

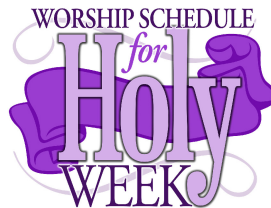


431 Columbus Avenue
Sandusky, Ohio 44870
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FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

April 2017



April 9th : Palm / Passion Sunday

April 13th : Maundy Thursday - Many people say this is their favorite worship service all year. We begin with a simple meal at **6:00 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. Soup will be provided. Please bring a salad or finger food to share. Following the meal, at **6:45 p.m.**, we will worship in the Boardman Room. This somber service ends in total silence and darkness.

April 14th : Good Friday - Though we do not have a Good Friday Service, you are invited to observe this important day with other local churches:

Columbus Avenue United Methodist Church and Trinity United Methodist Church will sponsor a public Good Friday observance. The Silent Walk with the Cross will begin at 2:00 p.m. from the Columbus Ave. UMC parking lot at 2401 Columbus Ave., Sandusky, and proceed down Columbus Avenue to conclude in the front yard of Trinity UMC (See the bulletin board for details).

Zion Lutheran Church will hold a service from noon to 1:00 p.m.. Prayer stations in the sanctuary will be available from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. for meditation.

The service at **St. Stephen UCC** (905 E. Perkins Avenue, Sandusky) is scheduled for 7:00 p.m..

April 16th : Easter Service - Please join us for the glorious celebration of the resurrection of our Lord, including Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m..



Easter will soon be here with all the alleluias, special music and beautiful flowers! As we anticipate this joyous celebration of the resurrection of Jesus that day, I know some of us will experience the story of the empty tomb with new understanding.

Earlier this year Study Group participants gained new insight into the resurrection through the Saving Jesus Redux curriculum. Instead of considering the resurrection in the traditional sense of a miraculous event long ago that insures Christians eternal life, they were invited to think about it metaphorically.

Such an understanding calls us to a deeper meaning of Easter, as something about us, here, now, today, rather than just about something spectacular that happened some 2000 years ago to Jesus. To consider Easter from the traditional perspective insulates us from our responsibility to become the body of Christ in the world striving to eradicate injustice, poverty and violence.

Think about it. We are often entombed by our life choices or circumstances, leaving us feeling as good as dead when it comes to making changes in our personal lives and the world. Any number of things can stand between us and the transforming presence of God. Think of these as large stones sealing us in our tombs. Only you know what these stones are for you, perhaps fear, disappointment, guilt or insecurity. So, how can we be released and resurrected?

According to the study guide, this can happen if we “practice resurrection” by trusting God and stepping out of our comfort zones. “Resurrection is a challenge to make a decision. Will the followers of Jesus let the powers of death, fear, and the status quo warp the world with violence, injustice and greed? Or will the symbol of resurrection inspire a new generation to stand up here and now to embrace a promise of new life that looks completely different from what anyone might be expecting?”

As our Lenten journey comes to a close, I ask you to consider this metaphorical understanding of Easter. Are you ready to accept the challenge of practicing resurrection? If so, this just might be your most personal and meaningful Easter ever.

Shalom,
Rev. Lenore

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BOWL FOR KIDS' SAKE

Don't forget the Bowl for Kids' Sake on April 2nd at 12:15 p.m.. Bowlers Marc Austin, Jud Brandes, Rev. Lenore Kure, Chris Michaels, Bill Roche, “Big T” Turner, Tim Work and Laurie Yates are looking for donations. If you would like to bowl, please contact Chris Michaels. Remember, all bowlers are expected to solicit donations, which benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters.



Supper Club will meet this month at Ruby Tuesday, at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4th. Reservations are required - please sign up on the back bulletin board.

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICE

The last mid-week Lenten service will be at St. Stephen United Church of Christ, 905 E. Perkins Ave., Sandusky on April 5th. We will gather for a simple meal at 6:00 p.m., with the service to follow at 6:45 p.m.. Rev. Cathy Lawrence and Pastor John Apple will preach.

BOOK CLUB NEWS

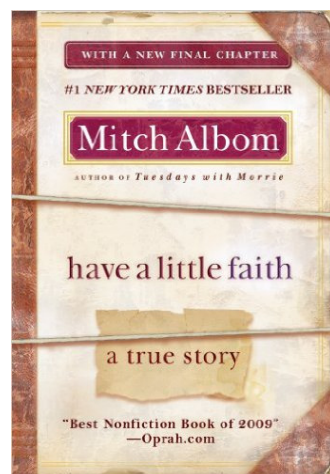
The Book Club will meet on Friday, April 7th to discuss *Left Neglected* by Lisa Genova. At that time the book for May, *Have a Little Faith*, by Mitch Albom will be distributed.

Albom is no stranger to Book Club participants. He wrote one of the first books they read, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, also non-fiction. *Have a Little Faith* begins with an unusual request: an eighty-two-year-old rabbi from Albom's old hometown asks him to deliver his eulogy. Meanwhile, closer to his current home, Albom becomes involved with a Detroit pastor--a reformed drug dealer and convict--who preaches to the poor and homeless in a decaying church with a hole in its roof.

What unfolds is a beautifully written story of a remarkable eight-year journey between two worlds - two men, two faiths, two communities. Moving between their worlds, Christian and Jewish, African-American and white, impoverished and well-to-do, Albom observes how these very different men employ faith similarly in fighting for survival: the older, suburban rabbi embracing it as death approaches; the younger, inner-city pastor relying on it to keep himself and his church afloat.

Albom and the two men of God explore issues that perplex modern man: how to endure when difficult things happen; what heaven is; intermarriage; forgiveness; doubting God; and the importance of faith in trying times. Although the texts, prayers, and histories are different, Albom begins to recognize a striking unity between the two worlds--and indeed, between beliefs everywhere. In the end, Albom finally understands what both men have been teaching all along: the profound comfort of believing in something bigger than yourself.

All are welcome to the discussion. Copies of the book are available from the church office. The Club meets at 2:00 p.m. on the first Friday of the month in Frosty's Activity Center at the Parkvue Health Care Center.



Hats off to Jesus!

Get ready, Holy Humor Sunday is coming!

Now is the time to be looking for a hat to wear to worship on April 23rd as we continue to celebrate the season of Easter with Holy Humor Sunday. Whether it's your favorite hat, a totally outrageous one, or something you have created yourself, come and join the fun. And don't forget to bring along a joke or two to share.

This tradition began in the early church as a way to extend the joy of the resurrection. Back then worshipers played practical jokes on one another and even squirted each other with water! The tradition died out for awhile, but made a comeback some thirty years ago thanks to the Fellowship of Merry Christians. We began joining in on the fun here at First Congregational 18 years ago.



GAMES NIGHT

Games Night is Tuesday, April 25th at 7:00 p.m.. Everyone is asked to bring a favorite game. Beverages will be provided - bring your own snacks. All favorite games are welcome. Please contact Tim Work with any questions or suggestions for favorite games at 419-271-2227.

STUDY GROUP

In keeping with our desire to become a Center for Peace and Understanding in the community, the final topic for the season will be *The Things That Make for Peace*. This five-session series challenges participants to put the Gospel call to peace into action in this critical time in history.

Beginning April 27th and ending May 25th, the first session is titled *Recognizing the Things That Make for Peace*. All are welcome to these Thursday evening gatherings, held in the Boardman Room at 7:00 p.m.. Study materials are available from Jacki Warren or Rev. Lenore.

SPAGHETTI DINNER



On Friday, April 28th from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. we will host our spring spaghetti dinner. Be sure to sell your tickets.

A 50/50 drawing and “bucket auction” will be held in conjunction with the dinner. We will need baked goods (for dessert), workers the day of the dinner and bucket auction items (you can drop items off at the church office). Joy Berquist needs new items, restaurant or business gift certificates, crafts, etc. for the auction. Robin Pratt will coordinate the 50/50 drawing. Contact Kim Nemeth for further information (419-656-1746) or to volunteer to work on the day.

Our next community breakfast will be coming up on April 29th. There will be a sign-up sheet to work the breakfast.

The menu will be scrambled eggs, toast, French toast, sausage, with coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and orange juice. If you would like to give money to the breakfast, please put it in an offering envelope and mark it “community breakfast.” If you would like to purchase something for the breakfast, feel free to see Chris after church or call him at 419-366-4729.

Let’s make this breakfast a success!



Community Breakfast

Since the last newsletter, we have received a letter of thanks from ExperienceWorks for our 2016 Shoreline donation.



Happy Birthday!



Patsy Hicks	4/1
Paul Fries	4/3
Harry Boguszewski	4/5
Debbi Keller	4/17
Eric Warren	4/20
Monte Page	4/26
Dot Malinovsky	4/27



Alyssa Ambrose, Ruth Baker, Harvey Heys, Johnson & Davis Families, Debbi Keller, Maureen Mork & JayGuo, Mark & Cathy Pifer, Christine Vroman, the Eats, Fairchild, Sprow and Stark Families, Spring Break/Easter travelers

Ongoing: Carol Antonelli, Bowyer Family, Brock Family, Keagan Grames, Izabella, Waddington Family

Homebound: Ruth Baker, Jane Brock, Mary Fenker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz

DISASTER KITS

Spring is here and with it, the potential for severe weather increases. It is time again to put together the disaster clean up kits. We want to take as many kits as possible to the Association meeting on April 29th. Please give the completed kits to Chris Michaels or leave them in the office.

There is a list of what to buy elsewhere in this newsletter. If you don't want to buy the supplies but prefer to donate money for the kits, put the money in an envelope marked "disaster clean up kits" and place it in the collection plate for Scarlet to record.

SHORELINE SPEAKERS AND SPONSORS

At the end of next month we will begin our services down at Shoreline Park so it's time to find speakers and sponsors. If you know of anyone, including yourself, who would be willing to share how God's love has impacted their life, please let Rev. Lenore know and she will follow up.

To help defray expenses, we are again seeking sponsors. For \$100 their business card size ad will be placed on the back of the worship bulletin for all 15 of the Shoreline services. The ad copy needs to be submitted to Paula, our church secretary, as soon as possible.



Please help with ARC Mansfield's spring drive, collecting toiletries for over 200 male and female clients with HIV. Please see the elevator bulletin board for products they need and use, and place your donations in the hamper by the elevator. The collection deadline is Palm Sunday, April 9th.

Congratulations to Allison Harris on the baptism of her sons Joseph Paul Judy Jr. and John Patrick Love Judy. They were baptized on March 26th. Judy Harris is the proud great-grandmother.



MAUNDY THURSDAY BREAKFAST

The Women of First Faith Community Church (225 E. Jefferson St., Sandusky) invite all to their 48th annual Maundy Thursday Breakfast, at 9:30 a.m. on April 13th. In addition to fellowship and food, the morning will feature a program "Overheard Conversation." Please call the church office at 419-625-8247 between 9:00 a.m. and noon for reservations. Reservations must be in by Monday, April 10th.

AIR CONDITIONING FUND UPDATE

Thanks to pledges, memorials and fundraisers, the Air Conditioning Fund grew by \$598 in February. Our total as of March 1st was \$54,396.57. An additional \$2,676 is pledged through June, 2017. We are in the last few months of this campaign - please be sure to honor your pledge, and if you didn't make one, please consider making a contribution to help us meet our goal.



REPORTS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM AND BOARDS

Leadership Team

The members of the Leadership Team would like to inform the members of the congregation that we will continue to perform the duties and responsibilities as directed upon us by our church constitution even though being a couple of members shy as required by it. We welcome any church member's input re: this subject as well as anyone wishing to join the Leadership Team.

Christian Education

Chairperson - Jacki Warren

The Board of Christian Education met Tuesday, March 7, 2017. We discussed the success of our various ongoing activities:

Patsy Hicks continues to meet with the Children's Sunday School class. The children will participate in the worship services Palm Sunday and Easter. The Board approved books to be provided to the children who will be baptized soon.

An additional adult study group using the Living the Questions "Loving our Muslim Neighbors as Ourselves" began meeting Sunday, March 5. Once again this series attracted a large group to explore this timely topic which generated lively discussion. The last meeting will be April 2nd. All are welcome.

The Thursday Adult Study Group began the Bible study, *Crossroads*, which coordinates with the Lenten Worship Series. The group will end the program year with a new study focusing on finding peace. The Peace and Understanding Gathering continues to meet monthly at 6:30 on the third Thursday of each month. Please join us for any of these interesting meetings.

Our Parkvue Book Club continues to thrive. These get togethers are fun, interesting, and meaningful for all of us. We have read 24 books since we started in June, 2015. What a labor of love this has turned out to be! Thanks to all who participate and to all who help make this such a success.

If you have ideas, questions, comments, suggestions for this Board, please see Jacki Warren, Phyllis Bottom, Patsy Hicks, or Debbi Keller.

Board of Deacons

Chairperson - Kim Nemeth

We prepared and served the meal for the Lenten service and I certainly appreciate all the folks that helped. We continue to host fellowship. The committee is only Jeanne Gilbert and me. We would really appreciate those of you that stay for coffee after church to sign up to host on Sunday.



Duane Gast made a donation to the air conditioning fund in memory of his father, Junior Gast.



Hello to the Congregation,

Winter finally reared its ugly head. The students had a snow day! The Boys & Girls Club was open during the daytime hours on Friday, St. Patrick's Day due to teacher & staff meetings in the schools.

Technology is back for another round in my battle with phones and tablets. My rule has been to allow for those devices from pickup time at school, 2:30pm, until we eat dinner at 4:30pm. So far, that has been working fine. However, the kids tend to sneak them back out of their book-bags or pockets at choice moments.

One small problem with that is, some kids will wrap themselves up in their tech games right at the very moment they should be employing some social skill with other members. For example, a child will get angry with others and just turn everyone off and bury his or her head into the phone or game. That is okay, but only when it is momentary and then all the issues get addressed in a reasonable time.

On the flipside, while playing the Wii video game, the kids really bond and have fun and hoot and holler. They have a very genuine interaction with each other, not unlike playing good board games. And I have found some teaching moments with the Wii, being that it is a small group game. The phones are more one-on-one and I haven't found any good skill to employ, yet.

The students will have their Easter break on April 10th, 11th, & 12th. We will be closed for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, 13th & 14th. Some employees from Old Navy will be helping out a number of times throughout April. Their work crew has been a reliable source for volunteer help and good exposure for our kids and the Club.

"I am not young enough to know everything."—Oscar Wilde

DISASTER KITS



BUCKETS
BUCKETS
BUCKETS






Once again this year, the Board of Mission & Outreach is collecting disaster kit buckets to be delivered to the Association meeting April 29th.

What to include in your kit:

- + Bucket (8 to 14 quarts)
- + Scrub Brush
- + Pair of Rubber Gloves
- + Large Heavy-duty Sponge
- + Large Container of Clorox Cleanup
- + Personal note

If you would prefer someone else to do the shopping for you, you can make a financial donation to Chris Michaels. The cost for the kit is about \$26.

Please bring the supplies to the church by April 14th ; money may be turned in up to April 16th.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>April 2017</h1>						1
2 Fifth Sunday in Lent/Communion Care & Share Bowl for Kids' Sake	3 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	4 Supper Club 6:00 p.m.	5 Mid-week Lenten Service 6:00 p.m. St. Stephen UCC	6 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m. Study Group 7:00 p.m.	7 Book Club 2:00 p.m.	8
9 Passion/Palm Sunday Mission & Outreach 11 a.m. Unitarians 2 p.m.	10 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	11	12	13 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Supper 6:00 p.m. Service 6:45 p.m.	14 	15
	17 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	18 Movie Night 7:00 p.m.	19	20 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m. Study Group 7:00 p.m.	21	22
23  Hats off to Jesus! Holy Humor Sunday	24 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	25 Games Night 7:00 p.m.	26	27 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m. Study Group 7:00 p.m.	28 Spaghetti Dinner 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.	29 Community Breakfast 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
30	Unless otherwise noted, our typical Sunday schedule is: 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - Noon				At Grace Episcopal: Tu & Th 10 am BonesandBalance	

Boys & Girls Club hours are 2:30 - 7:00 Monday - Friday, April 3rd - 7th and 17th - 28th
12 NOON - 6 p.m. April 10th - 12th; CLOSED April 13th, 14th and 28th