellowship activities for the U2 kids, regularly scheduled every week to take place at the same time that M&Ms is going on for the little children. With plans for youth programming going on at the same time, it is our hope to make Thursday nights a "one-stop" for entire families! The full schedule of Thursday night activities can be found on page 5 of this newsletter, and is planned to begin on January 13th.



You may have noted that by moving Hannah into this dedicated U2 role, we have left our Youth Program uncovered. First, I would remind you that our two dedicated youth volunteers, Larry Anderson and John Cole, have been present throughout and will continue providing consistency with our Youth Ministry. We are also happy to announce the hiring of Ms. Alyssa Hodge as our new Director of Youth Ministry! Alyssa comes to us from Cleveland, and before that Elyria, where she has experience with children, youth, and family ministry at Good Shepherd United Methodist and Elyria First United Methodist Churches. Alyssa, a mom herself, is a student at Methodist Theological School in Ohio in Delaware, where she is working towards her MDiv. (Masters of Divinity) Degree, possibly with a specialization in Youth and Family Ministry. A team made up of SPRC members, our Youth Volunteers, staff, and youth parents interviewed Alyssa last week and were unanimous in their recommendation that we hire Alyssa to lead our youth. She is a warm, caring, dedicated and thoughtful servant of God whom I am sure you will all embrace. Alyssa will start with us on January 1, 2022. Ministry to our young people, from the Nursery all the way to college-aged young adults is the most vital and everlasting ministry we do as a church. Everything we do at those ages will impact the future, not only of our congregation, but of the church at large. Especially after two years of pandemic-prolonged adjustments and delays, we are excited about the new direction we are finally able to go with this ministry. We invite you to join us in celebrating and supporting our entire ministry team, our volunteers, and most of all, our young people, as we strive to help them learn to Love God, Grow in Christ, and Live to Serve!

In Christ's Service

Rev. Jay Anderson
Senior Pastor

Lucy Kelly
Associate Pastor

Cindy Hughes
Director, Children's Ministry

Hannah Tonn
Coordinator U2 Ministry

A Letter from the Pastor:

by Pastor Jay Anderson

Sitting to write this newsletter article has given me a “Groundhogs Day” moment. No, I didn’t stick my head out the window and see my shadow, I’m talking about the Bill Murray movie of that name where he is a weatherman sent to cover the famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, and gets stuck in a time loop of reliving the same day over and over again. As I sat to write I re-read my January newsletter article from last year and, honestly, I could have just copied and pasted it here and it would have been just as applicable and not outdated at all.

A year ago I talked about the changes that the pandemic had brought to how we were doing things, about how live-stream worship was so important to how we reached out to everyone, and how we would eventually come through this pandemic but that we would never be able to go back to the way things were before because the world would be a different place. All of that is still true, so in that sense, nothing has changed. Yet at the same time, everything has changed. We are not the same people we were on January 1, 2021, we’re not the same church either. As John Wesley said, we are moving on toward perfection but we’re not there yet. With God’s help, however, we can get there!

Some of the things that are new and different are outlined in other places in this newsletter. Cindy Hughes’ article about the new and exciting changes to our U2 ministry for our 4th-6th graders is a big part of that and we are excited about how that transition will benefit that group of kids. I am so thankful for Hannah Tonn’s work in helping to make this transition possible and for her willingness to take on that ministry. With that change comes the addition of a new staff member, Alyssa Hodge, as our new Youth Director. You’ll get to know her better soon, but she is a student at MTSO in Delaware working towards her MDiv. degree and has experience at two different UMC churches in Youth and Family Ministry. So please welcome Alyssa when you get the chance to meet her. It is our hope and expectation that these transitions will help us to strengthen your youth and children’s ministry from top to bottom, and that along with our campus ministry led by Associate Pastor Lucy Kelly, we will continue to grow our ministry for young people into young adulthood.

Some things have been more challenging for us this year. I know we announced in December that we had hired a new Office Administrator, but I have to tell you we’re back to square one on that. (Lesson learned: don’t announce a hire until they actually show up for the first day of work!)

We have had other staff turnover this past year with Bev Pancoast’s leaving Youth Ministry, April Smith’s retirement from Facilities Management, and Amber Fullah leaving for full-time work with benefits, but that is in keeping with the trends in churches as well as in the private sector nationwide - people are looking for different things, people are stepping out of the work force, and the church is not exempt from that. Our SPRC is looking into how we might be able to address that in the new year, but your expressions of appreciation to our staff for their hard work and your generous love offering during the holidays goes a long way in helping them to know how much their efforts are appreciated as well.

And then as Lucy reported elsewhere in this newsletter, your generous support for the RIP Medical Debt Campaign, what we named *Project Jubilee*, was simply overwhelming. When Emily Knoth first approached us with this idea I thought it a good one, but honestly thought the goal of \$10,000 was ambitious for a year when the economy was mediocre at best, and when the pandemic was still touching all of us so directly. And when after the first week we reported only a couple of hundred dollars in donations I was adjusting my expectations downward, thinking we’ll do well to hit \$3,000-\$4,000 this year. Little did I suspect that you would come on strong at the end and blow right through that \$10,000 goal even before we got to the last week of the campaign. As of the last Sunday in December we were at over \$11,000 with gifts still coming in. As I have to write this article before the campaign ends, I can’t share a final number with you, but I can certainly report that you have once again amazed and humbled me with your generosity in supporting this outreach campaign on top of having just supported our 2022 stewardship campaign and everything else you have done all year.

So what does 2022 hold for us? Who knows! But I can tell you this much, even as I am officially getting out of the “prediction business” until this pandemic is truly behind us, I have faith that whatever we set our minds to as a church, as the body of Christ in this place at this time, we can do. All things are possible with Jesus Christ - we can do all things with God. Knowing that, and knowing you, I am confident that 2022 will be a good year for Church of the Master.

God Bless, and Happy New Year!

Pastor Jay

Children's Ministry Newsletter—January 2022

by Cindy Hughes



Important update for Sundays: Rainbows, Dewdrops, and now U2!

Families are encouraged to worship together during the 9:00 a.m. service - we have activity bags to help your children stay engaged. Our Sunday morning children's church programs are offered during the 11:00 service, during which we also offer Nursery care.

About 10-15 minutes into the Worship service, children of any age are invited forward to participate with the Children's Message, then following this, 3-year-olds through 6th graders are invited to meet their teachers in the Gathering Space to transition to their classrooms (see below). Or, families may choose to have children remain in Worship – children's sounds, energy, and emotions are welcome as part of God's joyful noise!

Beginning on February 6th, the first Sunday of each month will be "Family Worship," with all children remaining in the Sanctuary to participate with the traditional liturgy and hymns, and to receive Communion. (Nursery care will still be offered as an option during "Family Worship.")

Class	Ages/Grades	Bible Literacy Content
Dewdrops	3 years* - Kindergarten	Children are introduced to the Bible, by being read to from a "storybook Bible" format, following the 3-year lectionary cycle.
Rainbows	Grades 1-3	Children deepen their understanding of Biblical persons and content by repeating the 3-year lectionary, this time reading a "storybook Bible" for themselves, and occasionally a "children's translation" Bible with teacher guidance.
U2 – beginning Sunday, 1/9!	Grades 4-6	Children begin to explore a more mature understanding of the 3-year lectionary content, by regularly engaging with a standard Bible (simplified translation), and with additional historical and social context.

**3-year-olds attending Dewdrops must be potty-trained, as we do not have diapering facilities in this classroom.*

During this transitional year, we want to give flexibility to parents to make the best choice for their child regarding class placement. If your 3-year-old is more comfortable going to the Nursery instead of Dewdrops, if your 4th grader is better served by attending Rainbows, or if your 6th grader is ready to "graduate" from U2 and remain always in Worship, etc., we want to support you in these accommodations. Please chat with our Educational Ministry Team!

Thursdays are for M&Ms (Music and the Master)

Returning 1/13/22!

It has been such a blessing to be meeting in-person for M&Ms! Even though children 5-11 now have the opportunity to be vaccinated, Covid cases continue to climb; therefore, we are still *not offering dinner* when we resume January 13th. If you need to bring food for your family to eat in between activities, feel free to find a table or an open classroom to distance yourself safely from others while your masks are off.



We are excited to be offering an enhanced schedule of activities on Thursday evenings, now encompassing all of our young people from birth through high-school! We hope this makes it more convenient for your whole family to participate in meaningful faith and fellowship.

New M&Ms Schedule (dinner not included)

	0-2	3-K	G1-3	G4-6	G7-12	Parents
5:30			Children's Chimes*		Youth Handbells	
6:00	Cherub Choir		Faith Development	Faith Development	Faith Development	(Cherub Choir)
6:30	Nursery	Godly Play	Junior Choir*		Youth Choir	Bible Study

*6th graders may choose to participate in Youth Handbells and Youth Choir if these groups are more appropriate to their experience/maturity than Children's Chimes and Junior Choir.

This is the same basic schedule we've been following since coming indoors in November, with a few exciting additions:

- ◇ Grades 4-6 will now have Faith Development with Miss Hannah, at the same time that Grades 1-3 have Faith Development with Miss Cindy. We are thrilled that each age group will be receiving more age-specific content!
- ◇ In addition to Youth Handbells, there will now be Youth Faith Development time with Miss Alyssa, as well as a brand-new Youth Choir, led by Mr. Christopher, our Director of Music & Worship Arts!
- ◇ Parents will be able to attend their own Bible Study led by Pastor Jay or Pastor Lucy, while their children/Youth are engaged in their own activities, or in the Nursery.

Join the "Church of the Master Children's Ministry" Facebook group!

This is a private group for parents of kids involved in our children's ministry programs. We can share stories and pictures, and Miss Cindy will sometimes share activities and ideas to keep your children engaged with God's love outside of worship and M&Ms! Having this additional connection point will also be helpful if we would need to switch to a virtual format again. www.facebook.com/groups/chmasterchildren/

For 2nd-6th Graders: Acolytes Needed

Jesus said "I am the light of the world," and lighting candles in Worship is a symbol of Jesus' presence in our world and in our sanctuary! We need acolytes to fulfill this special role during the 11:00 service. While this has typically been a task for our 2nd-5th graders, we also welcome Youth and Adults to participate in carrying Christ's Light! Sign up here for as many Sundays as you wish:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050f4aada72aabff2-acolytes2>



Upcoming Events of Note:

Thursday, January 13th: M&Ms resumes

Sunday, February 6th: First Sunday of the Month "Family Worship"

All children remain in the Sanctuary to participate with the traditional liturgy and hymns, and to receive Communion.

Sunday, February 27th: Children's Sabbath during 11am Worship

Our children will lead worship on this special Sunday! Children's Chimes, Cherub and Junior Choirs will perform, and we will soon be soliciting volunteers to be readers, greeters, and ushers, and soloists to offer special music.

Music Ministry News

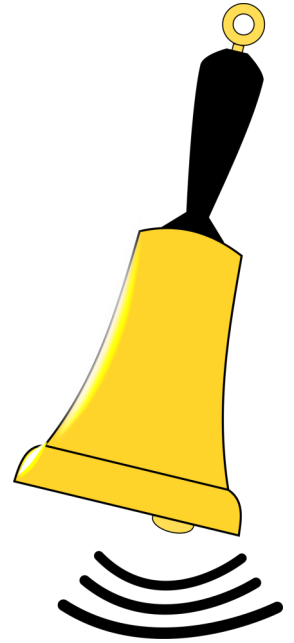
by Kim Hoessly

Ring in the new year by ringing!



Exultation Ringers meet on Wednesdays from 6-7 and Youth Bells on Thursdays from 5:30-6. Exultation Ringers will resume rehearsals in January on Wednesday the 5th. This group helps lead music in worship on the 3rd Sunday of the month, September-May. If you've not rung before, instruction is available.

Youth ringers resume on Thursday, January 13th. This will be a 6-week session with music in worship on February 20th. As with the Wednesday Choir, instruction is available if you have not rung before.



A Note on Stewardship

By Greg Shaw

Our successful Stewardship Campaign is over, and we now have the task of putting the pieces together to create a budget for Church of the Master for 2022. While final numbers have not been determined as of this writing, we are on target for maintaining or increasing our spending plan for the upcoming year due to your faithful response. While these are trying times for many congregations, you continue to bless our church with your generous financial support.

For most of us, when we hear stewardship, the first thing that comes to mind is a financial commitment. But stewardship really means we are taking care of something. Our church relies not only on your financial support, but your giving of time and talent to fulfill our mission to Love God, Grow in Christ, and Live to Serve.

As we enter 2022, many of us will take the opportunity to make one or more New Year's resolutions. Google's definition of **resolution**:

1. a firm decision to do or not to do something.
2. the quality of being determined or resolute.

So as you pause and reflect on what changes you resolve to make in your personal life for the coming year, I challenge you to prayerfully consider making a resolution about how to invest your time and your talents as an act of stewardship to help Church of the Master fulfill its mission.

WARM Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer at WARM: All are invited to work alongside other COM volunteers at WARM on **Saturday January 15th between 10AM-Noon**. Please contact Tiffany McGinnis to sign-up via email/text/call so that we have a headcount. No age requirement to volunteer.

- » WARM location: 150 Heatherdown Drive, Westerville
- » Tiffany McGinnis: 614-743-1206 tifft_23@hotmail.com

Donations: Drop off donations for WARM in containers located outside the sanctuary. This is a great way to let the community know that Church of the Master is still actively engaged in caring for our community.

Current needs at WARM include: beef gravy, alfredo sauce, mayonnaise, pancake mix, cake/cookie mix, hot dog sauce, canned salmon, mushrooms, olives, beans (dry kidney, black, northern, lima, butter, chili), white & brown rice, helpers and applesauce.

Heifer International Update

The Missions and Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone for their generous giving to Heifer International. We are giving \$6,407.00 to help people in need get a start to be successful by Heifer giving them animals and other help for them to be self-sufficient. Then they will pass on a cow, sheep, pig or honeybees to another person who needs help. We will receive an ark from Heifer for your generous donations. Thanks so much!



Jubilee Project Update:

“At the end of every seven years you shall grant a remission of debts. This is the manner of remission: Every creditor shall release what he has loaned to his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother, because the Lord’s remission has been proclaimed.” - Deuteronomy 15:1-2

Thanks to your generosity we were able to raise above and beyond our expected amount for our RIP Medical Debt Campaign this Advent season. Thanks to you, and the generosity of people outside of our congregation, we will be able to help eliminate over 2 million dollars worth of medical debt for people in the Midwest. This project began with the hard work of Emily Knoth, our summer ministry intern, who discovered this amazing cause and brought it to the attention of Bill Ruff. After learning that the church had funds available to match up to \$10,000, we decided we should expand the opportunity for people to participate and give. RIP Medical Debt is continuing to help people all over the United States. Please share this worthy cause with others. Thank you for caring for your neighbor as Jesus instructed us to do.

 <p>WITH EVERY DONATION, RIP PINPOINTS THE MEDICAL DEBT OF THOSE MOST IN NEED OF RELIEF: HOUSEHOLDS WHOSE INCOMES ARE LESS THAN TWO TIMES THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL GUIDELINE OR ARE INSOLVENT.</p> <p>OUR DONATION ALLOWS RIP TO BUY DEBT IN BUNDLED PORTFOLIOS, MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AT A TIME AT A FRACTION OF THE ORIGINAL COST. ON AVERAGE, WHATEVER YOU DONATE HAS 100X THE IMPACT.</p> <p>PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY RECEIVE A LETTER THAT THEIR DEBT IS GONE. NO TAXES. NO PENALTIES. JUST LIKE THAT, THEY'RE FREE OF MEDICAL DEBT.</p>	 <p>How We will do it</p>	<p>WHERE WILL THE PRE-EXISTING FUNDS COME FROM?</p> <p>IT IS 10% OF THE INTEREST EARNED FROM THE ENDOWMENT FUND INCOME/DESIGNATED FUNDS FROM...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- HICKS/THOMPSON FUNDS (CURRENTLY HAS \$1,936, WE WOULD USE \$900)- AD COUNCIL UNDESIGNATED FUNDS (CURRENTLY HAS \$10,507, WE WOULD USE \$5200)- OUTREACH UNSPECIFIED FUNDS (CURRENTLY HAS \$730, WE WOULD USE \$400)- JOHNSTON MISSION FUNDS (CURRENTLY HAS \$4040, WE WOULD USE \$3400)- HEALTH COMMITTEE UNSPECIFIED FUNDS (CURRENTLY HAS \$285, WE WOULD USE \$100)
---	---	--

While our campaign is closed as of 12/31/21, you can still help others by going to ripmedicaldebt.org and giving to other campaigns. Thank you!



**LOVE GOD.
GROW IN CHRIST.
LIVE TO SERVE.**

Find us on Facebook at
“Church of the Master United Methodist”

Church office Hours
Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Church of the Master United Methodist
24 N. Grove Street
Westerville, OH 43081

614.882.2153

Staff

Pastor Jay Anderson, Senior Pastor
pastor@chmaster.org

Lucy Kelly, Associate Pastor
associate@chmaster.org

Cindy Hughes Director of Children’s Ministries
children@chmaster.org

Kitty Laurich, Children’s Choir Director
childrenmusic@chmaster.org

Alyssa Hodge, Director of Youth Ministries
youth@chmaster.org

Hannah Tonn, Coordinator U2 Ministry
Email TBD

Chris Bowling, Director of Music Ministries
music@chmaster.org

Tyler Domer, Music Associate
choir@chmaster.org

Kim Hoessly, Bell Choir Director
handbells@chmaster.org

Bill Ruff, Financial Secretary
finance@chmaster.org

Randy Bennett, Facilities Manager
facilities@chmaster.org

David Campbell, Custodian