



431 Columbus Avenue
Sandusky, Ohio 44870
firstconguccsandusky.com

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

June 2017

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATION + BBQ RIB DINNER

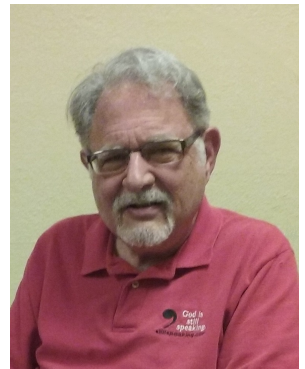


Rev. John Rainey
a.m. to 1:00 p.m..

Sunday, June 11, 2017 will be a red-letter day for First Congregational!

At our regular 10:00 a.m. service, we will **celebrate the ordination anniversaries** of Rev. John Rainey, and Rev. Dr. Robert Bottoms. John was ordained 60 years ago, Bob, 45 years ago. Our Association Minister Rev. Dan Busch will be the guest preacher.

Following the service there will be a **reception in the Boardman Room**, and then everyone is invited downstairs to participate in our annual **BBQ Rib fund raiser** from 11:30



Rev. Robert Bottoms

Those who wish to dine in may do so in the lower level of the church. Carry-outs will also be available. Tickets may be purchased from Church members, Tom Schwan, or by calling Paula at the Church Office - 419-625-8105.

DINNER INCLUDES:

½ Rack of Ribs (Saucy, fall-off-the-bone style) - Cole Slaw
Baked Beans or Mac & Cheese - Corn Bread - Beverage - Dessert

\$14.00 Donation

PLANNING A COOKOUT? Full racks of ribs available for a \$20 donation **only** by phoning in a pre-order to 419-625-8105 by June 5th.
(In order for our BBQ rib fundraiser to be a success, Church members need to sell their tickets and turn in the money by Sunday, June 4th.)





Several people have asked me what I think about the Religious Liberty Executive Order recently signed by the President. To be honest, I don't know all the details, but it appears that pastors will now be free to preach about politics and encourage their congregations to vote for certain candidates without fear of the church losing its tax-exempt status.

No matter what the order says, it won't make any difference to my ministry here at First Congregational. Other than encouraging members to exercise their right to vote, I have always tried to keep politics out of the pulpit, and plan to continue doing so.

I wasn't called to the church to push a political agenda or endorse candidates from a particular political party. My training is in theology, not political science. I was called to preach the Gospel and to help us all find guidance in scripture for making the decisions in life we are faced with every day, including political ones.

Years ago, after preaching a sermon involving environmental issues, a very irate member told me "that environment stuff is political, not religious. You shouldn't be talking about it." I quickly reminded him that according to Genesis 2:15 we are to be "care takers" of the earth.

Some of you today might also think I'm talking politics when I preach about justice issues and Jesus commanding us to "love one another" and to take care of "the least of these." Once again, that is scripturally sound and not based on the agenda of any political party.

It is true that in my private life, away from the church, I am politically active. I belong to a couple of political groups and voice my opinions as an activist for human rights and environmental issues. I sign petitions, contact lawmakers, attend rallies and join marches. But I would never try to force my opinions on the congregation, or tell you that God wants you to vote for a candidate that supports them. That would be an abuse of power, pastoral malpractice some have called it.

Just like me, prior to voting, you have to draw your own conclusions, based on your faith perspective and all the information available to you. Sometimes that's easy, other times seemingly impossible, but at all times, necessary.

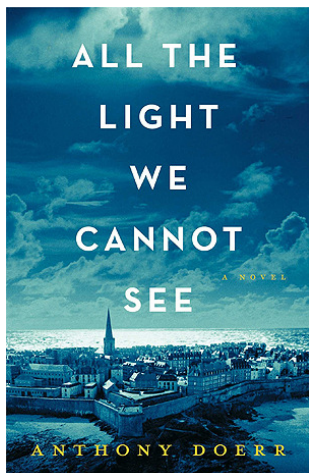
Shalom, Rev. Lenore

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BOOK CLUB

This month marks our Book Club's second anniversary! We have grown to a group of 16 men and women who share a passion for reading. There's always room for more so come and check us out if you think you would like to be part of the lively discussions.

We will meet on Friday, June 2nd to discuss *The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult. At that time the book



for July, *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr, will be distributed. Doerr tells the tale of a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's

converge.

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.



PENTECOST - JUNE 4th - TIME TO WEAR RED!

On June 4th, Christians around the world will celebrate the Day of Pentecost. It's often remembered as the Church's birthday. To symbolize the "tongues, as of fire" (Acts 2:3, NSRV) that came upon the disciples at Pentecost, we display the color red in the sanctuary that day and ask everyone to wear red.

SHORELINE SERVICES

Our summer Sunday community worship services at Shoreline Park began May 28th and will continue through September 3rd. We meet at 8:00 a.m. in the pavilion, rain or shine. The Park is located at Franklin & Water Streets, next to the Yacht Club.

The speakers and offering focus through the end of June are:

June 4 - Rev. Samuel Prince	Alzheimer's Association
June 11 - Rev. Dan Busch	Eden Theological Seminary
June 18 - Rev. Mark Bishop	Care & Share of Erie Co.
<i>(this Sunday only, in case of rain, meet at the church)</i>	
June 25 - Crystal Bunts	The Nehemiah Center

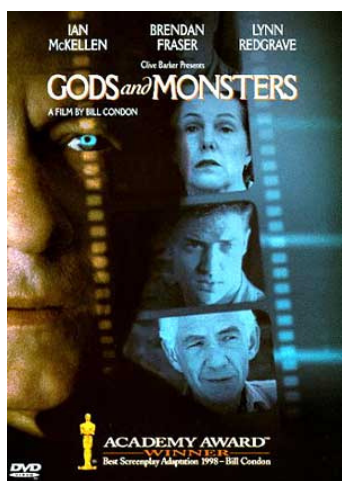


Supper Club will meet at Danny Boy's on Tuesday, June 6th at 6:00 p.m.. Reservations are required - please sign up on the back bulletin board.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING - JUNE 18TH

When you invest in the vision supported by Strengthen the Church, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and help develop the spiritual lives of our youth and young adults.

Your offerings are directed to our Conference, Local Church Ministries, and The Stillspeaking Ministry for these purposes. An envelope is enclosed for your generous donation.



MOVIE NIGHT

Movie Night will be Tuesday, June 20th at 7:00 p.m.. The film will be *Gods and Monsters*, starring Sir Ian McKellen, Brendan Fraser and Lynn Redgrave. McKellan gives a riveting, Academy Award-winning performance as Hollywood horror director James Whale. Retired and a semi-recluse, Whale lives surrounded by images from his past. When his dour housekeeper hires a handsome young gardener, the flamboyant director and simple yard man develop an unlikely, profound friendship that changes both their lives.

Popcorn is provided - bring your own beverages.

GAMES NIGHT

The next Games Night will be held on Tuesday, June 27th at 7:00 p.m.. Bring your favorite games - Jenga and Bananagrams will be provided. Beverages will be provided, but be sure to bring your own snacks. All are welcome - bring a friend or two. The more the merrier!



GAMES NIGHT



Addy, Madison Brenton, Jean Gardner, Noemi Gephardt, Harvey Heys, June Johnson, Marv Keller, Deanna & Tammy Samson, Sidney, Brent Williams, Quinn Family, Children & Youth Who Are Bullied

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

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

OUR BILLS NEVER GO ON VACATION!

Remember to keep up your pledge this summer. If you are traveling away from home, please send your donations to the church in your mailable offering envelopes, or utilize our electronic giving option. Contact Scarlet Berry either after worship or by phone at 419-624-2385 if you are interested in online giving.



COMMUNITY BREAKFAST WRAP-UP

Dear First Congregational Family and Friends,



Community Breakfast

We had our first community breakfast of the year on April 29th and I would say it was a very successful breakfast. We had plenty of help cooking and serving food to the members of the community. We served 59 people, with 24 second helpings and some 3rd and 4th helpings.

Our next breakfast will be July 29th, when we will serve pancakes and French toast. I hope to see everyone there who can be there. We are truly doing the Lord's work by helping our fellow man.

~ Chris Michaels

THE PEACE GATHERING

Hopefully, at the June 15th Peace Gathering we will meet the international students we are sponsoring this summer through the Alliance Abroad's Friendship Family Program. We had not yet received their names by the time this newsletter went to print.

That evening we will also finalize our plans for the Center for Peace & Understanding's booth at the 4th of July Stars and Stripes Celebration. Volunteers are needed to help set up at 8:30 that morning and to work for an hour or two throughout the event that runs from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.. Please let Rev. Lenore know your availability.

Social time for The Peace Gathering starts at 6:30 p.m. with light refreshments. The program will begin at 7:00. Anyone who has an interest in peace is encouraged to come and bring a friend.

SUMMER CONCERT

The North Coast Men's Chorus will present *Hot Time In the City* on Saturday June 10th at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, June 11th at 3:00 p.m. at the Waetjen Auditorium (Cleveland State, 2001 Euclid Ave., Cleveland). See mcmchorus.org or phone 216-556-0590 for ticket information. Glenn Gast is a member.



THE SANDUSKY GAZEBO CONCERT SERIES - 2017

Tuesday, June 14 7:00 p.m. Sandusky Choral Society

Tuesday, June 21 7:00 p.m. Dana Dorsey & the Blue Notes

Tuesday, June 28 7:00 p.m. North Coast Concert Band

Concerts may be cancelled in case of inclement weather



Hello to the Congregation,

The students school year finished on May 31st. After that, the Boys & Girls Club will close and then re-open on June 12th. The summer program hours will be from noon-6:00 p.m.. There will be a trip to Cedar Point during the break.

I recall from last year that I wrote on the summer transition for elementary school kids and again this year I find myself thinking on the same subject. The change of seasons effects a change in the children and the end of the semester brings a relaxation of school-work, which also plays a big part of their daily routine.

So with that summer transition comes a blossoming of the students' young personalities and also an overarching sense of freedom. However, that 'glory days' delight also coaxes kids to test their behavioral boundaries in all directions. That fact was made apparent to me last week in a couple of clashes with two of my longtime club members.

Those minor incidents also reminded me of how under-appreciated our teachers and our national school system are in the public eye. Lots of bad press gets thrown their way on a routine basis. Yet if not for the modern, westernized school systems that we sometimes take for granted in the U.S. and Europe, we would still be struggling with many of the social bugaboos that we see in many other countries.

So "hat's off" to all the teachers out there and have a wonderful summer. Let the lessons of the school year sink into the mighty, little brains of all those kids now screaming on the playground like wild-winds of the Midwest.

"The difference between school and life? In school, you're taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you're given a test that teaches you a lesson." -Tom Bodett

~ David Icsman, Youth Center Unit Director



Since the last newsletter, we have received letters of thanks from Ability Works, Care & Share and Volunteers of America (Crossroads Shelter) for our quarterly mission donations, and from CUE Seminaries for our 2016 donations.



Shane Klauss	6/1
Shane Klauss & Paul Fries	6/3
Jeffrey & Joy Berquist	6/5
Angela Williams	6/9
Chuck Marinelli,	6/16
Diane (Dee Dee) & Edward Swartz	
Sari Kelley	6/18
Laura Elliott	6/20
Jack Neese	6/22
Ruth Nappi, Christopher Ketchum	6/25
Heyley Ketchum	6/26
Mike & Halley Leffler	6/27



REPORTS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM and BOARDS

Leadership Team

The joint meeting of the Boards and the Leadership Team was held on May 11th. The Leadership Team would like to note that:

- Beginning the first week of June, fellowship will provide beverages only. Hosts may provide food if they wish.

- We need more participation in church Boards. We are relaxing the long-term commitment guidelines - all participation is welcome. Please see Halley Leffler, Karen Mork or Andy Nappi.

Board of Mission & Outreach *Barb Petersen - Chairperson*

The Board met on May 15th.

A big thank-you goes out to all who helped to make our Blankets+ special offering a success again this year. We collected \$326.

The Strengthen the Church special offering will be taken on Father's Day, June 18th. Please see the separate article, flyer and offering envelope elsewhere in this newsletter.

A report on the Disaster Bucket project follows.

~ Robin Pratt, Secretary

Disaster Committee report: Thank you, First Congregational family and friends, for your donations to the disaster clean up kits. With the 11 kits we assembled last fall, and the money raised this year, the Northwest Ohio Association of United Church of Christ received 40 buckets from our congregation. I want to give a special thanks to Pastor Jerry Fenske who delivered 15 of the 40 buckets to the Association meeting on the 29th (I was not able to attend as our Community Breakfast was the same day). I delivered the other 25 on May 6th to our Disaster Team meeting in Columbus.

~ Chris Michaels

AIR CONDITIONING FUND UPDATE

Thanks to the spaghetti dinner fundraiser, pledges and other contributions, the Air Conditioning Fund grew by \$708.99 in April. Our total as of May 1st was \$55,306.56. An additional \$2,127.00 is pledged through June, 2017. That leaves us with less than \$5,000 to go to reach our goal of \$61,693 (the total amount borrowed from the endowment fund).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>June 2017</h1>					At Grace Episcopal: Tu & Th 10 am BonesandBalance	
Unless otherwise noted, our typical Sunday schedule is: 8:00 a.m. Shoreline Worship 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - Noon				1 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m.	2 Book Club 2:00 p.m.	3
4 Pentecost Shoreline 8 a.m. Communion Care & Share	5 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	6 Christian Education 3:00 p.m. Supper Club 6:00 p.m.	7	8 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m.	9	10
11 Shoreline 8 a.m. Ordination Anniversaries 10 am Reception 11 am Rib Dinner 11:30 a.m.	12 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	13 Leadership Team Meeting 6:30 p.m.	14	15 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m. Peace Gathering 6:30 p.m.	16	17
18 Father's Day Shoreline 8 a.m. Strengthen the Church Offering	19 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	20 Movie Night 7:00 p.m.	21	22 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m.	23	24
25 Shoreline 8 a.m.	26 Staff Meeting 10:30 a.m.	27 Games Night 7:00 p.m.	28	29 11 th Step Meeting 1:00 p.m.	30	

Boys & Girls Club Hours: 12:00 p.m. (NOON) - 6:00 p.m., Monday - Friday, beginning June 12th
CLOSED June 1st - 11th