

Mantua Center Christian Church

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Pastor Chad Delaney

ANNUAL REPORT ***2008***



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Minister's Report

Since I began as your pastor on August 12, 2008, I've had the great pleasure of getting to know all of you over the last several months. We've visited in your homes, met for lunches, and enjoyed food and fellowship at Loaves and Fishes and the Over the Hill Gang Dinners. We've studied the scriptures together and had wonderful Sunday School discussions. Already I have been overwhelmed with a sense of belonging and friendship...it's a wonderful feeling. During my time as a student at Hiram, I would drive past MCCC unaware of the people and the amazing things that were happening here—now I know and I've become a better person for it. My family and I have been welcomed with open arms and we feel so blessed to be here with you.

Every church's journey of faith is filled with trials and difficulties as well as great love and joy. Our church has had its share of both since my arrival. Our congregation has witnessed the ebb and flow of life with babies being born and loved ones passing away, but each has been handled with caring hearts and warm embraces. In the midst of difficulty our prayer life has been active. Our hugs have held a little longer and tighter. Tears have been shed and stories have been shared to bring healing and laughter. In the midst of joyful events our love for God and for each other has deepened. We have matured together in spirit and faith and have allowed God to work in our midst. We have grown excited about the possibilities of our ministry together.

Together we have witnessed the emergence of new ministries as well as the continuation and re-making of old ones. We've seen the lay people of our congregation give so much of their time and energy to the ministries of our church. My own spirit has been deeply impacted by the sincere heart for mission that is shared by so many here at Mantua Center Christian Church.

I give thanks to God for giving me the opportunity to share my first lead ministry experience with such a welcoming, warm, and loving community. It has been a wonderful 5 months and I look forward to the future that God has for us together.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Chad Delaney

"And may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Phil 4:7 (NRSV)

The Church Board

2008, by all accounts, was an exciting year in the life of Mantua Center Christian Church. It can be described as a year of transition, and a year of action. The hard work of our *Go Team* lead us to our Statement of Calling, and Ministry Plan, wherein we defined who we are and where we are going as a congregation. At the beginning of the year, we transitioned from this process of self-discovery to the process of searching for a pastor to compliment our new vision. With the *Go Team's* work complete, the *Go Forth Team* was formed as our pastoral search committee. With the aid of Dr. Bill Edwards, our Regional Pastor, we began the process of calling a pastor. The *Go Forth Team* shared with Dr. Edwards our Statement of Calling, Ministry Plan, Congregational Profile and Pastoral Preferences Narrative to share with candidates. These documents, the result of many surveys and discussions, laid an excellent foundation for the *Go Forth Team* to represent the congregation in finding a pastor to join our church family. Dr. Edwards explained that a pastor search is a journey of prayerful discernment. Our decision to call a pastor should be based on individual and collective prayerful discernment on who God is calling to be our next pastor.

The search began in January, and through many hours of phone interviews, in person interviews, discussions and much prayerful consideration, the *Go Forth Team* came to a consensus in April. Considering the recommendation of the *Go Forth Team*, and after a special service with our pastor candidate, the congregation unanimously agreed to call Pastor Charles (Chad) Delaney to be the next pastor of the Mantua Center Christian Church.

Pastor Chad, Christin, CJ, Josh and Avery joined our church family in August. The Delaney's quickly became immersed in the life of the church, taking an active and interactive role in our many activities and ministries. We are very thankful for all the gifts the Delaney's bring, and we look forward to a new year full of exciting possibilities. It certainly seems that this is a match made in heaven!

During the first half of the year, we were fortunate to continue to be served by interim pastor Houston Bowers. Houston provided invaluable counsel in both our visioning and pastoral search process. As interim pastor, Houston's role was to help us heal and prepare for a new pastor, and a new chapter in the life of the congregation. Not only did he do this, but he and Mary helped us find our joy again, while moving forward with a renewed sense of purpose.

A special farewell service for the Bowers in June included music from the choir, hand bells and Centerpeace, thoughtful meditations, a slideshow remembrance and an irreverent skit. Just like Houston's ministry, a little bit of everything all wrapped up together for a special time. How blessed we were to have the Bowers for 2 years, serving, leading and being a part of our church family.

The Church Board - continued

Even with these significant transitions, there was plenty of action at the Center. From individual ministries to large-scale efforts, existing ministries to new ministries, we were busy in 2008. Passion for missions was evident; our giving to all types of missions grew as we supported SMILE, Shadow Woodstock, the 4-Cs, youth and adult mission trips, OWM and Over-The-Hill-Gang meals & programs and Loaves & Fishes. We provided meals to shut-ins and prayer shawls to those in need. Other emerging ministries included Ellie Monroe's quilt ministry, landscaping/beautification of the church grounds, and our new Story Time for pre-school children. We supported the Megan Brant scholarship, gave several scholarships to our college students and bought a washing machine for an orphanage in Argentina. In addition to these activities, our giving to denominational outreach remained strong.

We help prayer vigils, engaged in a Lenten study and started a weekly bible study. Our Sunday school program continued to thrive, moving in exciting directions in the fall. Our youth were busy in service, study and fun activities in addition to a mission trip, camp and youth Sundays. We enjoyed fellowship in potlucks, picnics, the annual "Baseball with the Babes", and the Christmas party. A highlight in our spiritual life together was the baptism of 5 members in the river during the spring.

Our worship experiences were enhanced with all types of music: piano, organ, vocal and bell choirs, Centerpeace and many special musical performances. We continued to be blessed with laypersons serving as worship leaders, inspirational elder meditations and thoughtful, challenging and spiritual preaching.

We ended the year introducing a new church structure, with the focus on enabling us to be more efficient and effective in living out our Statement of Calling and Ministry Plan. With leadership positions filled by enthusiastic volunteers, we look forward to an exciting and fruitful 2009, as we continue to seek ways to live out God's will in our world.

In 2008 we lost some dear friends and gained some new ones. We worked together, played together, laughed together, cried together, prayed together and shared some incredible spiritual moments together. It was indeed a year of action, transition and transformation. We are truly blessed!

Submitted by,
Brian Hurd, 2008/2009 Board Chair

Christian Education

This past year the following gifted and talented people were at the helm of our Sunday school Classes:

Pre-school - 2 nd grade	Beth Schabel & Paul Magyarics
3 rd - 5 th grade	Tom Gerez Laurie Metzko Dottie Summerlin
Junior High	Carol Magyarics
Senior High	Brian Hurd & Rick Painley
Life 101	Carol Srajer & Joan Siman
Campbell Class	Len Malotte & helpers
"The Little Rascals"	Janet Nichols, Evonne & Ken Fox

As always our teachers do a wonderful job working with our children, youth, and adults. The time and commitment that they make each week is so appreciated.

This year we decided on the first Sunday of every month to have the Sunday School Dept. classes, adults and kids, meet in the sanctuary for a time of music and a sharing of our churches outreach programs. Each month we had a different group explain what their outreach in ministry was. We heard from the prayer shawl ministry, Loaves and Fishes, Four C's, etc.

In December our kids and adults sponsored a child from the Four C's Christmas trees and we went out and bought Christmas gifts for our child. We gathered together one Sunday in the fellowship hall and had a gift wrapping party...it was a great time.

This year was one of goodbyes and new endeavors. In late summer we said our goodbyes and extended our good wishes to Rev. Houston Bowers as his time with us as an interim pastor came to a close. Thank you Houston and Mary for all the great memories... In late August we welcomed our new Pastor, Chad Delaney and his family! We are so excited that they are here and we are looking forward to his leadership and guidance. In late October we said goodbye to Tommy Gerez. Tom was a fixture with our 3rd-5th grade classes. Tom's trade mark style was teaching the kids the 10 commandments with the aid of his ever ready stash of candies!! He taught with love, laughter, and compassion. He is greatly missed.

Submitted by,
Evonne Fox

Clerk Report

Transfers of Membership to MCCC

- Morris Pengilly - transfer from Euclid Avenue Christian Church (Jan)
- Joy Wyatt - transfer from Euclid Avenue Christian Church (Jan)
- Chad Delaney - transfer from High Street Christian Church (Aug)
- Christin Delaney - transfer from High Street Christian Church (Aug)
- Carol Buzbee - transfer from Westlake Christian Church (Dec)

Transfers of Membership to another church

- Shirley Stanley (January)

Confessions of Faith

- Sarah Steed

Baby Dedications

- Jennylynn Grace Mink - dedicated by Kara (Alger) & Jason Mink (January)
- Avery Jordan Delaney - dedicated by Chad & Christen Delaney

Deaths

- Emma Jones (Sept)
- Leonard Hirschman (Aug)
- Margaret Newell (May)
- Harry Guyette (March)
- Tom Gerez (Oct)
- Pat Feightner (Nov)
- Mary Ellen Buell (Dec)

Baptisms

- Tara Finch (June)
- Corrine Goggin (June)
- Caitlin Goggin (June)
- Alan Korner (June)
- Carolin Newell (June)

Elders Report

For better continuity during the church restructuring program the four outgoing Elders were asked to extend their terms for an additional year and they agreed to do that. Since our role as the spiritual leaders of the congregation involves teaching, shepherding and as well as presiding at the table, we began with the process of reevaluating the shepherding program since it does not seem to be working as we had envisioned. We recognize that we have many members who are actually acting as shepherds within the church but due to fear of public speaking or other reasons have declined an elder position. In light of this we have looked at having presiding elders and shepherds who may or may not be elders. We are still working on this process.

Norman Alger submitted his resignation since he now spends several months in Florida each year and has been replaced by Roger Hurd. We are very fortunate to have the wisdom of both these men who have served our congregation faithfully for many years.

Our plans for the coming year include a retreat for the elders as we learn new skills for serving our church family.

Respectfully submitted,
Nora Brant
Elder Chair

Diaconate (terms completed Dec 2008)

Nancy Brucker, Karla Collins, Rowena Finch, Linda Hobson, Mike Hoskin, Brian Hurd, Lori Hurd, Sue Hurd, Diane Kinter, Eileen Kinter, Midge Kotkowski, Carol Magyarics, Paul Magyarics, John Metzko, Pat Sargent, Parker Schabel, Joan Siman, Dave Weldy

Diaconate (terms completed Dec 2009)

Bill Alger, Jeannie Alger, Lisa Bennett, Tim Bennett, Cal Brant, Mike Hoskin, Pat Hoskin, Mike Howard, Alex Hurd, Brian Hurd, Linda Hurd, Philip Hurd, Roger Hurd, Vic Magyarics, Wayne Meyer, Pat Miller, Rick Painley, Sam Roubic, Alyssa Schabel, George Srajer, Cathy Stanton, Nancy Tafel, Robin Vaughan, Sammi Vaughan

Library

Books for the youth library have been placed this year, honoring our newest young members at their dedication.

Honoring Jennilyn Mink, daughter of Josh and Kara Mink, dedicated December 2007:

The Last Straw, by Fredrick H. Thury, Illustrated by Vlasta van Kampe.

Honoring Avery Jordan Delaney, daughter of Chad and Christin Delaney:

Cookies: Bite-Size Life Lessons, by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

A new shelf was set up this year of general interest to Disciples. This shelf contains books written by Disciples, books about our denomination, its heritage and people who have been leaders in our denomination. We have added to the shelf of worship helps available to those who are our Worship leaders and other interested people.

With input from Christin Delaney we added about a dozen books to our preschool shelves for general use and to be used in her Story Time. Jan Green donated several books that explain the stories behind many of our favorite hymns.

In the fiction department, donations were made by Pat Sargent and Marie Derthick. Marie donated a series called **Mystery and the Minister's wife**. Several books were found in the library, donated by unknown persons. These will be added to the library under the guide lines that have been adopted for accepting books into the church library. Len Malotte donated several books of general interest and enrichment that includes a couple of C.S. Lewis books and a Disciple author.

We continue to have many books out that have not been returned. Please look around and see if they are hiding in some forgotten corner of your home.

Submitted by Pat Magyarics

Membership Committee

Our committee was mostly dormant this year, for which I take responsibility. In the midst of searching for a new pastor and waiting for the new church organizational structure to better align with our Ministry Plan, we were not active as a group this year but I guess we can take some credit for several successful events this past year:

- We bid a fond farewell to Houston and Mary Bowers in May. Everyone enjoyed a slideshow remembrance of their two years at MCCC, in addition to presenting them with a fully outfitted SERMONATOR 3000 shopping cart. And who can forget the Jay (in drag, "Oh my!") and Brian skit? The Bowers graciously fed us all at the Civic Center afterward - a fun time was had by all.
- The worship / baptism / picnic in the park was held in June, with good attendance, good weather, good food, and five new members joining our fellowship.
- We held a reception to welcome the Delaney family MCCC in August, and provided a "welcome wagon" of items, complete with a one-of-a-kind WhompChester, from the creative mind of a guy with a lot of time on his hands (Don Baird).
- The Baseball with the Babes was another of our annual events that we pulled off at the last minute with great success. On a beautiful fall day at Alger's Field, the MCCC team actually pulled out a win, thanks (as always) to those Hoffman Girls and the Magyarics Clan. (And our new pastor? Delaney got some game too.)
- The Summerlin family was kind enough to host our Annual Christmas Party this year - always a highly anticipated and fun event.

In addition, we sent letters of welcome to visitors along with a brochure about The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

I look forward to working with Katie Baird in 2009, as the Membership Committee has been re-constituted as the Involvement & Engagement Ministry Team. We have an ambitious agenda, and once we get the right team in place, we will start moving forward with activities that support our Ministry Plan.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Hurd

Outreach

This year a total of \$13,131 was given in Outreach special offerings. In addition to the special offerings for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Week of Compassion, members donated considerable funds to the work of the Westside Mission in New Orleans. The Week of Compassion Annual Campaign was highlighted by a visit from Amy Gopp, Associate Director, Week of Compassion, Disciples of Christ.

We have begun an effort to expand the focus of the Outreach Ministry, to include a more broad overview of all MCCC's Outreach giving, beyond its previous focus on special offerings.

Submitted by Sue Hurd

**MCCC 2008
STEWARDSHIP AND TREASURERS REPORT
YEAR-END SNAPSHOT**

General Fund Balance On Hand January 1, 2008		\$ 27,433.13
Receipts For 2008		
Pledges	\$ 86,165.00	
Offering	\$ 19,990.00	
Misc	\$ 225.00	
Checking Interest	\$ 132.64	
Reimbursed Income	\$ 4,756.90	
Special Offerings	\$ 13,131.20	
Parsonage	\$ 2,111.29	
Sunday School Offering	\$ 186.00	
Memorial Offerings	\$ 2,458.00	
C4 Group Projects	\$ 310.00	
Disbursements for 2008		
Budget Related Disbursements	\$ 98,448.90	
Reimbursed Expense Disbursements	\$ 15,740.24	
General Fund Ending Balance December 31, 2008		\$ 30,308.02
Certificates of Deposit Balance December 31, 2008		\$ 77,397.34
Total Available Funds Balance December 31, 2008		\$ 107,705.36
Special Offerings		
X-mas	511.00	
Week of Compassion	1340.00	
Easter	250.00	
Loaves & Fishes	20.00	
Thanksgiving	448.00	
Mission Fund	5547.20	
Westside Mission Center	2990.00	
Unusual Disbursements		
General Assembly Expenses	2391.05	
Katrina Trip	700.00	
Organ & Candleabra Repair	1306.00	
Parsonage Repairs	13111.21	
Budget Performance for 2008 (See attachment)		
Receipts to General Fund	\$ 106,341	
Budgetary disbursements	\$ 102,001	
Spending under(over) budget	\$ 4,340	
Budget Summary 2009 (See Attachment)		
Budget amount submitted	\$ 109,919	
Pledges received for 2008 Budget	\$ 88,130	
% of Pledges to Total Budget	80%	
Activities Planned For 2009		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Start reporting CD balances. -Stewardship campaign -Record and track expenses for the new structure 		

Worship Committee

I accepted the job of Worship Chair from Laurie Metzko during the Lenten season. Laurie held my hand throughout the transition and continues to be a blessing. I would also like to thank Katie Baird for her guidance. Most of all I am deeply grateful to and for Janet Nichols and Sue Hurd. (They continue to pick me up as I feel my way through this task☺)

We maintained the role of the worship leader in the weekly services although the tasks went through some modifications. The modifications were based on an informal survey the committee conducted to make sure that the worship experience was reaching as many people as possible. The role of the worship leader is to create and recite the Call to Worship, choose the Welcoming Hymn, write and deliver the Invitation to Give and the Prayer of Thanksgiving, select the Communion Hymn, and guide the Ministerial Announcements at the end of the service. We have had some difficulty finding worship leaders, but it is gratifying to see the people who step forward.

Jason Bricker-Thompson of Hiram College delivered the sermon on April 6th, 2008. He focused on the good works of the Fair Trade Organization. I want to thank Nancy Humes for helping develop and delivering the Pentecost service on May 11th, 2008. We had a consecration (burning) of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

On May 18th, 2008, Brother Vance from New Orleans preached at the Hiram Christian Church. It was a combined service with Hilltop and Mantua Center. (It was decided that we (the 3 churches need to continue to have worship services together regularly.)

Again, we had baptism at the Cuyahoga River on June 8th, 2008. Houston Bowers presided with Janet Nichols, Ken Fox, and Evonne Fox providing the music in the Mantua Village Park. A pot luck lunch followed.

In June we experienced the transition from our interim minister Houston Bowers to our new pastor Chad Delaney. On June 29th, 2008, we celebrated our friendship with Houston and Mary Bowers. We are sorry to see them go to their next interim ministry, but, we are delighted that they have purchased a house in Hiram. Steve Hurd, Brian Hurd, Jay Schabel, and Rick Painley roasted Houston and Mary after the regular service. (Never has Jay looked so good in a house frock. OH MY!!!!!!) Afterwards we went to the community house for lunch.

Chad was not to start until August, so, we had quite a few Sundays to fill. Russ Goldner preached on June 15th, 2008. Bob Kloos from Beacon Street Ministries delivered his usual animated presentation on June 22nd. Dan Garrett performed his musical sermon on July 6th. Nancy Humes filled the pulpit on July 13th. The youth described their mission trip to Buffalo on July 20th. Tom Gerez facilitated. On July 27th Peter Cascio visited Mantua Center. He is a friend of Ellie Monroe. Len Malotte took the August 3rd slot. On August 12th we had a musical sermon performed by our own Center Peace.

Worship Committee - continued

As we began our services with our new Pastor, Chad Delaney, the Worship Committee found it very easy to work with him. Chad came with the intention of doing much listening in his first few months.

Christin and Chad dedicated Avery on September 29th, 2008. Much of the Delaney family was in attendance.

On October 5th, 2008, our regional minister, Dr. Bill Edwards, installed Chad in Mantua Center and preached the sermon. Ohio is lucky to have such an outstanding regional minister.

In little time the Advent season was upon us. One part of worship is to light the Advent Wreath. Grandparents and their grandchildren shared a message and lit the candles. For the children's message, Chad chose to 'construct' a manger scene week by week introducing and discussing different characters.

The Christmas Eve service was marked by a skit based on the Leo Tolstoy short story, "Shoemaker Martin". Lauren Welch and Peggy Painley adapted the story to more suit our congregation and their talents calling it "Maria's Window". We also created a live manger scene with reflections of some of the characters. Our thanks to Jeannie and Randy Alger, Don Baird, and Ellie Schabel for their help in making the story of Christmas come to life.

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Painley, Worship Chair

Youth Report

The word for the Chi Rho group in 2008 was service. The middle schoolers continued to serve the congregation by doing yard work and other household chores throughout the year. They also cleaned the church on a regular basis, set up for Loaves & Fishes meals and prepared and served the Easter Sunrise breakfast.

A highlight of the year was the annual Whirlyball and lock-in night at the church, which lots of food, games, movies and fun, but very little sleep.

We sent 6 kids and 2 counselors to camp in July. New friends were made as Camp Portage combined with Camp Cuyahoga to form Camp Portahoga.

The middle school Sunday school class made decorations and posters advertising the Loaves & Fishes meal, bought and wrapped gifts for the community giving tree and decorated nail aprons for those going on the New Orleans mission trip.

The high schoolers participated in studies on Fair Trade and Living Green. They learned about the positive environmental impact of Polyflow, Jay Schabel's company, and helped ready plastic products for recycling. A group studied local ecology at the Hiram College Biology Station in the summer.

Fun activities included canoeing on the Cuyahoga, a progressive dinner, and a visit to a haunted house. Our annual lock-in included a great discussion between the boys and the girls. Each group came up with questions of the opposite sex that you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask.

In May we "honored" graduating senior Toby Gerez with a basketball themed roast, and we played "Are You Smarter Than A High Schooler" with Julie Stehli. Both Toby and Julie graduated in the top 10 in their class, received numerous awards and scholarships. We celebrated their achievements and thanked them for contributing to the life of our church family.

We participated in the CROP walk, collected goods for the 4-Cs and held fundraisers for the mission trip fund. The 2008 mission trip was in Buffalo, with 6 youth and 3 adults joining other youth from Hiram, Hilltop, Cuyahoga Falls Christina Church, South Haven United Church of Christ and Central Christian Church in Hubbard. The group stayed worked on both demolition and renovation projects in the city. We stayed in an old church building, which had been converted to a community/mission center. We learned about this unique community ministry started by an Ohio couple who decided to sell all they owned to start this outreach ministry center. Shortly after the trip, we sent 3 kids to CYF conference for a week to catch the spirit of Camp Christian.

In July the youth and leaders spoke to the congregation about their mission trip and camp experiences. This included testimonials and songs from kids who attended the Partnership camp, Chi Rho camp and CYF conference.

Youth Report - continued

Our CYF United Maundy Thursday service portrayed the temptations faced by teens, and how Christ can take these burdens and distractions away. This moving service, set to music, sent a powerful message of Christ's redeeming love.

Peace Sunday was titled "A Light Unto My Path", showing different situations where kids can stray from the path. We explored how friends, family, our church family, prayer and scripture can all help light the way to get us back on the path. We broke out in small groups to discuss the influences of "lights" in our lives, sharing our faith journeys. We ended in a circle with candle lighting, song and a prayer, *when we have the light of Christ's peace within us, help us to realize that we need to share this with others, lighting the path toward you. May the peace of Christ shine in your life for all to see.*

Submitted by Brian Hurd and Rick Painley

Nominations For 2009

Elder: Roger Hurd

Diaconate: Elders to work with Diaconate to determine roles and confirm

Clerk/Historian: Dottie Summerlin and Steve Hurd

Trustees: Don Baird, Randy Alger, and Mike Hoskin

Secretary: Sue Hurd, combined Board and Office

Treasurer: Jay Schabel

Board Vice Chair: Len Malotte

Outreach Co-Chairs: Sue Hurd and Ellie Monroe

Involvement & Engagement Co-Chairs: Katie Baird and Steve Hurd

Worship & Equipping Co-Chairs: Beth Schabel and Rick Painley