

Vine Reporter

January 2012

Conference Minister to Visit Sunday, January 15th

Rev. Roddy Dunkerson, Conference Minister of the Nebraska Conference, United Church of Christ, will be here to congratulate us on the newly renovated Sanctuary, Chapel and Narthex.



Rev. Dunkerson will deliver the sermon and share with us some of the experiences he had on his recent ministry trip to India.

Uppity Women of the Bible

February 1st, 8th and 15th • 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Join Pastor Renae at the church, as she leads you on a journey to meet some of the Bible's "uppity" women who took things into their own hands. See these women through the eyes of the times in which they lived and experience them in a whole new way.



Some of the OLLI group members will be attending the class as well. OLLI is the *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute* for retired people living in the Lincoln area. Their motto is "curiosity never retires!"

The study resource is from the *Living the Questions* curriculum, and detailed information about each session can be found on **page 2** of the newsletter. The class will meet in the *New Hope Chapel*.

BINGO



Chili-Bingo Night!

Friday, January 27th • 6:30 pm

Mark your calendars for this ever-popular event sponsored by the Board of Women's Ministries. Bring your "white elephants" for prizes! More details to come soon, but please make plans now to participate in this fun and tasty affair!

"Putting Away" of the Greens



Everyone is invited to help put away the 'Greens' and "undecorate" the church *immediately following worship Sunday, January 8th*. Cheryl Svoboda will be in charge of making sure everything gets back into the correct boxes and into the right places (so please check with her that day if there is any doubt or question about what to do with anything).

Pizza and pop will be served for lunch, and everyone will be asked to chip in to pay for lunch that day. **Thank you for considering to help!**

Ministry Team Checklist

It is important to share the work of the church and match people to the ministries that they have a passion for doing. Please fill out a **Ministry Team checklist** and mark all of the items that interested you. The checklist and return box are located under the Narthex bulletin board.





January 6th, the *Feast of the Epiphany*, marks the end of the Christmas season, and the beginning of a time known as the Sundays after Epiphany. The Sundays after Epiphany may be as few as four of as many as nine, depending on the dates of Lent and Easter. This year, Epiphany is a long season of seven Sundays.

The word Epiphany means “a showing forth.” “Manifestation” is another translation. During this season, we see God's glory and purpose “shown forth” or “made manifest” through the life of Jesus and His followers. The mood is one of proclamation and growth.

The passages from Hebrew scripture tell of God's call to individuals and to the Israelite people. The Epistle readings for all three years come from Corinthians, offering Paul's message to a growing, struggling, infant church. The Gospel readings focus on the call of the disciples and the teachings and healing ministry of Jesus. Traditionally, this is a time when the church has focused on its “call” and mission in the world. The basic color of this season is green, symbolizing growth. The season ends with *Transfiguration Sunday* which, like the Sunday which begins the season - the Baptism of Jesus - has the liturgical color white, indicating a more brilliant manifestation of God's presence. May God bless our growing congregation in this Epiphany season.

See you in church! **Love and Peace, Pastor Renae**

Uppity Women of the Bible • 10:30 am - 12:00 pm Wednesdays, February 1st, 8th and 15th



February 1st - The story of **Judith**, from the Koine Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, reads like a historical novel rife with warfare, lust, espionage and intrigue. This class will take you on a journey from a mythological battlefield and a besieged city into the studio and psyche of the Baroque painter Artemesia Gentileschi. Enjoy the careful scholarship and genuine love for the story of this amazing woman named Judith.

February 8th - The story of **Esther**: enter into an exotic and fanciful Persian kingdom complete with a dim-witted king, a defiant queen, an egotistical lieutenant and a loyal uncle. With lavish banquets, extreme beauty treatments and dangerous liaisons at every turn, can the beautiful and courageous Esther avert disaster for her people? Enjoy the range from slapstick farce to Shakespearian tragedy as you get acquainted with Esther.

February 15th - The woman in the **Song of Songs**: you will have plenty of opportunities to laugh and even blush, as you get to know the woman in the Song of Songs (also known as the Song of Solomon). Explore the mysterious, beautiful, and alluring story. Enjoy getting to know the woman who rejoices when she proclaims, “I am black and beautiful!”



Abundant Blessings that We Share

Our Christmas Mission Projects were a Success! Thank you to all who gave warm outerwear for the *Giving Tree* to benefit those in need. Blessings to the Board of Women's Ministries for giving money for Pastor to distribute to church members who are paying medical bills. Thanks to the youth of our church for purchasing toys for the children who live at *Friendship Home*. Blessings to everyone who gave a donation to the Christmas Fund. God loves a cheerful giver! You are cheerful indeed! **Congratulations on your mission work!**

50 children! That's right, we had 50 children in our Christmas Pageant on December 18th! A big thank you to Pastor for calling all visitors and inactive members to invite their children to be in the Pageant. It was amazing to see and hear as the children entered doing liturgical dances that were choreographed by Pastor. A helium star actually rose out of the choir loft as wise ones from all nations watched in awe. The real baby Jesus, played by Colton Sievers, was a bundle of joy! **Thank you to children and parents for making this special event happen.**

Extravagant Welcome: At Vine church, we welcome ALL PEOPLE to worship with us. When visitors come to worship at our church, please take a moment to introduce yourself and tell them how very welcome they are!

YOUTH GROUP SCOOP

Celebrate the New Year! On **Sunday, January 15th, 7:00 pm** at the church, all youth please come to make goodies and play games. Goodies are for the residents of Bel-Air Home. This activity will be led by Pam Cuttlers.

Meet our new Youth Coordinator: Anne Klute is our new volunteer coordinator for the youth group. She has lots of great ideas and abundant energy. Please give her your full support in youth ministry. Parents and youth, please meet on **Sunday, January 8th at 9:45 am** in the youth room for the following:

- “Get to know you” time for parents and youth to get better acquainted with Anne
- Your ideas for the youth group, including mission projects and other activities
- Fundraising ideas
- How often to meet, and best day/time
- Tell us if you will be going to the *National Youth Event*
- Other

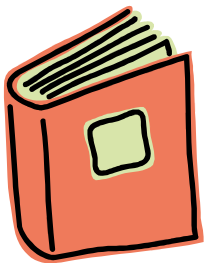
STILLSPEAKING

 The future is now!

Now is the time: All youth please register for the *National Youth Event* (NYE) this month. The information is available at www.ucc.org. NYE takes place every two years when youth from all over the nation come together for Spiritual renewal, learning, and fun. This year, NYE is at **Perdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana on July 10th - 14th.**

Tawny Anderson will be going on the *International Affairs Seminar Youth* trip March 10th - 17th. This trip is for United Church of Christ youth who will travel to New York City and Washington, D.C. to put faith into action. **Congratulations Tawny!**

“Check out” the Chapel Library!



If you are looking for a book for a cold winter evening, the library in the *New Hope Chapel* has many good choices. Just sign the check-out sheet and take one home. When you return it,

put the check-in date on the sheet and return the book to the shelf where you found it.

Try one of several novels by Jan Karon from the Mitford series about Father Timothy Kavanagh, an Episcopal priest. He has many interesting people in his parish! Did you miss the recent Hallmark Hall of Fame movie based on Mitch Albom’s book, *Have a Little Faith*, based on a true story? Enjoy the book!

Small Blessings by Celestine Sibley “celebrates the everyday ‘thankfuls’ that life offers.” Lose yourself in a simpler time in the *Chronicles of Fairacre* and *Village Affairs*, both told by Miss Read, an elementary school teacher in rural England. You’ll enjoy meeting the cast of villagers.

Fathers is a collection of memoirs written about fathers by many authors whose names you will recognize. Some fathers are remembered fondly and some less so. *First We Have Coffee* by Margaret Jensen is a treasury of stories from the life of a Scandinavian immigrant family.

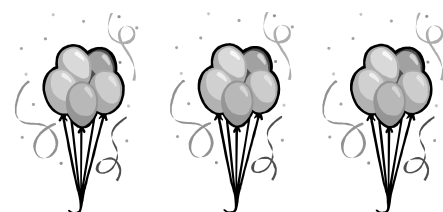
Birthday Celebration!

You’re invited to help us celebrate **Russel Workman’s 70th Birthday!**

Saturday, January 7th

Open House: **2:00 - 4:00 pm**, with a **DANCE** to follow at **Vine Church.**

Come when you can and stay as long as you’d like - **we’re ready to celebrate!**





Ministry, Mission and Fellowship

Make a New Year's Resolution - to wear your **name tag**. It is welcoming to new members and visitors, and helps them remember *your* name.

Readers and Greeters - are needed for **January**. Please contact Abby Workman at 402-525-3581 or abbyworkman@hotmail.com, if you are willing to read scripture, be a greeter, or do both.

Thank you to all of the Fellowship Hour hosts for 2011 - some people even served more than once! December hosts were the Board of Evangelism for the new member reception, Pastor Renae and Steve, Karin Coulter, Board of Women's Ministries, and Arlan and Betty Roth.

Fellowship Hosts needed for 2012 - the sign-up sheet for 2012 is on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. If you enjoy the treats after worship each week, consider hosting for a Sunday. Pair up with another person or family if you wish. Keep the refreshments simple. Coffee is made, and juice and napkins are provided. You do not have to wash cups and glasses. If you have any questions, call Cheryl Svoboda at 423-0307.

Napkins and juice are needed for fellowship hour - bottled juice that doesn't come from the refrigerated section at the store is preferred because it stays fresh longer.

SCRIP Talk - The SCRIP committee would like to thank everyone that planned ahead and used SCRIP in any way this year. This year SCRIP has donated \$8,573.05 to the Renovation Fund. Also most recently we helped fund the advertising for the Holiday Extravaganza, a new mirror to be used in *New Hope Chapel* by wedding parties, and the new Christmas tree in the sanctuary. It is thanks to all of you that we have the funds to do all of this and really appreciate everyone's participation.

Amaryllis Plants - Norman Brooks has at least 12 amaryllis plants that will blossom in the coming weeks. Cost is \$10.00 each. All proceeds will go to the Sanctuary Renovation. His address is: 1620 West Manor Drive, which is 3-4 blocks West of the church (down Sumner Street). Please call Norman at 488-0463, between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, Monday - Saturday, and Sundays 12:00 - 3:00 pm.

Junk Jaunt Donations - shortly after the beginning of the new year, the downstairs room where we have stored Junk Jaunt items in the past will once again be available to receive your contributions to the Junk Jaunt. We accept house wares, books, small appliances, games, sporting goods, furniture (two people can lift), lawn and garden equipment, electronics, bicycles, infant furniture, strollers, cloth, craft items, linens, kitchen utensils, shop and carpentry tools, glassware, craft items and seasonal decorations. We also accept items with internal combustion engines such as power lawn mowers, tillers, chainsaws, weed whackers, etc. Please contact George Robie about any items using gasoline and oil, because those **cannot** be stored in the church. We have other storage places available for those items. **Items that are not accepted:** guns or other weapons, non-digital televisions, infant car seats, exercise machines, cribs, clothing, or computer monitors. New member Randy Back has agreed to work with George Robie to help maintain order in the storage room. Contact George at 402-488-3142 for further information or to have Junk Jaunt questions answered. Thank you.

SOUPER Bowl of Caring • Sunday, February 5th

A traditional call when the family meal was prepared and ready to be served was "Soup's On." However, for too many people there is no guarantee they will hear that phrase. Vine's Board of Missions is asking that Super Bowl Sunday be observed as a time for sharing the abundance we have with those who are in need. Please bring a donation of **canned soups**, other **non-perishable foods** or **money** to worship service on **February 5th**. *Last year's offering was truly overwhelming, and it is hoped this year we will match or exceed that amount!*



These items will then go to support the hungry in our own city through the **Eastridge Pantry**.

The Evolution of a Chapel

In the 1950's, the original plans for the new Vine Congregational Church included a chapel, which has been used over the years for classes, meetings, small weddings and funerals, Easter vigils, meditation services, and many other purposes, including voting. In conjunction with the building addition in the late '80's and early '90's, a committee from the Board of Women's Ministries made significant changes to the appearance of the Chapel to blend with the colors used in the addition of the office/youth room wing and narthex remodel, and to make it a more comfortable place to meet or to pray. Those changes served us well for many, many years, and we acknowledge the dedicated members who made it possible.

In 1992, Vine members Dwayne and Laurie Deibert lost their baby daughter. In her memory, Laurie's parents crafted and donated *The Hope Window*, which still graces the south wall of the chapel. It is inscribed with the words, "The Hope Window, For the Hope that Children Offer, in memory of Lauren Ellise Brunken-Deibert, August 6, 1992, crafted and designed by Phylis and Mel Brunken, 1993." (NOTE: Mel and Phylis Brunken are also the creators of the stained glass windows in the sanctuary, which were funded by Vine members in memory or honor of loved ones.)

In 2004, New Hope United Church of Christ merged with Vine Congregational United Church of Christ, and we continue to celebrate the merger that brought us many new church friends. Shortly after the merger, the chapel was rededicated and named *New Hope Chapel*, with a section of the bookcases reserved for New Hope memorabilia.

Over the years, you may have noticed that summer humidity caused big (and unsafe) ripples in the chapel carpet. Professionals advised us that the glue used to install it had "given up," and while it could have been reinstalled, it didn't seem prudent to spend money to put back the 20+-year-old carpet. That led to the formation of, by the Board of Trustees, a committee to make recommendations to the board for another "by-then-much-needed" renovation of the chapel. About the time the chapel committee formulated its recommendations, plans were beginning to come together for the sanctuary renovation, and it seemed appropriate to put chapel plans on hold, pending decisions on the larger project

One of the anticipated parts of the sanctuary renovation project was the removal of the original

asbestos tiles under the pews. What was not anticipated was that we had asbestos tiles EVERYWHERE ELSE on the main level (except bathrooms and Fellowship Hall), so in the interest of not having to deal with asbestos abatement ever again, the decision was made to have it all removed, including in *New Hope Chapel*.

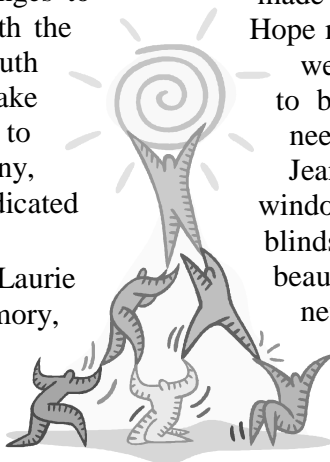
The chapel committee of Cindy Dempsey, Mary Johnson, Jean Jordan, Etta Kokes, Cheryl Svoboda, and Delores Wenz regrouped, updated their plan, and made recommendations to the Trustees. New Hope memorial funds and New Hope trustee funds were used for the project. Carpet was chosen to blend with the new narthex carpet, much-needed painting was done by Paul Svoboda, Jean Jordan did some refinishing on the windows to prolong their life, and oak-finish blinds and oak base were added to bring out the beauty of the wood ceiling. Jeff Brown made a new altar to "frame" the window and hold the cross and eternal light. New furniture was purchased and positioned to provide comfortable seating for reading and reflection. Cheryl Svoboda cleaned library shelves and sorted and categorized books (see book article on *page 3*).

We've just celebrated the birth of the Christ Child, who symbolizes HOPE. We celebrate the HOPE that children everywhere represent, as we read the dedication of The Hope Window. We celebrate the joy that came with the merger of New HOPE Church and Vine Church. We celebrate the completion of a year of monumental projects at Vine and look toward a HOPE-filled future for our congregation. And we celebrate the HOPE of a new, fresh, untarnished year ahead. Happy New Year!

Vine's Annual Meeting Sunday, February 12th

Annual meeting of Vine Congregational United Church of Christ will take place on **Sunday, February 12th**, immediately following a short worship service. All members of the church are encouraged to attend. Please study and bring your copy of the 2011 Annual Report of our church (available in late January).

Annual Reports. . . are due to Kris in the church office by **Friday, January 13th, 2012**. A report reflecting on 2011 is needed from each board/committee chairperson. Please submit your report **electronically** and/or via email to Kris at vineucc@windstream.net. Please do not give her a hard copy that needs to be retyped. Thank you!



Did you know?

Communion Sunday - Holy Communion will be served during worship on **Sunday, January 8th**. If you would like Pastor Renae to bring Communion to your home, please call the church office at (402) 483-4781.

Offering Envelopes - if you used offering envelopes this past year or requested envelopes for 2012, please pick up your box of envelopes at the greeter's stand in the Narthex. There are several *extra* boxes available. If you would like a box, please contact the church office.

Visits from Pastor: each month Pastor Renae makes visits to members of our church. If you would like a visit from Pastor, please contact the church office to set up a date and time.

Pillows for sale - the new love seat in the chapel came with two decorative pillows that are not being used. These two new pillows will be on display in the Fellowship Hall on **January 8th and 15th**. Bids will be taken with the pillows going to the highest bidder.

Continuing Education for Pastor: on January 23rd - 27th, Pastor will be at *Chicago Theological Seminary* for a class toward her Doctoral Degree. She is in the process of writing her dissertation and plans to **graduate on May 12th!** The focus of her paper is in the area of Ritual Studies with an emphasis on Confirmation as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood.

Thanks

Thank you to Mary Johnson - for sewing the beautiful new blue Advent Communion tablecloth and stole.

My family and I want to express our thanks: to our Vine friends for the cards, memorials and comforting words of sympathy we have received on the death of my mother. I also want to give a special thanks to Pastor Renae for the love and support she has provided. We are so blessed to be part of such a warm and caring community at Vine. God bless you all! ~ Pat Criger

Thank you from Pastor and family - Thank you for the Christmas cards and gifts! Your love and support of my ministry and your care for my family are a blessing. Love and peace, Pastor Renae

Christmas Joy: Thank you to the whole church for making this Christmas such a wonderful experience! Remember all the faith, fun and fellowship we shared at the following: the children's Christmas pageant, the choir and bells music, Christmas caroling and parties, the beautiful poinsettias, and the Candlelight Christmas Eve service.

Thank you from CEDARS - Please accept our sincere appreciation for Vine Foundation's generous gift of \$2,000 in support of the renovation at our TLC facility.

CONGREGATION NEWS

New Members ♦ Baptisms ♦ Birthdays
Weddings ♦ Memorials ♦ Special Announcements



Please welcome new members:

- Randy & Stasha Back Family
- Josh & Larissa Codr Family
- Leah Klein
- Breana Romero

Happy Birthday!

- 1 - Laura Williams
- 2 - Ethan Siegfried
- 4 - Rick Williams
- 4 - Terry Otto

- 4 - Andrew Klein
- 5 - Peter Niimi
- 6 - Cheryl Svoboda
- 7 - Phil Mullin
- 7 - Annette Foreman
- 8 - Russ Workman
- 8 - Stevie Renken
- 8 - Zane Cox
- 9 - Pamela Wurst
- 10 - Lyle Johnson
- 10 - Doug Ellison
- 11 - Jeff Brown
- 11 - Sam Walls
- 11 - Scott Renken



- 12 - Abby Workman
- 13 - Steve Anderson
- 14 - Steve Martin
- 16 - DeLoyd Larsen
- 16 - Mark Darrington
- 17 - Roger Svatos
- 17 - Joyce Scheneman
- 18 - Marian Engler
- 18 - Gary Hergenrader
- 22 - Jim Johnson
- 25 - Jady Nimitz
- 26 - Kim Remmenga
- 28 - Kess Packett
- 30 - Frieda Bowes