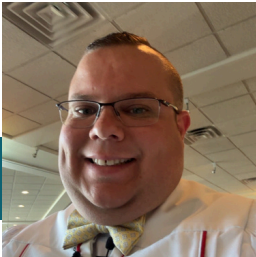


# CHUM NEWS

January 2025 Newsletter

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*- Jeremiah 29:11*



## A Message from the Pastor...

**Pastor Samuel Mohn**

Amazingly, it's that time. A new year has arrived, right on schedule...again. This is the time of year so many of us start making resolutions to change a certain area, or multiple areas in our lives. Maybe we have some extra pounds to shed. We might be committed to changing a specific behavior. New Year's resolutions range from simple desires to seemingly full-proof-plans for extensive life change. What we all have in common is the hope that something will change, and life will be different, and better, in the new year ahead.

Every year, people ring in the New Year with goals to live differently on some level. However, a few short weeks later, many of these very same well-wishers end up discouraged and filled with shame and remorse over their failed attempts to make their resolutions come to pass. Who knows? This may be the second, third, fourth, or 15th year someone has tried to "kick the habit." After so many misguided attempts, why would they even want to try again?

That's a good question. First consider a few additional questions...

What if every spring, the flowers just gave up on blooming?

What if the local birds that have migrated to some faraway place just decided to stay put on that tropical island?

What if the sun chose to hide behind the clouds all summer long?

Worse yet: what if Christ had not come to earth as a baby or hadn't risen from the dead?

I don't know about you, but I love fragrant, bright flowers, sweet singing birds are pretty nice, and, oh, how I love that summer sun smiling down on me! But the thought of Christ not defeating death is downright terrifying. Without his resurrection power, we really would have no hope for permanent life change – ever.

However, He was born. He died. And He most definitely did rise again.

That means this year, this month, today, or even this moment, is filled with hope for a better future, a future in Christ. We don't have to white-knuckle it anymore. Whatever your "it" might be, you too can release "it" into the capable hands of the ultimate Life-Changer.

When we desire change, we have the perfect example to follow: Jesus Christ. When we are ready to implement change, we have the perfect guide book: The Word of God. Finally, we have the perfect companion to strengthen our resolve: The Holy Spirit.

As we pursue change God's way, hope for a better future is no longer a dream; it becomes our reality. We truly can experience freedom in our lives today, tomorrow, and forever. With Christ, we don't have to wait for another New Year to roll around, or for the big glittery ball to drop in Times Square. God's mercy is new every morning. We can pursue our own new beginning right now.

We are to follow Christ. As we pursue him and seek to imitate his ways, we move forward in our process of change. No more slip-sliding backwards. When we truly follow Jesus, we are on the path that moves forward and upward, one prayer at a time.

Prayers are incredibly powerful. They are the foundation for any life change we desire. As we earnestly pray, we will find ourselves empowered by the one true source of power. There is no better time to pray than right now. Let us pray persistently and consider our Christian brothers and sisters everywhere. After all, we are on this journey together.

As we walk in godly love for one another, by forgiving, encouraging, and helping, we will find the strength to do what one person alone could never, ever accomplish. We need the Spirit's empowerment, and the encouragement we gain from each other. Together, we can move mountains! Often, our new beginning rests just on the other side of the highest peak. But together, we can make it through the roughest terrain. We were never meant to "go it" alone. Jesus had 12 disciples. He knew the value of loving and supporting relationships. Let us learn from his example.

As we've discovered, change can be challenging, but this New Year, as we journey together down the road of hope and faith, let's stay focused on the One guiding us: Christ.

Happy New Year! And happy new beginnings!

On a personal note thank you for all of your generosity shown to me over the Christmas season.

Peace,  
Pastor Sam

## I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry

by John Ylvisaker

The Faith We Sing No. 2051

“I was there to hear your borning cry,  
I’ll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,  
to see your life unfold.”\*

© 1985 John Ylvisaker. Used with permission.

“Borning Cry” has grown increasingly important in the hymn singing of the church, especially on special occasions, such as baptisms, confirmation, and memorial services. The hymn has also been adapted for choirs and handbells by several different arrangers.

Instead of the much more common perspective of person/people to God or about God, the text uniquely speaks to God’s people from God’s perspective. Few hymns offer this perspective. It represents the dialectic opposites of God’s transcendence and immanence at the same moment. The transcendent God begins the hymn text and throughout each stanza, most especially at the end, the words also reflect the immanent God, who is there at every phase of our lives.

In an age that appears to present more opportunity for music and text to be directed towards specific times and stages of people’s lives, this hymn transcends any specific generational attachment. Also, in an age that continues the ongoing, often arbitrary categorization of songs into “traditional” or “contemporary” genres, this hymn captures the best of both worlds, just as it captures the transcendent/immanent God.

The text offers something for everyone as it represents God’s unchanging presence, even as our lives never cease to change. It beautifully represents each generation and its special season. Stanza 3 proclaims at the beginning that God is there during childhood and then, as suddenly as it seems to happen in life, abruptly shifts to the questing adolescent and young adult stage. The stanzas continue through the stages of life, making way for and blessing possible covenantal relationships while not making the assumption that everyone will do so. In the text, God reveals God’s self to us through our middle age, finally arriving at the winter of our lives. God’s lovingly expressed words to us even as, in old age, we tire and prepare to receive the mystery of what lies ahead in eternity is portrayed as a “surprise.” Rather than a concrete description, the text offers no specifics as to what awaits us as we end this life on earth and begin our life eternal – just a gentle promise. In this promise of a “surprise” is also an acknowledgment that during our lives there come many surprises, through which God has guided us.

The melody itself reflects God’s presence. It begins on the third tone of the scale and seems to have already been in progress, perfectly illustrating the presence of God which existed prior to the persons who are being addressed. The beauty of the melody is in its simplicity and its ability to be easily learned and used in corporate singing. The “circle of life” is represented as well by the repetition of the first stanza text as the last stanza text. Simple flute or violin obligato lines are also a beautiful addition to this melody, and the countermelody by the instrument can be woven in and out of the main melodic line, representing the ever-present Lord of our lives.

The author and composer is John Carl Ylvisaker (b. 1937), a native of Moorhead, Minnesota, and a graduate of Concordia College in the same town. His website states,

He is renowned for his paraphrase of biblical text and theological astuteness, as well as his ability to recognize or write tunes people in the pew can readily sing. John has inspired audiences with his live performances and worship leadership at the many assemblies, conferences, and gatherings where he has appeared. Currently he is involved in producing recordings of his work.<sup>1</sup>

Although “Borning Cry” is Ylvisaker’s most famous work, his website also states that his repertoire is quite large, including more than 1,000 songs.

The composition of “Borning Cry” began in 1985, with a different, faster tune. Having been asked to adapt the song with a more gentle tempo, he later used the first version of “Borning Cry” for what would become another of his songs, “I Will Dance With Jesus.” In this ability to adapt, Ylvisaker shows an example of what he states is important in the use of folk tunes as a basis for hymns—flexibility.

Ylvisaker is the editor of a book of songs by the same title: *Borning Cry*. The collection provides more than 900 biblical texts, anthems, solos, liturgical songs and 120 of his original compositions. In the preface to the second edition of *Borning Cry*, Ylvisaker writes:

St. Paul’s references to “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” suggests that two new elements were added, “hymns” (a style borrowed from the Greeks) and “spiritual songs,” which was a new category probably resulting from the intimate sort of God the Christians worshiped. Jesus was a

God who not only became human, but also had friends and siblings, and a mom and dad. The spiritual songs were probably love songs to Jesus and story songs about his remarkable life here on earth.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, Ylvisaker concludes the preface with this statement, which is exemplified in this hymn:

“It’s only recently that we’ve been forced to decide between formal and informal, between orthodox and pietist, between contemporary and traditional. I don’t think it’s ever been a legitimate demand on the worshiper. I, for one, can be nurtured by both streams. I need to have my mind stimulated by the performance tradition and I need to have my heart touched by full participation in the song tradition of the church” (from the preface to *Borning Cry – Worship for a New Generation* in 1994).

In this hymn, we find stimulation of the mind by the images represented in the text, and hearts are touched by the assurance found in the words, “I was there...”

## January Birthdays

1/4 June Byo, Michael Moliterno, Gabriel Pekalla

1/6 Andrew Yoder

1/8 Jennifer Berlin

1/9 Joette Sondheimer

1/10 Zachary Dougherty

1/12 Julie Catchpole

1/19 Carol Smith

1/20 Aria Selway

1/23 Melanie Asay

1/30 Joseph Seifert, Kay Toth



## Upcoming Events

- **Join us for a potluck** this Sunday, January 12 at 5:30pm. There will be a Nativity Display in the dining hall from January 12 to January 19.
- We will be having a **Soup Sale on Super Bowl Sunday** to support King's Kids/Youth for meals at Spring semester meetings. We will collect hearty soups (Chili, Cheesy Potato, etc.) on Saturday Feb 8th from noon to 2pm. The sale will go from 2 to 3pm on Saturday, and after church on Feb 9th. Valentine treats will also be available to purchase.
- The **Food Pantry** is drive-through only between January 10 and February 7, from 10am to noon. Setup will be on the Thursday before, in the morning only, at 9:30am.
- **King's Kids and Youth Group** resume January 22 on Wednesday nights. See below for details:
  - 4:45pm - start time
  - 6pm - family meal
  - 7pm - pickup time
- **Grief Share** begins March 6 through June 5 at 6pm on Thursday evenings. Contact Jan Ferry for details.
- Save the date for this year's **Health Fair**: Saturday March 22 in Church Hill's Dining Hall and Lobby area. See Julia Catchpole for details.
- The **Children's Fair** will be on Saturday, April 5th. See Terri West for details.

# January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3	4 <i>Lead singer 11a</i>
5 <i>Worship 10a</i>	6	7	8 <i>Choir 7:30p</i>	9 <i>pantry set-up 9:30a</i> <i>Bible Study 10:30a</i>	10 <i>Pantry drive thru 10 to Noon</i> <i>Setup for pot-luck</i>	11
12 <i>Worship 10</i> <i>Potluck 5:30</i> <i>Nativity setup</i>	13 <i>ACTION brunch mtg 9:30a to Noon</i>	14	15 <i>Choir 7:30p</i>	16 <i>Bible Study 10:30a</i>	17	18
19 <i>Worship 10</i> <i>Nativity last day</i>	20	21	22 <i>KK/Youth 4:45p</i> <i>Choir 7:30p</i>	23 <i>Bible study 10:30a</i>	24	25 <i>Pekalla Party</i> <i>Seteup 11m</i> <i>Party 2 to 4</i>
26 <i>Worship 10a</i>	27	28	29 <i>KK/Youth 4:45p</i> <i>Choir 7:30</i>	30 <i>Bible Study 10:30a</i>	31	

## Connect with us!

Website:

[www.churchhillumc.com](http://www.churchhillumc.com)

Facebook: [facebook.com/  
ChurchHillUMC](https://www.facebook.com/ChurchHillUMC)

## Worship with us Sundays at 10am!

**Church Hill United  
Methodist Church**

189 Churchill-Hubbard Rd.  
Youngstown, OH 44505

Livestream available at:

[www.youtube.com/@churc  
hillumc6144](https://www.youtube.com/@churchhillumc6144)

## Our Team

**Sam Mohn**, Pastor

**Jane Page**, Director of  
Worship

**Carla Jenkins**, Pianist

**Terri West**, Children's  
Director

**Deanna Slifka**, Youth  
Director

**Joe Seifert**, Sound Room  
Tech

**Charity Washington**,  
Custodian

## Prayer Requests

Lee Elmo, Dora Baker, Ron Baker, Elaine (friend of Gay M.), Nancy Smith, Becky Paul, Helen Hess, David Moyers, Eileen Hawkins, Jeff Hawkins, Darlene Capitola, Andre Williams and Dianne, his mother, Jimmy Quinlan, Joette Sondheimer (Viv Seifert's sister), Les Thomas, Jane Doughton, Kevin Vara, Lori Vara, Carol Smith, Ron Miller (Ken Miller's cousin), Alma Knupp, DeeAnn (Carla Jenkins' sister), Samuel M, Sandy (Terri West's sister), Ken Hunter, Clara Jones, Frank Zedek, John Baksa, Viv Seifert, Ellen Hardgrove, Carter Denning, the Essad family, and the students, teachers, military members and their families

**Contact Linda Toepfer at 330-718-2361 for the current prayer list and to request prayers.**

