

# The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

**August 2024**

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**Acting Chair, Deacons**

Karen Dreger

**Acting Chair, Outreach**

Edie Phillips

**Co-Chairs, Trustees**

Roy Dreger  
Jack Fitts

**Treasurer, Secretary**

Linda Matis

**From the Pastor – Pastor Kearstin (she/her)**

Back when I was still interviewing with the search committee to be your settled pastor, I reached out to pastors I knew in the area to see what they had to say about y'all. I wanted to know how First Congregational was perceived by the wider community. Many folks spoke about your community dinners, others talked about how welcoming you are, and a few noted your deep connections to the history of North Ridgeville. Rev. Nathan Russell at Washington Avenue Christian Church in Elyria said it most succinctly, though: "They're aggressively friendly!" I chuckled when he said it and immediately thought, "I can work with that!"

As I have settled into my role with y'all, you've gone above and beyond to show me your friendly FCC welcome! This wonderful little church is the best kind of chosen family. I see it in the way you speak to one another before worship begins, in how you pray for one another, and how you show each other practical care in moments of crisis. It is truly an honor to witness the love that flows among you.

Each new church leader brings their own flavor to a community, and with it, some changes. I want to assure you that as I make tweaks and changes, I'm always asking myself, "Does this help us draw the circle wider?", "Does this help us embody our love for the community more deeply?", and "Does this help us 'walk the walk' of being a **loving and evolving chosen family of faith?**"

The heart of the Christian faith is love and relationship. Even God, who could have existed on Their own, still chose to exist in the community of the Trinity — Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit. New Testament Greek writers use the word "*perichoresis*" to describe the Trinity; the word evokes a sacred dance where many dance as one, providing room and support for each to dance as they desire, while also participating in the unifying spirit of the dance as a whole. It's a word that describes the both/and-ness of the Trinity really well: both one and also distinct individuals.

As we continue growing together, Beloveds, I hope that we can embody the *perichoretic* spirit in our work. May we come as individuals, sharing our unique dances with one another. May we leave room for all to dance as they



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feel called. And may we learn to move together to draw more folks into the dance with us.

Go Blessed,  
Pastor Kearstin

### **Moderator's Moment**

Peace to you my family as we continue to traverse though the summer!

The political landscape has surely taken much of our attention lately; and to be honest, I personally struggle with talking on the topic as I feel that no topic has the ability to pit friends and family against each other like politics can do. I did a bit of research on the topic of politics and what our church says on topics like government and found a lot of articles...and yet still left yearning a bit. I did find a neat little sermon from a UCC pastor in Wisconsin who quoted a line from one of James Madison's Federalist Papers: "If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary." And by that Madison meant to remind us that neither people nor governments were angels.

I think based on this, I just want to say that I pray for the leaders of our country and I pray that regardless of your political views, that we grow as a country to be more united and more bipartisan...and we choose to love our friends and our neighbors regardless of their political beliefs.

In that Love that binds us,  
Kris Dornan

**Pastor Parish Committee:** Did you know there is a group of church members who serve as a support group for the pastor and as a liaison between the pastor and the congregation? The committee's responsibility is to let the pastor know what people in the church are thinking and to give a framework for dealing with conflict creatively. Members of the Pastor Parish Committee are: Kris Dornan, Diana Goode, Jack

Fitts, Betty Fitts, Matt Karlovec, Vonnie Packard, Liz Wolanski, (and Krista O'Neill in an advisory role only). Please feel free to contact any of them to openly and honestly communicate your feelings and thoughts.

### **Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec**

Summer seems to be flying by and August is the time we start to gear up for fall programming, school, and get in those last-minute lazy days of summer. This year is no exception. Please note upcoming dates in the life of the church:

- **August 4: Clangy Change Sunday** – funds will go for school supplies for Community Care. There is also a list later in *The Messenger* of school supplies needed by August 4. July 30 starts our tax-free week. This is a perfect time to buy supplies! There is a green container right inside my office to deposit supplies!

- **August 25:** During worship we will have the "**Blessings of the Backpacks.**" Everyone is encouraged to bring their backpack or



whatever they carry their school/work supplies in to get blessed for the upcoming school year! We will have special backpack tags to give you! After

worship we will gather in Fellowship Hall for **ice cream sundaes!**

- **September 8: Round Up Sunday!** Everyone is encouraged to attend worship and Sunday School as we celebrate the return to fall! Afterwards, we will have a **potluck luncheon** with CE providing grilled hot dogs, drinks, and dessert. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish to share (salad, veggie, fruit, potato). Come join the fun as we catch up from summer!

The Board of Christian Education is currently looking at new Sunday school curriculum for the fall quarter. This is the first time since Covid that we are purchasing a

curriculum. As you can imagine, the cost of curriculum has gone up significantly in price. With that being said, I want to purchase enough curriculum but not see it wasted because of lack of attendance. So with the start of the school year routines, I **strongly** appeal to all families that Sunday morning is no exception. Please make worship/Sunday School a part of your weekly routine.



### **WANTED: NURSERY ROOM CARE**

**SIX adults are needed to commit to one Sunday every six weeks to oversee the nursery.** You need to arrive at 10:15 to staff the nursery and be with the 3-year-olds and younger until the end of the worship service. There is an intercom in the nursery for you to hear the worship service as the kids play. \*The nursery this summer has been staffed every week by someone from the Board of Christian Education. As we start fall programming, many of them are Sunday school teachers and will not be available. The bottom line is, if we do not have staffing for the nursery, our little ones may have to remain in worship which is NOT the projection we want to give visitors/families coming to our church.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

#### **Giving of your time and talents is desperately needed!**

Team teachers (lead teacher/**adult** helper) are needed for:

- 2 teams for the preschool - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – will work every other week
- 2 teams for grades 3 – 6 – teams will work every other week
- 2-3 adults to work with our 7<sup>th</sup> - high school youth

\*Curriculum, teacher manuals, and supplies will be provided\*

Finally a huge thank you to the Board of Christian Education for covering for me the last six weeks following my hip replacement surgery. The hip is healing well but unfortunately due to some issues rebuilding my hip, my surgeon is being very cautious about lifting my restrictions. My hope is to be in church on August 4!

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

Gratitude is a wonder-worker. Whatever you're doing, *stop!* It only takes a minute for you to make two people happy, and you are one of them. Call, text or email a friend who has enriched your life and let them know that you appreciate them. The beauty of that small act is that it becomes a globetrotter—traveling from that friend to another, gathering smiles with the miles. Now *you* are the wonder-worker!

The Outreach Committee is deeply grateful for the wonder work of our congregation regarding our June Dine-to-Donate event at Applebee's. Thanks to the participation of so many of the congregation, we were able to donate \$250.02 to the youth mission trip to Lotts Creek.

In addition to our monthly \$100 donation to Community Care, we continue to support its summer lunch program. We are still collecting items needed for its monthly distribution of food and essential items to those it serves. The list of items needed is located in the Sunday School hallway along with a bin to collect the items to be donated. We once again contributed \$100 to Neighborhood Alliance, the umbrella organization that provides for Lorain County's homeless shelters, safe houses, and other programs and facilities. These organizations have expressed their eternal gratitude for the blessings we have been able to provide.

What are your present blessings? Lift a prayer of gratitude for those blessings to the *real* Wonder-Worker. *Good morning, Lord!*

### Deacons' Desk – Karen Dreger

Happy August! There are many special days in August: National Watermelon Day (August 3), International Beer Day (August 4), Green Peppers Day (August 5), International Traffic Light Day (August 5), Balloons to Heaven Day (August 6), International Day of the World's Indigenous People and Saint Bartholomew's Day, (a Christian feast day that honors Bartholomew the Apostle, one of Jesus Christ's twelve apostles) to name a few. Our church also has a few special days in August. **Communion Sunday** is August 4, a **financial overview meeting** for the whole congregation in the sanctuary following worship is on August 18, there is an **evening prayer service** on Wednesday, August 21, and the **blessing of the backpacks** is August 25. The deacons are always looking for ways to improve our worship services. If you have any suggestions, let a deacon know or write it down and place it in an offering plate.

We wish everyone a fun and safe August. Please remember to wear sunscreen, stay hydrated, swim with a buddy in safe waters, drive safely, and remember to reach out to one (or more) of our members who need our caring.

### Trustees' Turn – Roy Dreger

I'm sure you are aware that the trustees are trying to put together a capital campaign. You may also be aware that the going has been slow. However, there are still some things that the trustees have accomplished.

The rear entryway of the church (under the overhang) has been a security issue for a long time. The light was only on when the switch was thrown, so the area beneath the overhang was dark during night hours when no one was using the building. The trustees wanted a dusk to dawn fixture, but there were problems trying to adapt the light that was there. (The fixture that was there had an integrated LED ring

light which could not be replaced.) The trustees decided to replace the entire fixture that was there with a fixture that used a replaceable bulb, that way we could utilize a bulb with a built-in dusk to dawn sensor. The new fixture is in and so far, seems to be working.

In regards to replacing the sidewalk along the east side of the sanctuary, it seems that there is a possible problem. The person I asked to look at it stated that since it was adjacent to the parking lot, the specifications might be different from a "normal" sidewalk, like one in front of your house. The big difference is in the amount of concrete needed. The city's building department was contacted but the issue is still unclear. Maybe the building department will take a look at it.

Currently we are talking with the painter to try and work out the dates and times to repair the ceiling above the organ where there is some damage from a roof leak. It is necessary that someone be at the church while the work is being done. This is a busy time of the year for everyone, and this includes the painters and the trustees, so finding the times that everyone involved is available can get complicated.

The trustees have asked West Side Roofing to work with our insurance company to see about getting the roof over the school wing replaced. West Side has done work on our sanctuary roof, and their work has been good so far. Not every company can do slate roofs, but West Side has that ability. Since they had done work for us, it was an easy decision to ask them to take the lead on this.

The Board of Trustees needs more board members. Currently we have four, and if someone can't make the meeting we are down to three. There needs to be more board members to help with the finances and building repairs. None of us are experts, and that is one reason why we need additional people and their input. Please consider joining the trustees. The only





requirement is that you must be an active church member.

I know it must sound repetitive, but your financial contributions help support this congregation and its various ministries. We thank you for your continued support.



### **School Supplies Needed for Community Care**

Please return to church by August 5

- ✓ 24 pack CRAYOLA crayons
- ✓ 12 pack colored pencils
- ✓ Fiskars scissors (kids blunt or pointed)
- ✓ Large glue sticks
- ✓ 4 oz. Elmers's glue
- ✓ #2 pencils
- ✓ Expo dry erase markers
- ✓ Highlighters (any color)
- ✓ Red and blue BIC pens
- ✓ Clear rolls tape
- ✓ Post its
- ✓ Index cards
- ✓ 70-page spiral notebooks (wide rule)
- ✓ Composition notebooks
- ✓ 1 inch 3-ring binders
- ✓ Pocket folders with 3 prongs
- ✓ Section dividers
- ✓ Gallon zipper bags
- ✓ Sandwich zipper bags
- ✓ Quart zipper bags
- ✓ Boxes of Kleenex
- ✓ Play doh 4 oz. all colors



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

**August 19:** Don't Forget to Write by Sarah Goodman Confino

### **Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 8/7 Sandy Chalkwater
- 8/9 Mike Bier
- 8/9 Ann Olesen
- 8/13 Kelsey Styr
- 8/14 Will Schupbach
- 8/17 Cathy Cornman
- 8/20 Lily Dornan
- 8/20 Bob Franks
- 8/30 Troy Schutz
- 8/31 Valerie Arnold
- 8/31 Jody & Bert Millar



### **Greeters**

If you would like to be added to the greeter rotation, please contact the church office.

<b>August</b>	
<b>4</b>	Lynne Petroff, Millie Gilly
<b>11</b>	Karen Farmer, Paul Wolanski
<b>18</b>	Vonnie Packard, Paula Dudek
<b>25</b>	Jane Woravka, Diana Goode
<b>September</b>	
<b>1</b>	Millie Gilly, Karen Farmer
<b>8</b>	Paul Wolanski, Vonnie Packard
<b>15</b>	Paula Dudek, Jane Woravka
<b>22</b>	Lynne Petroff, Diana Goode
<b>29</b>	Millie Gilly, Linda Matis

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	2	3  AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
4 Outreach 9 am Worship 10:30 am Communion Fellowship hour  AA Men 7:30 pm	5  AA Women 7 pm	6 CE 7 pm Trustees 7 pm  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	7  4-H 7 pm (rain loca.)	8  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	9  	10    AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
11 Worship 10:30 am Fellowship hour   AA Men 7:30 pm	12 Council 7 pm  AA Women 7 pm	13  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	14  4-H 7 pm (rain loca.)	15  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	16 Newsletter articles due	17  AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
18 Worship 10:30 am Fellowship hour Financial overview meeting  AA Men 7:30 pm	19 Women's book club 7 pm  AA Women 7 pm	20  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	21 Prayer service 7 pm	22  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	23	24  AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
25 Worship 10:30 am Blessing of the Backpacks Fellowship hour Deacons 11:30 am  AA Men 7:30 pm	26  AA Women 7 pm	27  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	28 Choir picnic 6 pm at Barb's house	29  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	30	31  AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm