



FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY 2018



I received a wonderful little book in my Christmas stocking. It's a mindfulness journal to help me do one thing every day to keep centered. It says, "when you are centered you appreciate the places, people and experiences that give peace to your body and meaning to your life." That is my wish for all of us as we begin the new year - that we become more centered.

I found an article on the internet (livestrong.com) related to this. "Money Won't Make You Happy, But These 12 Traits Will" by Sarah Stevenson describes 12 attributes found in genuinely happy people. So, if you want to be more centered and have more peace and joy in your life in the new year, consider that, according to the article, happy people...

- ...get a good night's sleep
- ...exercise
- ...spend quality time in nature
- ...listen to music
- ...live in the moment
- ...are do-gooders
- ...have a purpose
- ...spend time alone
- ...laugh often
- ...look for the good
- ...bounce back (resiliency)
- ...have a strong support system

Although these attributes were not prioritized, for me the most important is the last one, followed by having a purpose and laughing. With God as my main support I can confidently pursue what I perceive to be my purpose - to try to make the world a better place by following the teachings of Jesus. To counter balance the seriousness of all that I need to make sure I look for the humorous side of life and find something to laugh about every day.

Hopefully you have discovered that at First Congregational we offer a strong support system while helping you to find your purpose, look for the good in others, be resilient, do good, enjoy good music and share a few laughs. And if you nod off during the sermon, we are even helping you meet your sleep requirement! So, be happy - come to church!

Shalom, Rev. Lenore

GRANT RECEIVED FOR PEACE WORK

Thanks to Bob Bottoms applying for a grant from the UCC Make A Difference Fund on behalf of the Center for Peace & Understanding, we received \$1600 for an upcoming project we plan to sponsor with the Sandusky Library.

It probably won't happen until 2019, but we are working together to bring an exhibit, "Anne Frank: A History for Today" from the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect to Sandusky. It is hoped that the exhibit will lead to further discussion around the ways in which disharmony and misunderstanding between racial and ethnic groups in our community can be diminished through opportunities for dialogue, sharing and education.

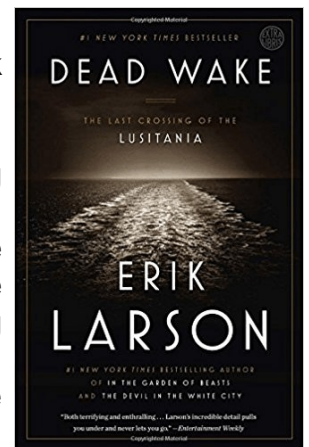
More funding will be needed as the cost of the exhibit is \$3500-\$9000, depending on the size of the display. The Library will be in contact with the Lange Trust to hopefully share in the financial support.

The Book Club will be discussing *A Man Called Ove* when they gather Friday, January 5th. At that time the book for February will be distributed, *Dead Wake* by Erik Larson.

It is the story of the sinking of the Lusitania, one that many of us think we know, but don't because the intimate details and true meaning of this great disaster have long been obscured by history.

Full of glamour and suspense, *Dead Wake* brings to life a cast of evocative characters, from famed Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat to pioneering female architect Theodate Pope to President Woodrow Wilson, a man lost to grief, dreading the widening war but also captivated by the prospect of new love.

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.



ANNUAL MEETING & POT LUCK

Following the worship service on January 28th, we will hold our Annual Meeting to elect and install members of The Leadership Team and Boards. Afterward there will be a pot luck. Please bring a dish to share.

MOVIE NIGHT



Break out of the winter doldrums by enjoying Movie Night, Tuesday, January 16th. This month's feature is *That Old Feeling*, a 1997 romantic comedy.

The wedding from hell just sparked a match made in heaven! Comedy legend Carl Reiner directs Bette Midler and Dennis Farina in an irresistibly funny, incurably romantic motion picture that celebrates the "lighter" side of love. Happily divorced for 14 years, Lilly and Dan still have one thing in common, they hate each other with nuclear capacity. But after a knock-down, drag-out fight at their daughter's wedding, their pent-up hostility suddenly turns to unbridled passion! Now the two unlikely lovebirds are on the run.

Come and enjoy some laughs, and popcorn. Show time is 7:00 p.m. in the Boardman Room.

GAME NIGHT

Did you get any new games for Christmas? If so, share the fun by bringing them to Game Night January 23rd at 7:00 p.m.. Tim & Cathy Work will also bring several games so there will be something for everyone. Bring a snack to share, and a friend!

THANK YOU

In December we received letters of thanks from Care & Share, Heifer International and the LGBT Community Center for our mission donations. We also received a thank you from the Humane Society of Erie County for their Shoreline donation.

Thank you for all the kindness shown to us over the Christmas season through your gifts, cards and holiday wishes. It is truly a joy to serve such a generous and appreciative congregation. We wish all of you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2018.

*In gratitude,
Rev. Lenore, Marc, Jerry, Robin, and Charles*



Remember in your prayers: Debbi Keller, Linda Nappi, Kaitlyn Nemeth, Anna LaVern Taylor, Evalyn Vroman, The Knisely, Nestor, Pifer, Stammitti, Williams and Wolf Families

The Prayernet, our electronic prayer chain, offers anyone with e-mail a chance to be part of this special prayer ministry. A prayer list is sent out at the beginning of each week, and team members are asked to pray for those on the list. If you would like to join, please e-mail the church at FirstCongrUCC@aol.com.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF CHURCH IS CANCELLED?

If the weather is unfavorable and you aren't sure about leaving the house for worship, or any other church event, 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(96.1 FM) of any cancellation involving the church. 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).

DIRECTORY UPDATE

Tammy Samson
305 Eagle Point Rd.
Rossford, OH 43460



Marty & Trudy Anderson	1/06
Mark Pifer	1/09
Melanie Kennedy	1/18
Hope Petersen	1/22
Dyson Leffler	1/24
Gary Lickfelt	1/31

Congratulations to Karen Mork on the Christmas Eve birth of her granddaughter Jacqueline Olivia! She is the daughter of Melanie and Matt Kennedy.



We extend our sympathy to...

...Cathy Pifer. Her brother Steve Nestor passed away December 10th.

...Angie Williams on the death of her husband Brent. His memorial service was held at the church December 16th..

Memorial donations were received from Barbara Gaeddert in memory of her cousin Wayne Knisely, and from Jerry & Janice Franketti in memory of Brent Williams



FROM OUR BOARDS

Christian Education

Jacki Warren - Chairperson

The Board met December 4th with all members present (Phyllis Bottoms, Patsy Hicks, Debbi Keller, Jacki Warren) along with Rev. Lenore. The following was discussed:

Sunday School: Children participated in the First Sunday of Advent in church, reading and lighting the candle of love. Their enthusiasm was hard to contain. They did a great job. Patsy intends to have Sunday School all through December.

Book Club: The Christmas Tea and book discussion (Skipping Christmas) with goodies and small gifts at Parkvue was a success. The January 5th meeting Rev. Lenore will just be getting back from vacation so Jacki will lead the discussion of A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman (suggested by Ruth Nappi). Rev. Lenore will also be on vacation for the February 2nd Book Club meeting. But a book needs to be selected and handed out at the January meeting. Possibilities were discussed.

Study Group: Still reading articles on white privilege. On December 14th, they will listen to a podcast. Since Rev. Lenore will be on vacation Thursday, January 4th a leader is needed for the discussion of: "Let's Talk about Whiteness", "The Color of Law" and "Now is the Time for Theology to Thrive".

Peace Gathering: Due to the Longest Night Service on December 21st, the group will not meet until Thursday, January 18, 2018. Since we are also concerned about environmental issues, it was suggested having a speaker on dealing with environmental issues in winter (heating, homelessness, do fish hibernate?).

In conjunction with the Library and the NAACP, the group would like to record the histories/ experiences of members. Also, the Library and the Peace Group are cosponsoring a book discussion, Tuesday, January 30th at 6 p.m. at the Library on America's Original Sin by Jim Wallis.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 11 a.m..

Respectfully submitted, Phyllis Bottoms

Board of Deacons

Kim Nemeth - Chairperson

There will be a pot luck after the annual meeting January 28th. Please bring a dish to share Fellowship sign up sheets for the new year are on the clip board on the serving table in the Boardman Room. If you enjoy this social time, please take a turn hosting.

Board of Mission & Outreach

Barb Petersen - Chairperson

We wish to thank everyone who donated to the Christmas Fund in December. A total of \$500 was collected.

Minutes of December 10, 2017 meeting:

Attended: Barb Peterson, Robin Pratt

Old Business:

Thank You notes for donations were received from: Volunteers of America, Eden Theological Seminary, Stein Hospice and Firelands Habitat for Humanity.

Disaster team report (Chris Michaels): Nothing new to report.

New Business:

Newsletter article for January: Thank you to everyone who made a donation to our special collection for the Christmas Fund in December.

Copy of report to Leadership Team.

Annual report is due sometime in January before Congregational Meeting.

Next meeting: January 14, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Pratt



Greetings!

We at the Boys & Girls Club had exciting things happen in December! The children have been learning music with Ms. Kelley and her program was very successful. Home Saving Bank and Santa made a special visit bringing gifts and special treats!

Mr. Gallagher, the Science Guy, will contribute his talents with the children and we anticipate quirky and fun things happening at the

We will be closed for holiday break December 25th - January 1st, opening back up on January 2nd - 5th. Our hours will be 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.. On January 3rd the children will be celebrating the holiday season with a field trip to Ghostly Manor Thrill Center.

For the month of January we will be learning about recycling. The children will have a number of activities to accomplish using only recycled materials. We will have a winter theme of "Wild Winter" with fun activities. We need gallon and half gallon containers, cardboard boxes and dryer hoses. If you want to donate any of these, drop them off at the Club between 12 - 7 p.m..

Do you have knowledge with Apple computers? We are in desperate need of someone to fix the computers to get them up and running for the children to use for homework. Please contact me at Shelia.Graves@bgcsandusky.org or 419-624-9250 to help.

Thank you,

Sheila Graves, Youth Unit Director

The Center for Peace & Understanding and the Sandusky Library co-sponsor

JANUARY 30th BOOK DISCUSSION

America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to a New America

In an on-going effort to increase awareness and understanding throughout the community of issues related to peace, our Center for Peace & Understanding is partnering with the Library to host a discussion of Jim Wallis's book *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to a New America*. It will be held Tuesday, January 30th at 6:00 p.m. at the Library and co-led by our own Rev. Bob Bottoms and Jennifer Ashburn.

Wallis, a bestselling author and leading Christian activist, offers a prophetic and deeply personal call to action in overcoming the racism that is so ingrained in American society. He speaks candidly to Christians--particularly white Christians--urging them to cross a new bridge toward racial justice and healing. Probing yet positive, biblically rooted yet highly practical, this book shows people of faith how they can work together to overcome the embedded racism in America, galvanizing a movement to cross the bridge to a multiracial church and a new America.

Copies of the book are available from the church office or the Library. You may borrow one or purchase a copy for \$6.

