

Christian Reporter

Mt. Lebanon Christian Church

January 2024

Fred Craddock tells the story from the early years of his ministry in Custer City, Oklahoma, a town of about 450 souls. There were four churches there, a Methodist church, a Baptist church, a Nazarene church, and a Christian church (where Fred served). Each had its share of the population on Wednesday night, Sunday morning, and Sunday evening. Each had a small collection of young people, and the attendance rose and fell according to the weather and whether it was time to harvest the wheat.

But the most consistent attendance in town was at the little café where all the pickup trucks were parked, and all the men were inside discussing the weather, and the cattle, and the wheat bugs, and the hail, and the wind, and is there going to be a crop. All their wives and sons and daughters were in one of those four churches. The churches had good attendance and poor attendance, but the café had consistently good attendance, better attendance than some of the churches. They were always there - not bad men, but good men, family men, hard-working men. Fred says the patron saint of the group that met at the café was named Frank. Frank was seventy-seven when they first met. He was a good, strong man, a pioneer, a rancher and farmer, and a prospering cattle man too. He had been born in a sod house; he had his credentials, and all the men there at the café considered him their patron saint. "Ha! Old Frank will never go to church."

Fred says, "I met Frank on the street one time. He knew I was a preacher, but it has never been my custom to accost people in the name of Jesus, so I just was shaking hands and visiting with him, but he took the offensive. He said, "I work hard, I take care of my family and I mind my own business. Far as I'm concerned, everything else is fluff."

(Continued on page 4)

Mt. Lebanon Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
367 Cedar Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
412-531-8554
www.mtlebcc.org



Pastor: The Reverend Dr. Cindy McClung
Assistant Pastor: The Reverend John McCarty

Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM
CAYA Service at 6:00 PM

PLEASE JOIN US!

Worship
With Us





January Worship Leaders & Elders

Elders

7 - Jane McCarty
14 - Chuck Sargent
21 - Brad Montgomery
28 - Kathy Spray

Worship Leaders

7 - Chuck Sargent
14 - Verna McGinley
21 - Dan Wahl
28- Jeff Hawn

MISSION STATEMENT

Serving Christ!

Living and Sharing Faith, Hope and Love

VISION STATEMENT

God's vision for Mt. Lebanon Christian Church (DOC) is that we be a Christ-centered church; growing in faith through prayer, worship, and Bible study; growing in service through outreach; growing in love through Fellowship.

MT. LEBANON CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)

A Church Alive with the Holy Spirit!

**367 Cedar Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15228**

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“Every Member Is A Minister”

Cindy McClung
John McCarty
Tom Spray
Samuel Olawoyin
Joyce Lackey

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Asst. Pastor
Board Chair
Director of Music
Secretary

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 - Chris Wagner
5 - Duane Wolff
6 - Geri Offenbach
9 - Deborah Sykes
10 - Ed Persinger
16 - Lisa Schmidtetter
20 - Horst Riddler
Mary Jane Webb
John Crist
24 - Alyson Campbell
25 - Barbara Dillon
29 - Walter Ozanick

SAMUEL OLAWOYIN, Biography

I am from Nigeria and I was born into a musical family. My father was the choirmaster of our church while I was growing up and all my 7 siblings sing quite well. I started learning the piano while I was 12 years old and later moved to the organ years after when I started playing as an organist in an Anglican church back in Nigeria.

I initially studied Land Surveying and Geoinformatics before I eventually went ahead to study music professionally in the University. It is worthy of mention that while I was studying Land Surveying, I was much more involved in music within and outside the school campus. I was famous as a keyboard and piano player which made me realize that my calling is actually music. I play mainly classical music and a little bit of contemporary music. I served as organist for several church denominations such as Anglican, Methodist, Apostolic churches. I also serve as piano/organ accompanist for several choral groups and church choirs in Nigeria.

One major thing that I love about MLCC is the genuine love that exists in the church. Despite the fact that I am not from the US, I am treated with lots of love and respect. This gives me a sense of belonging which I really appreciate and won't ever take for granted. Lastly, I love the style of worship, especially the aspect where we share our joy and concerns, pray for people who are sick and give to people who are in need.

I am currently pursuing my Master's Degree in Organ performance at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, under the legendary organ teacher, Dr Ann Labounsky. I am happily married to Omolola Grace and our union is blessed with two children; Daniel (5year old boy) and Daniella (3year old girl).



IN NEED OF PRAYER

Please contact The Elders for any prayer concerns or even just to talk. The Elders pray for those in our congregation who need prayers from those on our prayer lists and those mentioned during our , worship services. If you are in need of prayer and would like to be included in our private prayer list please contact the church office.

Ed Pajak

Family of Joyce Schnars Freeman—death of Joyce

Fires in Maui and Hawaii

Fires, flooding and earthquakes throughout the world

War in Ukraine

War in Israel

Bill Green

Duane Ready

Donny and Heather Harrison – Healing

Jim - lung cancer - friend of Jane McCarty

Scout – friend of Scott's -5 year old with brain tumor

Carla – recovery from surgery – health issues

Sara & Ron – friends of Wahl's

Rev. Janet Hellner-Burris - pastor, DOC Wilkinsburg

All those with Covid

Peace

Also, please remember in your prayers our members who are homebound. Connie McCarty, Lee Scott, Audrey Houke and Betty Rothermel.

You see what he told me? "Leave me alone, I'm not a prospect." I didn't bother Frank. That's why the entire church, and the whole town were surprised, and the men at the café church were absolutely bumfuzzled when old Frank, seventy-seven years old, presented himself before me one Sunday morn for baptism. I baptized Frank. Some of the talk in the community was, "Frank must be sick. Guess he's scared to meet his maker. They say he's got heart trouble. Going up there and being baptized, well, I never thought ol' Frank would do that, but I guess when you get scared..." All kinds of stories.

Dr. Craddock goes on: "We were talking **the** next day after his baptism, and I said, 'Uh, Frank, you remember that little saying you used to give me so much: "I work hard, I take care of my family, I mind my own business?"' He said, "Yeah, I remember. I said that a lot."

I said, "You still say that?"

He said, "Yeah."

I said, "Then what's **the** difference?"

He said, "I didn't know then what my business was."

Friends, we are looking to see what God's mission is for us at MLCC. We need input from all of you as we talk together in house meetings. Let's work together to create a future story that makes an Impact for the kingdom of God!

Blessings!

Cindy

Discernment Committee

Following our congregational meetings with Jim and Annelle from New Beginnings, we engaged in the next steps of the discernment process - preparing to facilitate open dialogue and collective decision-making to consider the future for our faith community. You must sign up to participate.

The meetings are an hour and a half, except for the last meeting which is two hours.

House Meeting Schedule

Sundays after Morning worship—January 7 and 14, February 18 and 25

Wednesday at 1 PM at Friendship Village January 10 and 17
February 21 and 28

Wednesday at 7 PM on zoom January 10 and 17
February 21 and 28



January

January is considered the dead period of the year. Initially, the Gregorian calendar had ten months. Both January and [February](#) were simply combined into one month and this month was known as the "dead period".

Garnet is the birthstone of January. Carnation is the birth flower of people born in January.

January is the coldest month in the northern hemisphere. The United States' record-low temperature was minus 80 degrees Fahrenheit. On January 23, 1971, a weather observer at Alaska's Prospect Creek Camp noted this. At this temperature, the eyeballs of a person can freeze after a few seconds of exposure.

January has two zodiac signs: The water bearer and the goat.

Not exactly a FUN fact but, January is the most familiar month when it comes to divorces and break-ups and is frequently referred to as "divorce month" by legal practitioners.

The highest temperature in the southern hemisphere is in January. Record highest temperature was recorded in Oodnadatta, Australia, at 50.7°C (123°F). This January heat record has been in place for the past 62 years.

National Bean Day is celebrated on January 6 in the US. People who want to consume fiber, protein, vitamins, and other nutrients for a healthy life, should eat more beans. Beans provide between 9 and 13 grams of fiber per cup. Blood cholesterol levels can be lowered with soluble fiber. Bean has more than 40000 varieties including soy, [kidney](#), and black



JANUARY OUTREACH

Cards for Kane Residents

In this bleak midwinter life can seem cold, hard and lonely for our friends at Kane Senior Living.

Help to share God's love and brighten their day with an uplifting card. Simply purchase or make a card, sign it and drop it in the card box on the outreach table by January 31. What better way to show our neighbors that they are loved.

Some suggested messages for cards:

Wishing you weeks worth of smiles!
Warm wishes to brighten your day!
You are wonderful!
May your day be filled with all kinds of bright sunny things!
Sending God's love and cheerful thoughts to brighten your day!
You are going to have a great day!
Don't forget to smile today!
You are awesome... It's true!
You are amazing... Don't forget it!
You make the world a better place!
Jesus loves you and so do we!

November and December Outreach results

SHIM Food Donations totaled 230 lbs.

We blessed 37 residents at Kane Senior Living at Scott with Presents for Christmas!

"Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me." - Jesus

GOD'S GARDEN

Elder's Corner

As soon as I got married and could afford a house, I began digging and making a small space for planting. Every time I saw a sparse spot in the garden, I would take a walk looking for weeds or flowers that were beautiful to me. I would take home any seeds if they were present. Many times, when I stuck a shovel into my garden, I would find below the surface a layer of clay or stones. I removed the stones, mixed in topsoil, and planted the weeds or flowers in that fertile spot.

One morning, I discovered that someone during the night had taken away many of the flowers. The empty flower bed filled me with despair, and I felt my labor had been in vain. I decided it was pointless to plant any more.

The next day, at one of the nursery schools I frequented, a question was asked. "What could they do with a flat space along the side of the school?" My first thought was a garden; "*GOD'S GARDEN.*" The idea was approved, and soon many hands were digging and planting. A place for stones and rocks, as well as parking spots for the children's work trucks appeared. Circles of cut trees were used as a path. A sandy spot for building and thunder posts for banging in pretend rainstorms got created. It became a wonderful play area. Now, 21 years later. How many big and little hands have gotten dirty and enjoyed God's earth? Even bird feeders and bird baths were added, cared for by the children and staff.

In a parable from Matthew 13, Jesus tells us what happens when seeds are sown on various kinds of ground. He said that seeds that land on stones and ". . . not much earth." Can grow quickly but die in the sun. I believe God was saying to us that don't let those life messages not take root. These people are not genuine believers and soon fall away.

How grateful can I be for Jesus' words concluding this parable: "He who received seeds on good ground is he who hears the Word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit."

A heart open to God is soil in which the seed of His word can flourish.



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January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 7:00 pm Women's Prayer Group	3	4	5	6
7 House Meeting Noon 11:00 Traditional-Worship Service CAYA service 6 PM	8  Martin Luther King Day	9 7:00 pm Women's Prayer Group	10 House Meetings 1 PM Friendship Village 7 PM on zoom	11 Dining Disciples A Noon Elders Meeting 7 PM	12 Dining Disciples B 6 PM	13
14 House Meeting Noon 11:00 Traditional Worship Service CAYA Service 6:00	15 7:00 Trustees Meeting	16 7:00 pm Women's Prayer Group 7:00 Board Meeting	17 House Meetings 1 PM Friendship Village 7 PM on zoom	18 Dining Disciples C 6:30 PM	19	20
21 11:00 Traditional Worship Service CAYA Service 6:00 pm	22	23 7:00 pm Women's Prayer Group	24	25	26	27
28 1100 Traditional Worship Service CAYA Service 6:00 pm	29	30 7:00 pm Women's Prayer Group	31	Have faith in God's timing. It's better to wait a while and have things fall into place than to rush and have things fall apart. 		