

# The VINE

*The Newsletter for the Eastern Area Churches of the Presbytery of Cincinnati*  
*August, September 2021*

## **CROP Hunger Walk**

**ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1:00-3:00**  
**AT ADAMS LAKE PICNIC SHELTER**

Bring a dish to share if you wish. Hot dogs will be served straight from the grill. Condiments, Water, Lemonade, Cups, and Table service will also be provided.

All proceeds go To Church World Services to feed the hungry, but 25% comes right back to our Eastern Area.

Collection envelopes will be provided within the next 2 weeks to each church who wishes to participate. If each person walked to just a few friends and neighbors to collect, this would be our most successful Walk ever!! All collections will be due to Barbara Jean, who is acting as Treasurer for the Walk, no later than October 9, but we hope to collect most at the picnic. Make checks payable to "CWS." Contact Barbara Jean Havens for more details: (513)218-4396 [barbarajeanhavens.eac@gmail.com](mailto:barbarajeanhavens.eac@gmail.com)

**Look for the Pastors of Cherry Fork, Seaman, and Winchester to carry the CROP Walk banner in their hometown parades. Winchester's will be on August 29, and Seaman's on September 25.**

### *2021 -2022 EAC Slate of Officers*

Moderator – Elder John Martin

Treasurer – Rv. Mike Hughes

Past Moderator – Elder John Robson

At-Large Member – Elder Norine Behm

Vice-Moderator – Rev. Mike Brazelle

Secretary – Elder Linda Watkins

At-Large Member – Rev. Dr. Ruth Dunn

Coordinator- Elder Barbara Jean Havens

*They will become official at a brief installation ceremony at the CROP picnic*

## **Clerk Meeting Comes to the Eastern Area**

ATTENTION ALL Clerks! Our Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, Erwin Goedicke, wants to meet with you and as many pastors as would like to be there. He is coming to Georgetown PC from 10:00am to 12:00 on Saturday, September 18. The Annual records review will be performed at this time, so bring your minutes and records books. A light lunch will be provided by the EAC. There will be a time after the review for "Ask the Clerk" to find out anything you wish you knew about records or the Book of Order.

### ***Adams County Shelter for the Homeless***

At the meeting August 16th of the Presbyterian Brotherhood at Cherry Fork Ms Char Brown, director of the Adams County Shelter for the Homeless, made a presentation. The shelter, serving Adams and Brown Counties, is located just outside of West Union. With but occupancy for 17 adults and children, it is chiefly at capacity each and every day. Folks, mainly but not exclusively from the two counties, are given room and shelter and love for 30 days.

A background check is run to ensure that no one is being sought by the law and cannot be a user of alcohol or drugs while in residence. Ms Brown, who has headed up this service for many years, emphasized that by the third day, folks must begin search for employment, education that would help with employment, and housing. Visitors have always complimented on the cleanliness and openness of the facility. It operates with 50% funding from the State of Ohio and 50% through their own efforts and kind donations. It has a board of ideally 9 local citizens. Faith opportunities are available but not required. All are expected to maintain good hygiene and do their own laundry. When asked what is most needed, she replied underwear. Those who seek a room always come with but very little. She ended with an impassioned statement that all of us could find ourselves homeless. Thanks be to God.

### ***From Pastor John at Winchester***

#### ***All Winchester Prayer Gathering***

Every month, second Tuesday, at 6:00 P.M. folks gather at the designated church for one purpose: to pray. Together they pray aloud and silently to Almighty God to come to the aid of the village and township. Motivation: Illegal drug and drug use. Yes, the cancer of drugs has found root in the bodies of citizens young and not so young. And it is zapping the very energy of Winchester that ought to be devoted to family life, school work, and earning the daily bread.

Police Chief Donny Edgington took a call in May from Bev Warner, citizen and disciple of Christ. She explained her deep belief in the power of prayer and the need for all Winchester to ask God's help in overcoming the cruelty of drugs. (continued)

Chief Donny was a willing listener. His daily focus has become the use and transport of illegal drugs. He and his team struggled every day in the battle. Bev reached out to pastors and they eagerly offered help. So, beginning in June at the 3C Church, services of guided prayer have been offered. In July the Methodist Church was host and in August, the Presbyterian. **The September Prayer Service will again be at the 3C Church.** (Church of Christ in Christian Union)

Between prayer gatherings each church and its members have been asked to focus on a particular neighborhood. Bev has widely distributed color maps with labeled streets and invites folks to travel around — car or on foot — to see their town with new eyes, and, in turn, bow in prayer. The work and prayers will go on.

### ***Answer to Prayers***

At the July gathering Chief Edgington shared what had happened in his life as law enforcement since the first prayer gathering in June. At that meeting he described in detail Friday nights and drug related happenings at the local motel. As he had learned, Winchester is a transport point in the drug trade and a venue for sex trafficking. Since June, he has had some quiet nights. Miracle? Hand of God? But it is another example of answered prayers that was brought up at the last meeting.

Pastor Norine, great-grandmother of Hope, told of a distressing time. A thief had reached into a vehicle and stolen Hope's carefully prepared backpack of precious items, most especially a knife given to her by her late beloved great uncle Robert. Prayer time. Within days, Chief Edgington, in response to the theft, found the backpack but her possessions scattered in two different locations. Only the knife was not among the possessions. More prayers. And the knife turns up! The hand of God? Certainly, the answer to prayers.

### ***Living Churches Initiative***

Ten of our area churches have completed 3 months work and the first segment of the Living Churches Initiative, brought to us at no charge by the Cincinnati Presbytery as part of the grant they received from the Lilly Foundation. From this study we hope to get a clear picture of the resources we have at hand and the ability to define opportunities to be the "hands of Christ" reaching out to those nearby. What a blessing it would be for all to help provide what is missing in the lives of those living in our communities. Simply put, How can we help?

# **We Need to Talk**

Change is in the air. Sometimes that can seem threatening, but sometimes it is like a fresh breeze renewing and reviving those in its path. I choose to embrace the latter idea. You have all seen the Presbytery of Cincinnati go through many changes over the years. Those who try to cling to the way things “used to be” are quickly left behind. This is natural and necessary in order to remain relevant and vibrant.

The Eastern Area Council of Presbyterian Churches of the Cincinnati Presbytery has been operating under a set of by-laws that, as close as we can tell, were written in 1993. Attempts were made on two occasions to update the by-laws, but not much changed in them. Now, in light of the serious study this group has undertaken for the past two years, we have come to understand the function and form of the group to be outdated, and much less inviting than we had ever intended.

As those who have been left in charge of this dinosaur struggled to make necessary changes, we quickly realized that we were stepping outside the parameters of our by-laws. Now we are, after debate, discussion, and study embarking on the daunting task of up-dating/re-writing and re-visioning who we are and who we wish to be.

We are not finished with the entire 4 pages of by-laws, but we have completed the first 1 ½. Since we meet monthly, it is a slower process than we might wish, but I feel confident in saying that by our October meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>, we will have the entire set updated for your information. As you can imagine, language is the biggest change.

Just for the sake of whetting your appetite, I would like to mention some of the changes so far. Certainly, the most noticed change will be that we will no longer be known as the Eastern Area Council. From this time forward we are the Eastern Area Churches of the Cincinnati Presbytery. I came to the Eastern Area Council in late 2001 as its Coordinator. At that time, and up until yesterday, our mission statement was, “To joyfully worship and witness for Jesus Christ in our unique congregations and communities through shared ministry and mission.” Hard to argue with that, but we needed to shorten and make it something we can all remember. Our newly adopted mission statement is, “Together we love, grow, and empower the Body of Christ.”

Our new vision statement (we didn’t have one before this) is, “To proclaim the Gospel for the salvation of humankind.” (We kind of borrowed that one from the “Great Ends of the Church” in case those words sound familiar.) Another big change is that the EAC (we can still use that acronym) used to include all PC(USA) churches in Adams, Brown, and Highland Counties, and we have now expanded that membership to include those in Clermont County as well. That is one of the changes we are most excited about as we realize that many of them share some of the same situations and demographics that are ours. New member churches mean new energy and thought. Good things!

As we continue to re-think who we are, I have every confidence that the changes we’ve made were first imagined and whispered by the Holy Spirit. Pray for us as we go through this transition and finish the changes that shape who we are, what we are about, and what we will be to each other. I know they will be welcomed by all.

You will be updated as we complete this process, and I invite anyone who is interested in being a part of the conversation to attend our next meeting. Contact me for details of where and when.

In the meantime, I wish you all of God’s richest blessings!

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**Please submit articles of information for the October Vine to Barbara Jean at the above email.**