

# The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

**October 2023**

**Bridge Interim Minister**

Rev. Chris Nichols

**Director, Christian Education**

Mary Karlovec

**Music Director**

Barb Habecker

**Moderator**

Kris Dornan

**Vice-Moderator**

Diana Goode

**Co-Chairs, Christian Education**

Renee Dornan

Kelsey Styrt

**Chair, Deacons**

**Chair, Outreach**

**Chair, Trustees**

Paul Wolanski

**Treasurer, Secretary**

Linda Matis

**From the Bridge Minister**

"The people here are so friendly; I really felt welcome." We received that comment the other day from a newcomer, grateful for the kindness of so many in our church family who greet others, especially those they haven't met before. Whoever you welcomers are, you were fulfilling scripture:

*"You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Deuteronomy 10:19*

*"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Hebrews 13:2*

God is big on welcoming. There is constant encouragement in scripture, and an occasional requirement, to extend hospitality, to welcome the stranger, "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey," to quote one of the UCC slogans. That little statement serves as a reminder that every gathering of God's people should include the empty seat, ready for the newcomer. Your welcome is the refreshment they need. I'm sure you haven't forgotten those who welcomed you when you first arrived in the fellowship of First Congregational UCC. Worship services, meals, gatherings of any kind are opportunities to allow God to use you to bring someone into the circle, and possibly change a life. Keep up the good work!

Peace – and welcome - to you!  
Christopher Nichols, Bridge Pastor



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
a just world for all

**No matter who you are  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here.**

### Upcoming Sermon Themes

**October 1: "Jesus at Prayer"** Prayer fulfills our relationship with God, and Jesus teaches us how. Based on Luke 11:1-4

**October 8: "Welcome Home"** God prepares the Hebrew people for their new life: things are the same and different at the same time. Based on Isaiah 40:21-31

**October 15: Pastor Chris on vacation**

**October 22: "God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle (God Never Said That!)"** Scripture is full of stories of people who are overwhelmed, crying out to God. Based on 2 Corinthians 12:2-10

**October 29: "He Leads Us"** God takes care of us, bringing us to the place we should be, if we will follow. Based on Psalm 23

### Moderator's Moment – Kris Dornan

Too often, people of faith hear a tragic story, and use a "Drive-By Bible Verse" to attempt to give quick comfort. One of those is Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength." Another translation is "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." But to someone who is hurting, there is not much comfort in that. Odds are things may not get better.

The implication of some who use that verse is that the suffering person/family somehow lacks faith... if they prayed harder...fasted more...or did something else...things would change. "You can do real damage to people when you drop something like that on them, because it makes them feel even worse," said Chuck Myricks, pastor of Akron's Arlington Church of God and author of the musical "Paul," which ran at Playhouse Square and later off Broadway in New York. St. Paul was writing that letter to the Philippians while he was in prison. "That's right, in jail," said Myricks. "You need to read the entire passage. It deals with how he has learned to be

'content in all circumstances.' This is a passage about endurance in the face of suffering. He is writing from a place of loss and confinement. Think about that." (adapted from Terry Pluto's Faith and You article – Cleveland.com)

### Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec

October is here in all its beautiful colors! It is one of my favorite months of the year! It is also when we begin to gear up for all the hustle and bustle of the last three months of the year.

This month the Board of Christian Education is sponsoring **Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 22 from 6:30 - 7 pm.**

**This event is open to all families, friends, and neighbors with children 0-12 years of age.** We need "trunks" for the event. If you



are willing to decorate your trunk and provide candy to give out, please arrive at 6:00 pm so you are ready by 6:30. There are sign-up sheets outside the CE office for those willing to be "trunks" and for those coming to "treat." Signing up will help us estimate how many families to plan for and how many trunks to provide space for at the event.

We are still in need of two people to help **staff the nursery once a month.** If you are willing to help, please see me. We also need one adult to teach in the Preschool-1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom. This is only two Sundays a month.

We are hoping to start a brown bag lunch bible study for our adults in the near future. There is a sign-up sheet outside the CE office if you are



interested. **Note on the sheet which days of the week work best for you.** If you would like to lead a bible study, please talk to me or Pastor Chris! We would love to have lay people leading the bible study!

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to the September Clangy Change collection. We were able to send a check for \$200 to Colors+ in Fairview Park to support LGBTQ+ youth and their families on a daily basis.

Finally, the youth are selling Grand Pacific Junction popcorn at the Food Truck event on September 30 and then before/after worship on Sundays until it is gone (if it's not sold out at the food truck fun day). We will have cheddar, kettle corn, caramel, and chocolate drizzle popcorn for sale. We have a limited supply of each. Profits made will start to build the mission trip funds for 2024.

### **Outreach Committee News – Karen Farmer**

Why is every Autumn a glorious surprise? It's my favorite time of year, a celebration of nature, filled with golden moments, begging for praise to God.

As this beautiful time of year unfolds around us, there are many mission projects unfolding under the direction of the Outreach Committee. We have designated \$100 for Community Care this month. We earmarked \$100 for gas & grocery gift cards for the Safe Harbor Genesis House and wish to thank all of you who have donated toiletries and feminine hygiene products for this shelter. We also donated \$200 to the Native American Heritage Foundation. We are looking for ways we might be of assistance to Neighborhood Alliance as it opens its new facility to house homeless families in Lorain County. Our

annual UCC Neighbors in Need campaign, promoted throughout September, is a special mission offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the US. We continue to stay in contact with church members who are homebound and remember the children of our Community Care family on their birthdays.

These missions are golden moments that allow us to open our hearts and minds to His presence. Do you sense His presence in the golden moments of your days? Enjoy this invigorating, awe-inspiring season of God's creation. Invited, God will join you and that will be the most golden moment of all, the true peace of Autumn.



### **Deacons' Desk – Dr. Kurt Dornan**

As we enter the fall season, it is important to think about protection from multiple threats to our body this year, including influenza, COVID-19, and RSV. Any of these viruses can cause us to be very sick, and it's important to make sure we take the necessary steps to prevent illness. Even if you have received influenza and COVID immunizations in the past, it is important to get them yearly as these viruses change year to year and the immunizations change as well to best fight them. If you have any questions, please talk to your PCP (or me!).

### **Trustees' Turn – Paul Wolanski**

Nothing new to report from Trustees. Our last meeting was not very productive as less than half of the Trustees were in attendance. Everything is still pending from the previous month.

If anyone, male or female, young or old, would consider becoming a Trustee, please let me know. There is very little time or work involved, mostly a one-hour meeting the first Tuesday of every month to discuss and make decisions about the church's upkeep. To be a Trustee, *you must be an active church member*. Thank you!

**Parish Nurse's Notes: Susan Dornan**

October is breast cancer awareness month. Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed among women in the United States. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death from cancer among women with only lung cancer killing more women each year. Seventy-five percent of women with breast cancer have NO family history or risk factors. Fortunately, early detection significantly improves breast cancer survival, reducing the risk of dying of breast cancer by 40%. In fact, when breast cancer is detected early the five-year survival rate is almost 100%! Mammograms have helped to reduce breast cancer deaths by 1/3 since 1990 so talk to your healthcare provider about annual mammograms and remind your mother, sister, or daughter to do the same.

October is also a time to raise awareness of domestic violence. Twenty-four people PER MINUTE are victims of domestic violence. Sadly, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men will experience domestic violence at some point in their lifetime. Genesis House Domestic Violence Center of Lorain County provides comprehensive family-focused services for those impacted by domestic violence. If you or someone you know needs help, call the 24/7 Genesis House Crisis Hotline at 440-244-1853.

**Women's Book Club:** All gatherings are at the church at 7 pm unless noted.

**October 16:** Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

**November 20:** The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart by Holly Ringland

**December 18:** The Christmas Bookshop by Jenny Colgan

**Birthdays & Anniversaries**

10/1	Elizabeth Feigi	10/2	Bruce Griswold
10/6	Ronda Van Den Bossche		
10/7	Lynne Lipperman	10/8	Pat Kyle
10/9	Chase Dornan	10/11	Nate Schupbach
10/11	Jennie Vulcan	10/20	Dreama Stamper
10/20	Louise Barker	10/23	Nancy Long
10/26	Matt Karlovec		
	10/2 Kinzer & Barb Habecker		
	10/11 Dean & Lynne Lipperman		
	10/12 Ryan & Holly Hengartner		
	10/18 Mike & Joan Bier		
	10/18 Paul & Liz Wolanski		

**Greeters**

Oct. 1	Regenia Comerford, Lynne Petroff
Oct. 8	Diana Goode, Vonnie Packard
Oct. 15	Karen Farmer,
Oct. 22	Paul Wolanski, Paula Dudek
Oct. 29	Regenia Comerford, Lynne Petroff

**Acolytes**

Oct. 1	Matt Dornan
Oct. 8	Chase Dornan
Oct. 15	
Oct. 22	
Oct. 29	

**Communion Servers**

Oct. 1	Charlotte Dornan,
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**Scripture Readers**

Oct. 1	Beth Dornan
Nov. 5	Abby Anderson
Dec. 3	Abby Anderson

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>Outreach 9 am</b> <b>Worship 10:30 am</b> <b>World Communion</b> <b>Fellowship hour</b> <b>Deacons 11:30 am</b>  AA Men 7:30 pm	<b>2</b> <b>Secretary on vacation 10/2-10/13</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>3</b> <b>CE 7 pm</b> <b>Trustees 7 pm</b>  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>4</b> <b>Bell choir 6:30 pm</b> <b>Choir 7:30 pm</b>  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>5</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>6</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm	<b>7</b> <b>Custodian on vacation 10/7-10/14</b>  AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm
<b>8</b> <b>Worship 10:30 am</b> <b>Fellowship hour</b>  AA Men 7:30 pm	<b>9</b> <b>Council 7 pm</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>10</b>   AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>11</b> <b>Bell choir 6:30 pm</b> <b>Choir 7:30 pm</b>  4-H 7 pm	<b>12</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>13</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm	<b>14</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm
<b>15</b> <b>Worship 10:30 am</b> <b>Fellowship hour</b>  AA Men 7:30 pm	<b>16</b> <b>Newsletter articles due</b> <b>Women's book club 7 pm</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>17</b>   AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>18</b> <b>Bell choir 6:30 pm</b> <b>Choir 7:30 pm</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>19</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>20</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm	<b>21</b> <b>Cabbage roll prep</b>  AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm
<b>22</b> <b>Worship 10:30 am</b> <b>Fellowship hour</b> <b>Cabbage roll pick-up 10 am – 2 pm</b> <b>Trunk or Treat 6:30</b>  AA Men 7:30 pm	<b>23</b>   AA Women 7 pm	<b>24</b>   AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>25</b> <b>Bell choir 6:30 pm</b> <b>Choir 7:30 pm</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>26</b>        AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	<b>27</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm	<b>28</b>        AA Women 9 am AA Couples 6 pm
<b>29</b> <b>Worship 10:30 am</b> <b>Fellowship hour</b> <b>Deacons 11:30 am</b>  AA Men 7:30 pm	<b>30</b>   AA Women 7 pm	<b>31</b>   AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm				