

EASTMINSTER EVANGEL

We are currently training 6 people to conduct an inactive members ministry. It will involve contact with members who no longer are attending church. Training should be completed shortly and we will start this highly sensitive program.

A plant ministry is planned where we visit people who have visited with us 2 times. We will bring a plant and a folder with information about our church activities. We feel it is important not to ignore their visit and maybe we can encourage them to join us again.

The Communication and Nurture Committee of Eastminster Presbytery celebrates our 1st. Year publishing *The Evangel* and extends thanks to:

- All who have submitted articles,
- All local church staff who have enabled Congregations to receive *The Evangel*,
- All who **will** submit articles in 2008,
- To Kerry Price, Webmaster, for her expertise in getting *The Evangel* out to you.

CONTACT EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERY:

P.O. Box 316, 3833 Main Street
Mineral Ridge, Ohio 44440
Office: 330.505.2167
Fax: 330.505.1545
Toll-Free: 1.800.215.2416
or email us at info@faithfulness.com

spirit was broken. A few weeks later with no vehicle, no license, no money, no hope, in total despair, I was hungry and came to this church for groceries where I met Dick Franklin who invited me to church. I first called and spoke to Rev. Mark Ruppert. Mark had open arms and seemed to be non-judgmental, like a good Christian. I came here the following Sunday and have been coming here since. Through the various ministries of this church and the love that has been shown to me here, my walk, my spiritual journey, is growing stronger everyday.

Now through the grace of God, I have conquered my drug addiction and even my eye sight has improved. I am involved in the Thursday morning men's group, men who truly care about my walk with God and hold me accountable. It is this church, this group of Christians here at the Presbyterian Church who are walking with me in my spiritual journey.

My spiritual walk with God is growing along with my business. My vision is improved and I will be driving again soon. I am in a relationship with a young lady, but most of all I now have God in my life. I am so grateful that like the prodigal son, God welcomed me back into his home. If it were not for the grace of God and this church I would be out there today smoking crack, or be in jail, or homeless or worse yet, dead. It is only through the Grace of God that I have been brought back and saved.

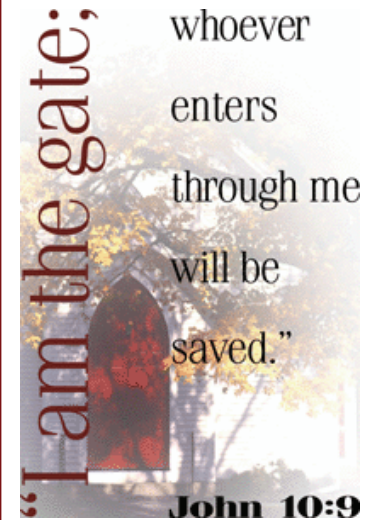
God's Grace & The First Presbyterian Church in Akron

By: John Mills

Let me begin my story by telling you how I was stripped and laid bare before God so I would be open to hear his Word. Most of my life I have been battling demons within my soul. I was adopted and never felt I belonged, brought up in a Catholic home and attended Catholic School. I turned to a world of drugs, a place where I felt secure and wanted. I smoked my first marijuana joint at 10 and did my first hit of acid shortly after. The world of drugs consumed me for 36 of my 47 years. During this time I was walking the gray line of doing drugs and doing God. I remember one time standing on the corner of Main & Exchange in downtown Akron during the Jesus Movement of the 70's. I was doing LSD and passing out Bibles to passers-by.

All of this came to crashing halt a year or so ago. I had the true secular, American dream with a S.U.V., a work van, all bills paid, up to 20 sub-contractors, and lots of commercial accounts. I had it all! Then during one of my crack cocaine highs I loaned out my truck, which was stolen with all of my tools. To make matters worse, when I went to renew my license a couple of weeks later my license was taken away. I was legally blind, not able to drive. My

(See page 4 for God's Grace)



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WINTER QUARTER 2008
EVANGELISM

Be an Evange! Send Articles!

Spring: Fellowship

Articles Due by: February 25, 2 008

Write Now! johnsontjp@aol.com



COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

By: Elder Joanne Cutter

Who ever said, "There are no free meals"? For the past four and a half years, the First Presbyterian Church of Hubbard has served a FREE all you can eat pancake and sausage breakfast to our community the last Saturday of each month from 8:30 to 11:00 am. Our first Breakfast was served May 31, 2003. Turnout was poor, but has increased to an average of 80 per month.

A free will offering is accepted, although the offering basket is kept in the kitchen, so that those who cannot give do not feel obligated. The money given for the offering is donated to help support the Hubbard Food Bank, a project of the Hubbard Christians In Action.

The community outreach mission works two ways. We not only are in fellowship with our neighbors, family, and friends at the breakfast table, but are supporting the Food Bank which provides food monthly to approximately 60-70 families each month of the year. Being a member of First Presbyterian Church, not only means being in worship every Sunday, but giving of yourself in sharing a meal with those who are in need.

Our permanent sign that was erected this past fall:

It takes several volunteers each month to prepare and serve this meal.

We praise God for providing this opportunity for us to serve.



Acts 16:5 Initiative

By: Rev. Larry A. Myers

When the Kinsman Presbyterian Church became involved in the Acts 16:5 Initiative, we focused on creating an active youth group and an inviting environment for young married families. Several Action Learning teams were formed for various tasks.

Recently new individuals became active in our leadership team and attended Stan Ott's latest seminar. One participant became interested in creating a "Personal Spiritual Development Plan" that is found in Glenn McDonald's book, *The Disciple Making Church: From Dry Bones to Spiritual Vitality*. The leadership team, spouses, and others are currently meeting weekly at the manse to study this book. Those who can not make the meeting are reading at home. Personal spiritual development is creating active disciples who are transforming our congregation through sound biblical principles.

Good News in the Face of Tension

By: Rev. Lynn Thompson Bryant

Even in the midst of anticipating Joy, Peace and Love in the Advent season, I feel very aware of brooding conflicts just below the surface. I wonder about the "Hudson ruling," healthy ways to talk about the Interpretation of Scripture, and questions concerning what will be most uplifting for the body of Christ. Firestone Park has offered a vital witness in extending Christian love and service to families in need, in providing joyous hospitality in holiday fellowship events, and in pursuing creative ways to build on their ministries. Similar examples come from churches across the presbytery, and that brings true cause for celebration!

I've come across a story that gives me hope for our larger body of Presbyterians. A recent interview with Moderator Joan Grey, published in *Presbyterians Today*, when asked if

she saw "a solution" to connecting pastors to churches of vital ministry, she replied: "We should be looking at churches where the Spirit is breaking out and they're growing against the odds and doing mission when everything is against them. There's a creative tension between our limitations and God's resources." When they ask: "What do you think God wants us to do now?" they trust that God will help them find the resources to accomplish it. "That's a very creative place to be," said Joan.

Neighborhood Block Party - Year #2

By: Rev. David Joachim, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Boardman

Borrowing an idea from our United Methodist friends, we sponsored our 2nd annual "ice cream social" on Sunday, 7/15. The Church Growth Committee distributed fliers in the surrounding neighborhood a week in advance to a "Meet 'em & Greet 'em" gathering out front on the church lawn, 6pm. The church sign invited in others. On a beautiful evening, a professional Balloon Man created animals for the kids and a Face Painter did children and adult faces. A church members' "live band" played oldies as 95 neighbors drifted over to the picnic tables for "Handel's".

85 people came out in '06, so the idea seems to be catching on. Many Westminster folks also came out, and old friends and new friends greeted. The "How many new members will we get?" question was turned into a statement, "We're greeting our neighbors for Jesus Christ" (whether they're Roman Catholic, unchurched, or "other") *A great time was had by all...*