

The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

February 2024

Pastor

Rev. Kearstin Bailey

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

Co-Chairs, Trustees

Roy Dreger

Jack Fitts

Treasurer, Secretary

Linda Matis

Moderator's Moment – Kris Dornan

I can't take any credit for this, but if you were able to hear Pastor Chris's sermon on January 14, this was a portion he presented, and I knew I wanted a copy of this. Another perfect item as we greatly anticipate Pastor Kearstin's time with us! A friend of "Pastor Chris Nichols" posted this advice from St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Kansas City:

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT OUR "Ministers"

1. They love God and you a lot. So be mindful.
2. They are painfully limited human beings. So be realistic.
3. They probably have a pretty low view of their "performance". So be kind.
4. They wish they were a better preacher. So stay awake.
5. They really do want God's best for you and your family. So be open-hearted.
6. Their work knows no time or locational boundaries. So be patient.
7. They hear much more negative information than positive. So be encouraging.
8. They have chosen a vocation in which few remain. So be praying.
9. They have chosen a highly leadership-intensive call. So be lead-able. This is a team sport.
10. They need help. So be available.
11. Their God-given vision is bigger than themselves and the church. So be open.
12. They want to personally meet all the needs but know they can't. So be understanding.
13. They are going to say some dumb things every now and then. So be forgiving.
14. They are greatly encouraged by your faithfulness. So be present.
15. They are passionate for God's Word to be made practical to you. So be spiritually hungry.



16. They long for church to be your spiritual oasis. So be loving to each other.

17. They need to hear that you pray for them. So be interceding.

18. They are just regular people. So be real and allow them to be real.

Pray for all of our ministers.

Prayer. God, as we prepare to receive a new pastor, we pray that through your Spirit, you help us to be realistic, to be kind and open-hearted and patient. Help us to be encouraging and praying and lead-able. Help us to be available, and open to new things, understanding and forgiving. Help us to be present, to be spiritually hungry, and to continue our love for each other, and to include in that love the new pastor soon to be with us. In the name of our ultimate leader, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec

February will be a very busy month for the Department of Christian Education. The first Sunday of February is “Clangy Change” Sunday. For February, we are using the change collected to support our upcoming Community Care project, “40 Bags for 40 Days of Lent!” Like last year, we are asking church members to build children’s birthday bags with the following supplies in the birthday bag:

- Pkg of birthday paper plates and napkins
- Package of candles
- Cake mix and can of frosting
- Other ideas to add to the bag (optional): balloons, noise makers, hats, glow sticks, etc.

The money from Clangy Change will purchase the extra supplies needed so we can build and deliver at least 40 bags to Community Care. Last year we delivered 45! We would love to exceed our goal this year!

On Sunday, February 11 during coffee hour we will have Valentine’s Day cards available for members to write a note in that we will be sending to our homebound. Help us spread our love and hugs to them!

On Sunday, February 18 we will have our annual Chili Cook-Off to kick off Lent



(yes, we are a few days late) and support the summer youth mission trip to Lotts Creek. We need chili makers with that special winning recipe to enter the Cook-Off. There is a sheet outside my office to sign up.

Who will be the winner of the Golden Ladle?? Come join the fun for lunch after church. We will be putting away the Alleluias and name the “Keeper of the Alleluias!” The cost is \$6 for adults, \$3 for kids ages 5-12, and under 5 is free. This entitles you to a generous tasting of three different chilis, crackers, drink, and of course our famous Mardi Gras cupcakes! Please come join the fun!

On Sunday, February 25, weather permitting, the youth will be heading to the Maltz Museum to see their touring exhibit “The Girl in the Diary: Searching for Rywka from the Lodz Ghetto.” It is an amazing opportunity for our youth and we are excited for the opportunity to visit the museum again.

Blessings for February!

Save the date!
Saturday March
23: Annual Easter
Egg Hunt and
Lenten Workshop
More details to
come!



Outreach Committee News – Karen Farmer

I love the stillness that comes with falling snow, blanketing the world in a quiet innocence that reminds me of the quiet nature of God's love. God is everywhere in the silence of winter, speaking to us, reassuring us that His love is constant.

During this month of February, dedicated to expressions of love, the Outreach Committee continues to find ways to share God's love with our community. We will be collecting hats, gloves, scarves, and socks for Neighborhood Alliance (Genesis House) this winter. Check the snowman in the Sunday School hallway for details of this vital mission. The Christian Appalachian Project and Heifer International wrote to us to express their gratitude for our financial support last month.

We voted to continue our \$100 monthly membership in the Community Care Club. We are considering requests for donations from the Lorain County Free Clinic, as well as, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), which strives to end discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community. We are looking into possibly hosting a "yard sale" in the parking lot, a fundraiser sale of gift cards to Red Robin restaurants, and a "Dine & Donate" event at an area restaurant. We plan to have One World Shop bring their mobile store to the church for some Mother's Day shopping opportunities once again in April.

We hope that we may make a difference in the lives of many through these missions. May you know that, even with no footprints in the pristine landscape of new fallen snow, God has walked this way and asks that we follow by sharing His message of love.

Deacons' Desk – Karen Dreger

Ash Wednesday is February 14 this year. It is the first day of Lent which is 6 1/2 weeks before Easter. It is important to experience Ash Wednesday in preparation for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday. It is a time of repentance and reflection. Christians today will often give up something for Lent such as sweets, a special coffee, smoking, or social media. The 40-day period of Lent is a time to reflect on man's sinful humanity and Jesus' sacrifice for our sins.

In biblical times, sprinkling oneself with ashes has been a mark of repentance and sorrow for one's sins. Often the ashes used on Ash Wednesday come from palm leaves of Palm Sunday of the year before. The ashen cross on your forehead (or hand) is a reminder of the power of the cross. Genesis 3:19 reads: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; from dust you are made and to dust you will return." Even though our bodies will return to ashes (dust), our spirits can live eternally with our Savior."

Trustees' Turn – Roy Dreger

During the trustees' first meeting of the year it was decided, among other projects, to have Geisel come in again to present their suggestions for updating our heating and cooling systems. One of the two furnaces that heat the sanctuary had to have a new circuit board several months ago and it cost almost \$1,000.00. On Saturday, January 13, Barb discovered the temperature in the sanctuary was only about 57 degrees. Geisel was called out for a service call and, perhaps not unexpectedly, the remaining furnace was



found to have a bad circuit board. The furnaces were 24 years old and have had a history as of late of breaking down. (The air conditioning units were of the same age and condition and use an older type of refrigerant that is not easy to find, nor is it cheap to purchase once you find it.)

Something needed to be done, and sooner rather than later. Aside from being too cold for services to be held in the sanctuary, temperatures too cold or too hot are not good for the organ. Barb says the organ should not be subject to extreme temperatures changes and repairing the organ (again) would just compound the cost of getting everything back to normal.

Therefore, the trustees decided by consensus that, rather than investing more money in the furnaces or air conditioning units, this was the time to replace them before the cost to repair was more than what replacement would cost.

SO, we have had both heating and A/C units replaced. With that in mind, I am going to recommend to the trustees that a capital campaign be started to help pay for the heating and cooling units as well as other infrastructure problems that need to be dealt with before they become exorbitantly expensive. If we do start a campaign, we will provide a list of projects that we feel need to be done so that you will know what your contributions are funding. You are, of course, free to donate to this or any other project at any time.

We have received an estimate for ceiling repair in the sanctuary above the organ as well as painting in Fellowship Hall. We will be discussing this at our February meeting, so if you have any thoughts on this matter, please let one of the trustees know before then.

A quote was received for cleaning the stove hood and duct work in the kitchen. This is supposed to be done on a yearly basis to satisfy the insurance company as well as the state fire marshal. This work is slated to be done early in February.

As always, your financial support of this church keeps our ministry in North Ridgeville functioning, and we thank you for that.



2/9	Mary Karlovec
2/12	Renee Dornan
2/15	Harry Berg
2/18	Abby Anderson (16!)
2/18	Nancy Franks
2/19	Claire Wolanski (16!)
2/25	Shirley McVeigh
2/26	Henry Schutz
2/28	Daryl vonBenken
2/1	Bill & Regenia Comerford
2/4	Jamie & Beckie Schupbach



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

February 19: Midnight at the Christmas Bookshop by Jenny Colgan **AND** Whistling Season by Ivan Doig

March 18: Someone Else's Shoes by Jojo Moyes



Greeters

- 2/4 Paula Dudek, Vonnie Packard
 2/11 Karen Farmer, Paul Wolanski
 2/18 Lynne Petroff, Linda Matis
 2/25 Regenia Comerford, Diana Goode

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



Nancy S. Long (nee Saum), age 87, of North Ridgeville, passed away on January 20, 2024 at the St. John Medical Center in Westlake. She was born on October 23, 1936 in Akron and has been a resident of North Ridgeville for the past 40 years, moving from South Carolina and California. She was a member of First Congregational Church in North Ridgeville and a Friend of Bill W. Nancy traveled extensively with her husband Jim, and especially loved beach vacations. The summer months would find her working around her yard. She is survived by her daughter Janice Jankura of South Carolina; sister-in-law Beverly Saum, many nieces and nephews. Nancy was preceded in death by her husband Jim; parents Charles and Harriet (nee Auker) Saum; brothers William and Robert Saum; sister Louise Hamilton.

Funeral service Monday, January 29 at 8:00 p.m. in the Bogner Family Funeral Home, 36625 Center Ridge Road, North Ridgeville, where family will receive friends from 6:00 p.m. until time of service. Rev. Chris Nichols will officiate. Interment will be private.

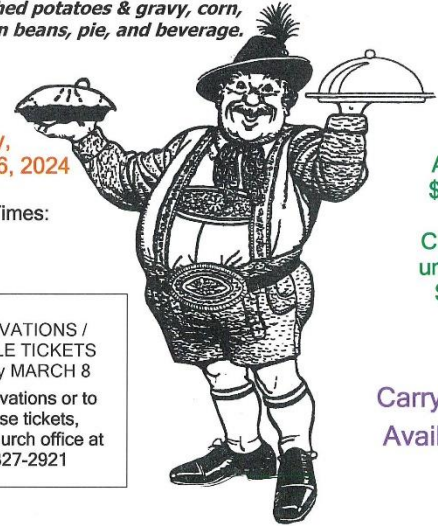
Swiss Steak Dinner

*Treat yourself to a home cooked meal...
 Dinner includes salad, rolls, Swiss steak,
 mashed potatoes & gravy, corn,
 green beans, pie, and beverage.*

Saturday,
 March 16, 2024

Serving Times:
 4:30 pm
 6:00 pm

RESERVATIONS /
 PRE-SALE TICKETS
 ONLY by MARCH 8
 For reservations or to
 purchase tickets,
 call the church office at
 440-327-2921



Adults
 \$15.00

Children
 under 12
 \$7.00

Carry Outs
 Available!



Sharing faith, hope, and love for 200 years
First Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
 36363 Center Ridge Rd., North Ridgeville, OH 44039
 440-327-2921 ~ www.fcclive.org

Dear Friends at First Congregational Church,

Happy New Year! We're excited to share with you the impact your clothing shed made over the last year:

- 44,901 pounds of clothing were donated to your shed in 2023.
- This was enough to clothe an estimated 8,271 people all over the world.
- Based on this volume of clothing, our organization received \$1,796.00.

Thank you so much for everything you, your volunteers, and your communities do to support the clothing shed program!

Sincerely,
 The Team at St. Pauly Textile, Inc.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1 Bible study 11:30 am AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	2	3 Kids fun day 12-2 pm AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
4 WELCOME, PASTOR KEARSTIN! 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 st Step 8:30 pm	7 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm 4-H 7 pm	8 Bible study 11:30 am AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	9	10 AA Women 9 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
11 Worship 10:30 am AA Men 7:30 pm	12 Council 7 pm AA Women 7 pm	13 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	14 Ash Wednesday Service TBD 	15 Bible study 11:30 am 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 Chili Cook Off AA Men 7:30 pm	19 OFFICE CLOSED Women's book club 7 pm AA Women 7 pm	20 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	21 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	22 Bible study 11:30 am AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	23	24 AA Women anniv. 8:30-11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
25 Worship 10:30 am Fellowship hour AA Men 7:30 pm	26 AA Women 7 pm	27 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	28 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm Hall rented 5:30-8:30 pm (Lions Club)	29 Bible study 11:30 am Al-Anon anniv. 4:30 pm AA Women 6 pm (up)	(Linda Matis will be on medical leave from 2/26-3/15. Melissa Goode & Lynne Petroff will be providing office coverage.)	