

# CROWN HILL NEWS

## Prayers

- Continue to lift up the Ramseyer family in your prayers.
- Pray for Austin Zuercher in Costa Rica who we support through EMM.
- Remember Beulah in prayer as she continues radiation treatment and Larry Morrison as he continues his chemo treatments.
- Continue to pray for Win as she works on building strength back up in her foot.
- Pray for Earl Webb who was hospitalized this week with pneumonia.
- Remember our people in nursing homes: Patt (&Earl), Suzan, Martha & Carolyn.
- Pray for our shut-ins: Pete Stauffer, Paul Troyer, Elmer Richard, Mary Nussbaum, Ila Zimmerly, Win Ramsyer, Brady Murray and Fred's mother Doris Hoffman.
- Pray for the Manor Board as it restructures after the loss of Myron and several other Board members. New Board members are Dan, serving as interim chairperson, and Doris, serving as Treasurer. Sandy Hanzie is also returning to Manor service as bookkeeper. The next Board meeting is January 11. Currently all but one of the apartments are occupied.

## Upcoming Events/Announcements

- This Monday (January 10) we are taking the Christmas decorations down at the church at 6:00pm. Thanks in advance for your help!
- The Ladies Bible Study will be starting up again on Sat Jan 15th at 8:30 am. We'll be studying Following God's Guidance. All women are welcome, whether you've attended a previous study or not! See Doris or Myrna if you have any questions.
- WINTER READ. Join us for Winter Read, facilitated by the Ohio Mennonite Conference and our six church community. The study will be on the book by Latasha Morrison titled BE THE BRIDGE: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation. The Salem-Wooster congregation is our host for this five-session study. More info is available on the flier in your church mailbox. Contact Thomas or Dan if you would like help obtaining a copy of BE THE BRIDGE. The gatherings at Salem will take place from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. on five Thursdays — Jan. 13, and 20, and Feb. 3 and 17
- Reminder: all are invited to join in prayer on Wednesday evenings, 6:30 to 7:30 in the Fellowship Hall.
- On January 23, Sunday School will be shortened to make time for a congregational meeting and voting on the Constitution Revision and 2022 Budget.
- On January 30, we will have Sign-up Sunday instead of Sunday School.



Zip	Households	Head count	City	State
44270	25	75	RITTMAN	OH
44691	21	49	WOOSTER	OH
44667	14	31	ORRVILLE	OH
44230	5	8	DOYLESTOWN	OH
44217	3	9	CRESTON	OH
44276	3	5	STERLING	OH
44618	3	6	DALTON	OH
44677	3	6	SMITHVILLE	OH
44281	2	2	WADSWORTH	OH
44645	2	6	MARSHALLVILLE	OH
44203	1	1	BARBERTON	OH
44214	1	1	BURBANK	OH
44254	1	2	LODI	OH
44256	1	7	MEDINA	OH
44273	1	2	SEVILLE	OH
44278	1	2	TALLMADGE	OH
44287	1	1	WEST SALEM	OH
44313	1	3	AKRON	OH
44622	1	1	DOVER	OH
44685	1	1	UNIONTOWN	OH
44840	1	3	JEROMESVILLE	OH
Totals:	92	221	21 Zip Codes	

Everything went smoothly for our December Food Pantry. The only issue was that we were over prepared! Over the fall months our numbers have been gradually increasing, but in December they dropped dramatically. We never know why the numbers go up or down, but in January we will be shortening our hours due to the lower numbers. We will be open from 3-5 on Thursday and 11-1 on Friday January 27 & 28.



## January 9

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Sermon:

Short in Stature, Not in Status

## December 26 Offering

\$4550.00 General

\$415.00 Myron Ramseyer Memorial

\$25.00 Fellowship Hall Rental

### Pastoral Letter: Was There Ever Such A Thing As A Small Farmer?

Since I moved back to Wayne County after graduating college I have been a part of innumerable conversations lamenting the loss of the small farm. It doesn't seem like too long ago that our area was made up primarily of 100 acre farms, each with a dairy herd, bank barn and large family that worked hard to keep the farm going. Now the bank barns are being "harvested" for their lumber, being used for steers, calves or other livestock or just rotting away. The 100 acre farms are being bought or leased by large farming operations or divided into smaller plots for houses. As lamentable as this is, what I want to reflect on is the question of whether there ever was such a thing as small farms.

Growing up I was just old enough to work on the small farm with my grandparents before they retired. What I learned from my grandparents was that even though they looked like small farmers, they were really a part of an interconnected network of farmers in that community. The first tractor that my grandpa had was purchased together with two other neighboring farmers. Decades later when I came on the scene, the same practices continued. My grandpa didn't have a skid steer or a cattle trailer so whenever those were needed, the neighbors would provide. Whenever my grandpa had something to offer, he helped his neighbors. Although these things are not nearly as sensational as an Amish barn raising, the same principles are at play--small farming has only ever been possible through a sense of reliance and mutuality between neighbors. If a farmer wants to be independent they have two options: Grow and become a huge operation or fold.

I believe these same principles apply to the church. There really is no such thing as a small church. Rather, a small church is (or at least it ought to be) a part of a larger, interconnected body of believers where they rely on each other. A church that wants to be independant has two options: Grow to become a mega church, or fold. In the western world we have been culturally conditioned to believe that being reliant on others is a bad thing. A sign of weakness. We have bowed down to the idols of independence, autonomy, personal liberty and self actualization.

We need to learn a lesson that generations of small farmers can teach us: We thrive when we rely on other people. That to rely on your neighbor is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of community health, of trusting relationships and good stewardship. When you are relying on your neighbor it forces you to maintain good relationships, to keep communication open, to make sure you are reciprocating the support. Perhaps the greatest advantage of relying on each other is what it enables us to accomplish together. The centuries of agricultural success that have been characteristic of our community are a direct result of mutual support that small farmers have given each other.

As farming operations have grown, their reliance on each other has dwindled. In the last half century we have also witnessed the onset of mega churches, many of which started as a denominational church but grew so big they felt they no longer needed to be a part of a denomination. They became independent and autonomous. My dream for local small churches is that we would learn to support and rely on each other just like generations of small farmers have modeled for us.