



431 Columbus Avenue
Sandusky, Ohio 44870
firstconguccsandusky.com

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

February 2018



From the
MINISTER

Back in 1976 President Gerald Ford designated February as Black History Month. At the time he urged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

I have to admit, I never really took advantage of that opportunity. It's not that I didn't think it was important. I was just so involved in other matters I didn't feel I had the time to pursue that interest. But I recently discovered the truth in the adage "you find time for what you care about."

Since last fall when our Center for Peace & Understanding and the Study Group became involved in educating ourselves and others about racism and white privilege, I have been busy learning about black history, especially here in Sandusky. The most important thing I've learned is that it isn't enough to say you aren't a racist. You need to take a stand against racism. Several of us did that last fall when we participated in an anti-racism rally at Shade Mylander Plaza.

Now it's time to do more. The National Council of Churches is calling all faith groups to prayer and action on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. by participating in a Rally To End Racism on April 4th in Washington, D.C.. The Ohio Conference of the UCC is joining the National Council of Churches in providing bus transportation to the rally.

I plan to go and hope you will too, or help with the \$75 cost for someone else. At the time of departure the Ohio Conference will give each participant \$30 towards meals and incidentals enroute.

We will leave the evening of April 3rd from either Toledo or Cleveland, arriving the next morning in time for the Interfaith Service of Prayer and Preparation at the Lincoln Memorial at 7:30 a.m.. Then we'll walk to the National Mall for the rally at noon and return to Ohio late that evening.

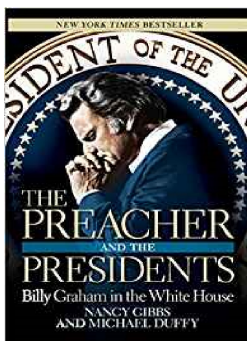
ACT Now: Unite to End Racism in the areas of church life and practices, criminal, economic and social justice, civil and human rights, environmental justice, immigration, media, and education.

A-Awaken to the truth that racism is evil and hurts us all

C-Confront racism through truth-telling and action to right the wrong

T-Transform the hearts, minds, and behaviors of people and institutions.

Shalom, Rev. Lenore



When the **Book Club** meets February 2nd they will discuss *Dead Wake*. At that time the March selection, *The Preacher and the Presidents* by Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy will be distributed.

At a time when the nation is increasingly split over the place of religion in public life, this book reveals how the world's most powerful men and the world's most famous evangelist, Billy Graham, knit faith and politics together. It is an amazing story of how Dr. Graham, America's most trusted spiritual leader, became a confidant of presidents and the price both he and they paid for such a friendship.

All are welcome to join the Book Club discussions held on the first Friday of the month at Frosty's Activity Room at the Parkvue Health Care Center at 2:00 p.m.. Copies of the book are available from the church office.

The **Supper Club** will gather at the Olive Garden on Tuesday, February 6th at 6:00 p.m.. Reservations are required so please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the back of the sanctuary.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Our Lenten journey begins on Wednesday, February 14th with our own unique Ash Wednesday service, including Holy Communion, but not the imposition of ashes. Please join us in the Boardman Room at 7:00 p.m..

We are **collecting adult and children's multivitamins** to be sent to the Good Samaritan Children's Home in Ukraine. This is the orphanage Rev. Lenore visited three years ago with Marty Siegel. Marty was notified of their need for vitamins for the children and staff and began a collection to be sent around Valentine's Day. If you would like to donate, please do so on or before Sunday February 11th. There is a box at the rear of the church for the vitamins. Financial contributions for the shipping expenses can be placed in a pew envelope marked "vitamins." Checks should be made out to our church.



Come and share the laughs Tuesday, February 20th when **Movie Night** features *La Cage Aux Folles*. In this first film adaptation of Jean Poiret's 1973 play of the same name two gay men living in St. Tropez have their lives turned upside down when the son of one of the men announces he is getting married. They try to conceal their lifestyle and their ownership of the drag club downstairs when the fiancée and her parents come for dinner. Showtime - 7:00 p.m..

Tuesday, February 27th is **Game Night** hosted by Tim & Cathy Work. Bring a friend or two, a snack to share and your favorite game, or enjoy one of the many they bring. The fun begins at 7:00 p.m..

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Barbara Petersen	2/3
Jerry Boros	2/8
Robert Baker	2/11
Joy Berquist, Michael McGookey	2/12
Marnay Schrock, Jacki Warren	2/15
Gary & Scarlet Berry	2/16
Kathy (Harris) Collins	2/25
Kathryn Baker	2/26
Elmeda Schwartz	2/27



Since last month we received letters of thanks from Ability Works, Crossroad, Erie County Senior Center, the LGBT Community Center and United Church Homes (Parkvue) for our quarterly donation from our budgeted mission fund. We also received thanks from Rahab, A Ministry of Hope, for our Shoreline donation.

THINKING OF JOINING THE CHURCH?

We hope to take in new members some time in March so if you've been thinking about becoming an "official" member of our church family, please let Rev. Lenore know. She will explain what is involved.

MEMORIAL

Barb Petersen made a donation in memory of Brent Williams.

Directory Update

Dot Malinovsky
3800 Boardwalk Blvd.
Sandusky, OH 44870

Greetings!

This month our club members will be designing and homework, recreation and program activities, and items such as arcreating robots made of recycled materials. They will also make an igloo out of plastic jugs. I want the members to understand the importance of recycling and how we can re-use simple items like plastic, paper and cardboard to make artful projects. This will be lots of fun! So, if you are wanting to help, please collect and save these items for us. It will be very much appreciated.

We are still in need of volunteers to assist with ts and crafts materials, especially construction paper.

As the weather tends to change and schools are closed, as a reminder the club will be also.
Thank you!

Sheila Graves, B&GC Youth Unit Director



How We Decide To Cancel Worship If The Weather Is Bad



Charles, our organist, plays for an 8:00 a.m. service at St. Paul Lutheran Church on Sunday morning. If he can drive there without too much problem, we will be open for worship. If not, he calls Rev. Lenore and she calls the TV and radio stations to let them know our service is cancelled. So, if the weather is unfavorable and you aren't sure about leaving the house for worship, please check the "iAlert" on News Channel 3 WKYC or go to wkyc.com.

You can also sign up for free text alerts that will send i-alert notifications directly to your mobile device. Sign up at <http://www.wkyc.com/news/mobile/text/>. We will also notify radio stations WCPZ(102.7 FM) and WLKR (96).

Obviously, if a level 3 snow emergency has been declared, everything is cancelled! You can always call Rev. Lenore to find out what is, or isn't, going on (419-366-8729).

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Saturday, February 3rd the Sandusky Library is hosting two special programs. There will be a performance by first-person presenter Anthony Gibbs, who will portray John Parker, an Underground Railroad operative in Ripley, Ohio at 10:30 a.m..

At 2:00 p.m. there will be a speaker and discussion titled "Terrorizing Immigrants and Catholics: the Ohio Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's." This is one of a series of programs made possible by a grant from the Ohio Humanities Council to promote community dialogue about difficult issues of race and ethnicity.

Wednesday, February 7th at 6:00 p.m. at the State Theater the NAACP presents Bicentennial Banter: A Glimpse of the Black History of Sandusky. Pastor Thomas Darden (born in 1929) and Mrs. Dorothy Farrar (born in 1921) will discuss their experiences of life in Sandusky.



Harry Boguszewski, Ross Brazee, Harvey Heys, Marv Keller, Rev. Cathy Lawrence, Dot Malinovsky, Kassidy Nemeth, Rylee Parkinson, Christine & John Vroman, William & Nancy Walker, Francis, King & Bray Families; **Homebound:** Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Dot Malinovsky, Dorothy Moore, Elmeda Schwartz



REPORTS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM AND BOARDS

Christian Education

Jacki Warren, Chairperson

Members Jacki Warren and Phyllis Bottoms met with Rev. Lenore on Tuesday, January 9, 2018. Patsy Hicks and Debbi Keller were unable to meet with us.

Study Group: This Thursday 1/11, the group will finally begin discussing the UCC prepared material: "White Privilege, Let's Talk; A Resource for Transformational Dialogue". The group will decide how much of the material they want to use.

For Lent it was suggested to do as last year and use a 6-week Bible Study that coordinates with the Mid-Week Lenten Worship Series. This year's theme is "Thy Will Be Done". A leader's guide (with answers), study notes and session directions is available.

Also a daily Lenten devotional guide, "Finding Peace in Lent: Reflections on the St. Francis

Prayer” will be made available for use and as an option for the Peace and Understanding Group, which led into a lengthy discussion of the Peace Group.

Peace and Understanding Gathering: Discussion of a program for Thursday, January 18th included contacting Eric Jordan (article in Sandusky Register, Sat. Jan. 6th) to speak or perhaps a speaker on the Underground Railroad and our role, First Congregational UCC's with civil rights. Other discussion concerning whether the focus group is still interested in becoming a nonprofit group by our 200th anniversary; clear goals need to be defined. It was suggested that the Jan. 18th session be an open conversation on the date and time of the meeting (interferes with flow of study group), expectations of the group, focus, and planning for future meetings so they can be better publicized ahead of time. Some feelings of being adrift, overwhelmed and frustrated were voiced. Is this a time for New Beginnings?

Book Club: Next meeting is Friday, February 2nd. The book is Dead Wake, a book about the Lusitania. Discussion will be led by Jacki since Rev. Lenore will be on vacation in California. Titles for future months were offered: The Boys in the Boat, The Preacher and the Presidents, The Perfect Day, and The Help.

Other Business: Rev. Lenore reported that we came in under budget for 2017. Jacki will submit an annual report for the Board. (Thank you, Jacki.)

Our next meeting is Tuesday, February 13th at 11:00 a.m..

Respectfully submitted, Phyllis Bottoms

Board of Deacons

Kim Nemeth, Chairperson

Fellowship hosts are needed for Sunday morning and volunteers will be needed to help with the Lenten supper on Wednesday, February 21st.

Board of Elders

Joy Berquist & Chris Michaels, Co-Chairs

Happy New Year to my friends and family at First Congregational Church. As I write this article on the second Sunday of January, I sit back and reflect on some of the things the Board of Elders did the last couple of months of 2017.

Toward the end of October and the beginning of November we replaced the sheet of glass we used to cover the altar cloths with a piece of plexiglass, making it easier for one person to change the altar clothes. The four Advent banners got new banner holders. If you would like to see them, I can show them just come and see me after any Sunday service.

Now I would like to thank all the kids that lit the Advent candles and the Christ candle for Christmas Eve. It was especially beautiful this year. I would like to thank Joy Berquist for setting up for communion on Christmas Eve. I would like to thank Barb and Russell Petersen and Bill and Karen Michaels for handing out bulletins and candles Christmas Eve. I would like to thank Mark Pifer and Andy Nappi for helping me with both the offering and communion that night. Without them I don't know if I could have done it.

I look forward to the next two years on the Board of Elders and letting everyone know what is going on when I can.

Sincerely,

Chris Michaels, Elders Co-Chairperson

Board of Mission & Outreach

Barb Petersen - Chairperson

Mission & Outreach Board Meeting 1-14-2018

Present: Barbara Petersen, Robin Pratt

Thank you notes were received from:

LGBT Community Center
Erie County Humane Society

Care & Share

Heifer International (certificate for goat, pig, ducks & chicks donation)

Christmas Fund (certificate for 2016 donation)

We approved the donation of \$100 to purchase a brick for the MLK bust for Freedom Park in Washington Park.

We will be collecting vitamins for the Ukraine Orphanage. Needs to be an announcement in the bulletin & newsletter.

The annual report was submitted on 1-21-2018 for the Annual Meeting.

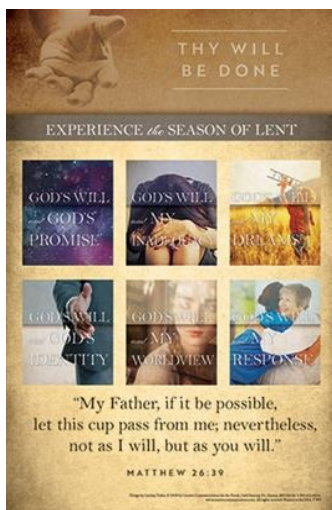
Blanket Sunday will once again be on Mother's Day Sunday. We need to order the contribution information next month.

Members of the Mission & Outreach Board for 2018 will be Barbara Petersen, Bill Mayo, Karen Mork and Robin Pratt as the Leadership Team liaison.

Our next meeting will be Sunday February 11, 2018.

Robin Pratt, Secretary

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES



Once again, we will join other local congregations for supper and worship on the Wednesday evenings during Lent. We begin with a simple meal of soup and sandwiches at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship at 6:45. The first one will be February 21st at Frist Congregational. Pastor John Apple from First Faith Community Church will deliver the sermon that evening.

The theme this year is "Thy Will Be Done." Each service will focus on a different aspect of God's will at work among us. The sermons will be delivered by the pastors as biblical characters. We will hear from Moses, David, Mary, Paul and Lydia.

The other participating congregations are: First Faith Community, First Presbyterian, The Community at Parkvue, St. Stephen United Church of Christ, Trinity United Methodist and joining us for the first time, St. Paul Lutheran Church.

The offering will benefit Crossroads, our local homeless shelter.

The schedule for the remaining services is:

February 28 - St. Paul Lutheran (2211 Mills St.) Preacher - Rev. Jerry Fenske

March 7 - The Community at Parkvue (3800 Boardwalk Blvd.) Preacher - Rev. Lenore Kure

March 14 - First Faith Community Church (225 E. Jefferson St.) Preacher - Rev. Doug Winner

March 21 - St. Stephen UCC (905 E. Perkins Ave.) Preacher - Rev. Cathy Lawrence