

# THE EPWORTH TOWER

JANUARY 2021

4855 W. Central Ave Toledo, Ohio 43615 | 419.531.4236 | [epworth.com](http://epworth.com)

PRESCHOOL  
OPEN HOUSE:  
Sunday, Feb. 7  
(1-3pm)

CDO and Preschool  
Registration for Epworth Families  
will begin Feb. 1

## Epworth Preschool:

Early Childhood Education Center is a half day preschool program for children 3-5 years old. Classes are offered 2, 3 or 4 half days am or pm.

## CDO:

Children's Day Out is a one day early preschool program for children who are 2 or 3. Children cannot turn 4 during the school year and they do not have to be potty-trained.



Epworth members have an opportunity to sign up for ECEC or CDO before registration opens to the public during the Open House on February 7. To schedule a visit, please contact Jane Lyon, Director, at [jlyon@epworth.com](mailto:jlyon@epworth.com) or pick up a registration packet in the Lobby.

# January 2021

## 3 INFO & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- + Sympathies
- + Thanks!
- + Inclement Weather Policy
- + *Feed Your Neighbor* Food Pantry
- + Support Altar Flower Fund
- + AmazonSmile

## 4 PASTORAL LETTER & #WEAREEPWORTH

## 5 ANNOUNCEMENTS / CARE

- + Healing And Wholeness Service
- + Upcoming Guest Preachers
- + Wellness Message
- + Stephen Ministry

## 6 GROW / SERVE / GIVE

- + January Sermon Series
- + Wednesday Oasis Classes Begin
- + Furniture Ministry
- + Sack Lunch Project

## 7 GROW: KIDS & YOUTH / SERVE / GIVE

- + Epworth Preschool
- + Epworth Kids: January
- + January S.W.A.T.
- + School Supply Drive for Hawkins STEMM Academy Partnership

## Our Promise

*Help for today,  
Hope for tomorrow,  
And a place to call Home.*

## February Tower Deadline:

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2021

*E-mail articles & pictures to  
communications@epworth.com*

## Saturday Worship

- **4:30PM 30-MINUTE WORSHIP SERVICE** - Hear an inspiring message of faith and hope at this 30-minute service. Perfect for those who are on-the-go who still want to get a lift of faith each week.

## Sunday Worship

- **8:30AM WORSHIP W/WEEKLY HOLY COMMUNION** - This classic service includes Holy Communion served every week
- **9:45AM CLASSIC** - Steeped in the warm-hearted Methodist tradition featuring choral and organ music
- **11:00AM MODERN** - Fast-paced and featuring our praise band
- **NEW! WORSHIP ON TV** - Tune in to WTOL CBS local **Channel 11** at 11:30am for a televised broadcast of our weekly worship following CBS's top-rated Sunday morning show, Face the Nation.

## Online Worship

- **WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK** - Participate virtually in our worship services every Sunday at 8:30 am at **epworth.com/Live**. Simply tune in online and watch and worship with us! If you can't view live at 8:30, the message is rebroadcast on facebook at 9:45 am and remains accessible on our facebook page throughout the week at **facebook.com/EpworthToledo**. You can always access any of our streamed sermons 24/7 at **Epworth.com/sermons**. Invite family and friends and celebrate Sundays with your Epworth Family.

## Stay Connected

- **WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER**  
*Sign up for the weekly e-newsletters!*  
Go to: [epworth.com/email](http://epworth.com/email)
- **OBITUARY NOTIFICATIONS**  
*Sign up to receive obituary notifications!*  
Go to: [epworth.com/email](http://epworth.com/email)
- **SOCIAL MEDIA**



/EpworthToledo



/EpworthChurchToledo



/EpworthToledo

## Our Pastors:

**DR. STEPHEN SWISHER**

Senior Pastor  
[steve@epworth.com](mailto:steve@epworth.com)

**REV. BETH IRWIN**

Associate Pastor  
[beth@epworth.com](mailto:beth@epworth.com)

**REV. DAVE PETTENGILL**

Associate Pastor  
[dave@epworth.com](mailto:dave@epworth.com)

## Sympathies ~ recent deaths

- **THE SQUIRE FAMILY** for the passing of April Squire.
- **THE CALDWELL FAMILY** for the passing of Barb's father.
- **THE FOSTER/JOHANSEN FAMILIES** for the passing of Wanda Foster's daughter, Meredith (Foster) Johansen.
- **THE ISAAC/HOMRA FAMILIES** for the passing of Dee's brother, Allen Homra.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The Church building closes if there is a Level 3 Snow Emergency in Lucas county.

### Preschool (ECEC & CDO):

- Canceled if Ottawa Hills Schools close.\*
- 1 hour delay: Preschool opens on time.
- 2 hour delay: Preschool morning classes canceled, afternoon classes will meet.

\* The preschool reserves the right to cancel classes regardless of Ottawa Hills schedule, should extenuating circumstances arise.

## FEED YOUR NEIGHBOR FOOD PANTRY

Thank you to the generous spirit of Epworth for their donations to feed Your Neighbor. For the months of January and February they would like the following:

Regular jars of peanut butter	Pinto bean dry or cans
Saltine crackers	Kidney beans
Ramen packages	Egg noodles
Small cans beef stew	Canned spinach
	Canned carrots

If you have any questions contact Carol Bardi at [cpb5538@gmail.com](mailto:cpb5538@gmail.com).

## With Appreciation...

### ...FOR YOUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Thank you to the generous Epworth congregation for **donating 30 turkeys to St. Paul's Community Center** so the residents could enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner and probably many turkey dinners after that!

Also, a big thanks to the Epworth family for supporting our Advent projects this Christmas...donations to **Hawkins STEM Academy, Heifer International, St. Paul's Community Center, and Feed Your Neighbor Food Bank**, as well as **donating hams to St. Paul's for Christmas dinner, and hats and mittens for local agencies**. A final report will be made in the next Tower. We appreciate this congregation's generosity in this time of extreme need in the community!

– Community Outreach Committee

*If you'd like a thank you printed in the next Tower, send your note in an e-mail to [communications@epworth.com](mailto:communications@epworth.com).*

## SUPPORT THE ALTAR FLOWER FUND

Contributing flowers for the Sunday altar is a special way to support Epworth and honor loved ones, past or present. Flowers enhance our experience of weekly worship while providing a beautiful tribute to the special people and events in our lives. We have some available dates for Altar Flower



donations. If you would like to honor a loved one or celebrate a special occasion by donating flowers for a Sunday worship, please contact Cindy in the office at 419.214.3777 or [cindy@epworth.com](mailto:cindy@epworth.com) to find out what dates are available. Your support is much appreciated!

## DONATE TO EPWORTH EVERY TIME YOU SHOP ON AMAZON!

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

Now, you can support Epworth every single time you purchase something on Amazon! To sign up, go to: **[smile.amazon.com/ch/34-4428652](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-4428652)** and select Epworth as your charitable organization, then start shopping! If you have any questions, or would like a direct link, contact Laura in the church office at [laura@epworth.com](mailto:laura@epworth.com).





Happy New Year, friends.

I know 2020 presented many challenges, most were unexpected and unwelcomed, however, we continued on and were relentless in offering light and hope to the world. Now a brand new year is in front of us with all of the attended hope attached offering us more opportunity to make a difference.

The Bible proclaims, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old has gone, the new is here" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

I'm excited to begin a New Message Series this month called, "Mastering the Art of Doing Better." One of Northern Ohio's favorite sons and my favorite inventor, Thomas Edison, said it this way, "There's a way to do better. Find it." The Bible is full of stories that make that statement ring true. I look forward to exploring this important topic with you in the days ahead.

As we all begin making new habits for 2021, it's a great time to focus our attention on the essentials of what it means to grow spiritually. These include; developing deeper faith, identifying

reasons for hope and pursuing balance of body, mind and spirit. We will be going deeper in all of these areas and we want you to be a part of it. The words of the Apostle Paul help center us, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, give thanks to God through Him" (Colossians 3:17).

Be sure to check out all of our Bible Studies, small groups, affinity groups, Wednesday Night Oasis and more as we all make concrete plans to start the new year on the right track.

Also, a big thank you to our staff, lay leaders, usher and greeter teams, team leaders and everyone who worked so diligently to make Advent and Christmas such a momentous occasion for our Community and beyond. Literally thousands of people were positively impacted with warmth, friendship and the Light of Christ in person, online and through our television broadcasts. I am very grateful.

Now on to a New Year and a New Adventure. I am honored to discover the promises of God with you.

Your friend and partner in Ministry,

Dr. Stephen Lowell Swisher  
**Senior Pastor**

## *"Epworth gave us support and hope when we felt scared and alone."*

### *- Cindy and Scott's Story*

We were introduced to Epworth in 2009 by friends of ours in a local Parents Group. We were looking for a new church, one that had more activities for families and that could make church "fun" for the whole family. At Epworth, we found a lively Contemporary Service, and Cindy fell in love with Contemporary Christian music. We got involved in Friday Night Kids Stuff, outdoor worship, VBS, and a phenomenal Preschool for our 4-year-old. We were loving our new church!

Just months after becoming members, we were reminded about the true meaning of church. In August 2009, Scott was diagnosed with Tonsil Cancer and our world was turned upside down. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, we pulled Sasha out of Epworth's Preschool and headed to The Cleveland Clinic for two months of intense chemotherapy and radiation. The love and support we received from our Epworth family was immeasurable and truly lifesaving. Sasha was mailed a package full of cards from her preschool teachers and classmates that brought us all to tears. One of our Epworth friends told me all about K-Love radio and sent us to Cleveland with a stack of Contemporary Christian CDs. I can't begin to explain the peace and strength that music gave me. Every week, we received countless texts and emails telling us that Epworth was lifting us in prayer. We felt, and needed, every one of those prayers.

During a particularly rough patch in the hospital, I had to take a break, and I walked out of Scott's room. When I came back, I found Pastor Bob and Mary Beth Thomas by Scott's bedside, and I cried

tears of relief and joy. We'd been members for less than a year, and they drove two hours to visit us in Cleveland—and it wasn't the only time! Thankfully, Scott doesn't remember most of the nine months that he was sick, but he remembers a few things. He remembers the pain, the feeding tube, and the visits from Pastor Bob and Mary Beth.

I remember Christmas Eve that year. I had one goal, and that was to have Scott back at church on Christmas Eve. Scott doesn't remember walking into church that night 11 years ago, but I sure do. The love we felt that night was overwhelming. Our families were unable to do much for us during that time, but our Epworth family showed up and taught us how to lean

into our faith. Epworth gave us support and hope when we felt scared and alone.

We were reminded of the healing power of prayer and the unconditional love of our God. A year later, we were blessed with Danica and throughout the years, our involvement at Epworth continues to grow.



## HEALING AND WHOLENESS SERVICE – JANUARY 11<sup>th</sup>

Because of the MLK holiday on Jan. 18, Epworth's monthly service of healing and wholeness will move up a week to Monday, January 11 at 7pm in the Chapel. If you are looking for a quiet, reflective service to bring peace and stillness in times of turmoil, please join us on for prayer, scripture, and music. Because many of our healing service attendees have compromised immune systems, masks will be mandatory at this service. Appropriate socially-distanced seating will be arranged in the chapel. If you have any questions, or would like to join the team, please contact Pastor Beth at [beth@epworth.com](mailto:beth@epworth.com).



## UPCOMING GUEST PREACHERS

Dr. Swisher welcomes longtime friends to join him at upcoming Worship Services. [Visit our website](#) to learn more about them.



**Dr. Jocelyn Roper to speak on April 18 @ 8:30, 9:45 and 11am in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Dr. Jocelyn Roper is the District Superintendent for the Miami Valley within our West Ohio Conference. Prior to that appointment she served as the Director of Diversity for our West Ohio Conference and the Assistant District Superintendent for Ohio River Valley District.



**Rev. Calvin Alston to Preach on Ash Wednesday, February 17 @ 7pm**

Rev. Calvin Alston is the District Superintendent for Shawnee Valley within our West Ohio Conference. Dr. Alston served for nine years as the Senior Pastor of New Vision United Methodist Church in Cincinnati and for seven years as the Senior Pastor of Christ UMC in Columbus.



**Bishop Will Willimon to Preach on Palm Sunday, March 28 @ 8:30, 9:45 and 11am**

Bishop Will Willimon is currently Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Degree Program at Duke Divinity School. He is considered by many one of America's best known and most influential preachers.



STEPHEN  
MINISTRY

### STEPHEN MINISTRY *Joy of Christmas ~ Gone?*

In this 2021 new year, the joy of Christmastime can turn into a time of emptiness and perhaps painful loneliness for those who are going through a difficult time or who have suffered a loss.

But help is available. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They will listen, care, encourage, pray with and for you, and support you through the first days of the new year and as long as your need persists. If you or someone you know is hurting, find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders or Stephen Ministers, or contact us at [stephenministry@epworth.com](mailto:stephenministry@epworth.com). Our Stephen Ministers are there to care!

## INDOOR SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS DURING WINTER MONTHS

*from Pastor Beth and the Epworth Wellness Team*

As winter is upon us, we need to be aware of certain safety measures that are important as we are all enclosed in our homes and our furnaces are on. **Please know that carbon monoxide poisoning is a life-threatening situation and could affect your entire family.**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that kills without warning. It claims the lives of hundreds of people every year and makes thousands more ill. Many household items including gas- and oil-burning furnaces, portable generators, and charcoal grills produce this poison gas. Following these important steps can keep your family safe.



### CO Detectors

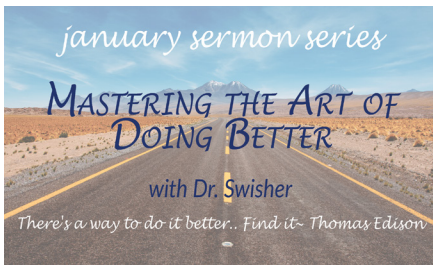
- Install battery-operated or battery back-up CO detectors near every sleeping area in your home.
- Check CO detectors regularly to be sure they are functioning properly.

### Oil & Gas Furnaces

- Have your furnace inspected every year.

### Portable Generators

- Never use a generator inside your home or garage, even if doors and windows are open.
- Only use generators outside, more than 20 feet away from your home, doors, and windows.

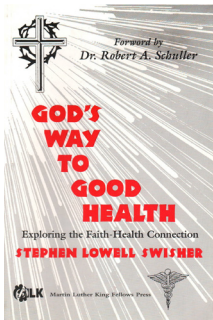


## JANUARY SERMON SERIES – MASTERING THE ART OF DOING BETTER

Ohioan Thomas Edison once said, “There’s a way to do it better..Find it.” In Dr. Swisher’s January sermon series we will discover help from the Bible on how to do better in every area of life throughout the New Year. Be our guest the first weekend in January 2021 as we begin this adventure together. Worship services are held Saturdays at 4:30pm and Sundays at 8:30, 9:45, and 11:00am.

## NEW WEDNESDAY OASIS CLASS STUDIES BEGIN JANUARY 13!

6:30-7:30pm Wednesdays, Jan. 13 – Feb. 3



### God's Way To Good Health

Led by Dr. Swisher

Join Dr. Swisher on January 13 for a class on his book “God’s Way To Good Health”

As we begin a new year, our thoughts turn to how to make the most of our health, our time and our connection to God. If this describes you,

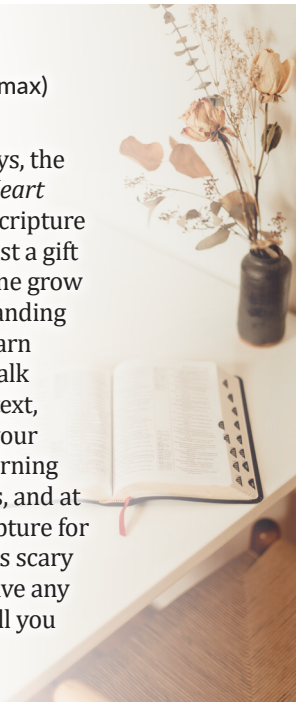
God’s Way To Good Health will be the perfect Discipleship Class to attend. In this study we will learn about Diets from the Bible, God’s promises on maximizing health and patterns we can establish to make the most of 2021.

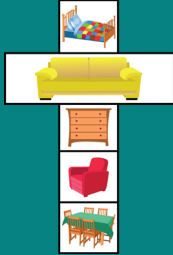
Dr. Swisher’s book was published by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Press in NY and features a foreword by Dr. Robert Schuller and an afterword by New York Times Best-Selling author Dr. Larry Dossey, MD. Sign up today for this life-affirming, faith-enriching class.

### Scripture By Heart

Virtual – Led by Pastor Beth (Class size: 12 max)

Biblical storytelling is the gift of sharing the words of the bible from the heart. On Sundays, the scripture is read at the pulpit. *Scripture by Heart* develops the ability to capture the heart of scripture without perfect memorization. This is not just a gift for Sunday mornings, but a gift to help anyone grow in their spiritual formation and understanding of scripture in general. It is a great way to learn life verses for personal development. We’ll talk about how to analyze scripture, finding subtext, and putting your own passion for God into your presentation. We will spend three weeks learning how to analyze and break down bible verses, and at the fourth class, we will present a short scripture for each other as a class. Don’t worry – it’s not as scary as it sounds! We’re all friends here! If you have any questions please reach out to Pastor Beth. All you need is the bible of your choice for class.





### FURNITURE MINISTRY: TOUCHING LIVES IN A VERY PRACTICAL WAY

STATISTICS	DECEMBER:	2020:
Families:	11	128
Adults:	11	158
Children:	20	168
Furniture:	117	1381

**Items needed for blessings area:**  
Blankets, sharp knives, large skillet  
and large pots and pans

## SACK LUNCH PROJECT

Epworth volunteers continue to meet each Wednesday morning, at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church downtown, to prepare and serve sack lunches to our homeless and food insecure community. This program provides a sack lunch, including a hot portion, along with coffee and hot cocoa.

We meet at St. Paul’s UMC at 8:30am each Wednesday to safely prepare the meals and beverages.

From 10–11:30am, several of our volunteers assist in the distribution of the meals.

If you are interested in volunteering for this ministry, just one Wednesday, or more, contact Jennie@Epworth.com to sign up and be a part of this team! Volunteers are kept to a safe number and guidelines to protect volunteers and those we serve are followed.

*THANK YOU! THANK YOU! To our team of volunteers and to all who have contributed funds, water and coffee – you have blessed this community and ministry beyond measure!*

Serving  
4:19



## EPWORTH PRESCHOOL

### Successful "Contact Free" Toy Drive

Epworth Preschool collected over 80 toys to help make sure every child had a Merry Christmas. The children walked their toys out to the curb and waved to the Ottawa Hills Police Officers as they played their sirens and picked them up.



## EPWORTH KIDS: JANUARY

### Elementary:



This month, we continue gathering through our weekly virtual Large Group Sundays at 10:00 a.m. on the children's facebook page [facebook.com/Epworthkids](https://facebook.com/Epworthkids) and digital devotional materials at [epworth.com/kidsathome](https://epworth.com/kidsathome). Epworth's Elementary kids will explore the

Life App **Responsibility**. We define the Life App Responsibility as: Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you.

We want your kids to know that being responsible is simple: in the game of life, it all comes down to trust. We build trust with others when we follow through with what we say we will do – even when the going gets tough. To help learn about Responsibility, the kids will work to memorize this month's memory verse: *"Suppose you can be trusted with something very little. Then you can also be trusted with something very large."* (Luke 16:10 NIV) Our prayer is that your kids will learn that part of a life with Jesus means that we need to be responsible for our actions.

### Preschool & Toddler:

We will continue gathering through our weekly virtual Large Group Sundays at 11am on the children's facebook page [facebook.com/Epworthkids](https://facebook.com/Epworthkids) and digital devotional materials at [epworth.com/kidsathome](https://epworth.com/kidsathome). Epworth's Preschool

and Toddler kids will explore the Biblical truth: Jesus is amazing.

Each week we will post interactive Bible stories, and follow-up activities to help teach your child that Jesus is no ordinary man—He is God's son! This hands-on, action packed virtual



Bible story time will also help your early childhood kiddos memorize this month's Bible Memory Verse: *"Everyone who heard him was amazed."* (Luke: 2:47) It is our prayer that your little one will discover the amazing truth about who Jesus is!

## STUDENTS WITH A TASK

### The Youth Ministry for Students in Grades 6-12

For January (at least) we will continue meeting online. We will meet Sunday nights on Jan. 10, 17, 24, and 31 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. We will be diving into a new series called **Goals: God-Sized Dreams** as we look at the story of Nehemiah and how he faced big problems, but he also had God-sized dreams and how this relates to our lives today.

If the COVID-19 cases decrease during January and reach an acceptable level, we will plan on having a Superbowl party in-person, in the Deep End on February 7. Remember if you are looking for ways for your teens to grow in their faith during these times Pastor Dave is writing weekly devotionals for students and families to use, writing a weekly blog post on a relevant faith/life topic, and doing a short video devotional.

If you are not receiving the emails with these resources and wish to do so, please contact Pastor Dave at [dave@epworth.com](mailto:dave@epworth.com).



## THE EPWORTH-HAWKINS STEM ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP SPECIAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE JANUARY 17-31

The School Supply Pantry at Grace Church was very busy in October and November, and shelves need to be restocked. The Epworth-Hawkins Partnership will be holding a school supply drive January 17-31 to help replenish supplies. Most needed items are: **Crayola colored pencils, 3x5 ruled index cards, zippered pencil pouches (preferably not plastic), children's scissors, and wide-ruled notebook filler paper.** Supplies can be dropped off in the "School Supplies" bin near the Epworth Central Avenue entrance, or monetary contributions (checks made

out to Epworth UMC, with "Hawkins" in the memo section) can be mailed or dropped off at the church office. The teachers at Hawkins and the five other schools served by the School Supply Pantry thank you!



**Epworth**   
United Methodist Church  
4855 W. Central Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43615-2337

---

*“Epworth gave us support and  
hope when we felt  
scared and alone.”*

- Cindy and Scott's Story

Read her story  
online at  
[weareepworth.com](http://weareepworth.com)

**#weareepworth**

