



431 Columbus Avenue  
Sandusky, Ohio 44870  
firstconguccsandusky.com

FIRST  
CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

**February 2020**



From the  
**MINISTER**

I've always liked February. Maybe that's because it's shorter than the other months so we move quickly through it and into March, my birthday month. (I'm one of those people who loves birthdays, mine and those of everyone else!) Speaking of birthdays, my granddaughter's birthday this month always finds me in San Diego - another reason to like February. But I also like it because February has the fun of Groundhog Day and the sentimentality of Valentine's Day.

This year, a leap year, February is also special because it has an added day. Since the Earth does not orbit the sun in precisely 365 days, every four years an extra day needs to be added to the calendar. Centuries ago it was decided to tack it on to the end of February and call it leap day.

Leap day is sort of mysterious and associated with age-old customs, folklore, and superstition. One of the most well-known traditions is that on leap day women may propose to men, instead of the other way around. In some spiritual communities it's believed that leap day is an ideal time for love, healing and learning. Along those lines, maybe we should make it day for taking a leap of faith. Is there something you have always wanted to do, but hesitate to do so because you aren't certain of the outcome? Now is the time to give it a try. If not on February 29<sup>th</sup>, maybe that day you could promise yourself to do it some other time in this leap year.

It was almost 25 years ago when someone at the UCC national headquarters told me to take a leap of faith when I called seeking advice. As a new, naive pastor I had foolishly promised our little congregation that I would help them raise the money for an elevator. Then I found out it would cost \$250,000! That's when I called the headquarters for help. At the time I thought the advice I was given was ridiculous, but I took it to heart and four years later we dedicated our elevator without ever borrowing a cent! That's probably why I am confident that our recent leap of faith, selling our building in hope of securing our future, will somehow work out fine.

So, I urge you to take a leap - a leap of faith! I think I'll ask someone to marry me. If you know any likely candidates, please let me know. LOL!

Shalom, Rev. Lenore

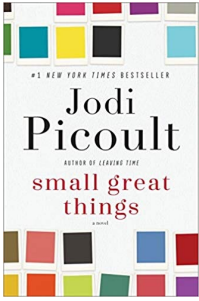
Rev. Lenore will be on vacation January 30<sup>th</sup> - February 5<sup>th</sup>. If you have a pastoral emergency during that time, please call Rev. Bob Bottoms at 419-271-0086. He will be preaching on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.



### SUPPER CLUB

This month the Supper Club will meet at Mekong at 6:00 p.m. on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The restaurant is located at 3321 Milan Road. Please sign up on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary if you plan to attend.

## BOOK CLUB



The Book Club will meet on Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss *A Seat By The Hearth*. At that time the book for March will be distributed - *Small Great Things*. With incredible empathy, intelligence, and candor, #1 New York Times best selling author Jodi Picoult tackles race, privilege, prejudice, justice, and compassion through richly layered characters and a gripping moral dilemma that leads readers to question everything they know about privilege, power, and race. Copies of the book are available from the church office. All are welcome to join the discussions held on the first Friday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in Frosty's Activity Center at the Parkvue Health Care Center.

---

## STUDY GROUP

Considering this is an important election year, the Study Group begins a new curriculum, *Faithful Citizenship*, Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.. All are welcome to come and gain a better understanding of our civic responsibilities as followers of Jesus. In the weeks that follow the group will also read and discuss the book *Silence Is Not the Answer* by George S. Johnson. In this time of confusion, fear and conflict, this is a collection of prophetic voices urging us to wake up, notice what is happening and take a stand.

---

## HELP SAMMY HELP THE HOMELESS

Sammy Greenman (our confirmation class) will be attending a youth overnighter at the Vermilion UCC February 22<sup>nd</sup> to help Denison Avenue UCC help the homeless! Games, activities, and presentations will focus on the issue of housing insecurity.

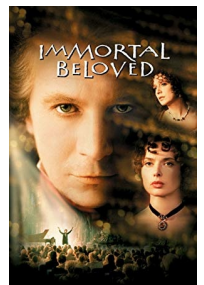
Citing several code violations, including the lack of a sprinkler and fire alarm system, on Christmas Eve the City of Cleveland ordered the church to stop allowing homeless people to spend the night in the church building. They usually host as many as 50 homeless persons on a given night. The church has appealed the legal order, but they need funding for the building upgrades and legal expenses.

The overnighter participants are challenged to each raise \$100 for Denison's needs. They are also encouraged to collect new hygiene items (toothpaste, soap, etc.) and new or gently used warm clothing for Denison's clients. New socks and underwear are especially appreciated!

Let's help Sammy prove that our confirmation class, like our congregation, is small but mighty by giving him an abundance of donations to take with him. He will be collecting money and items February 2, 9 and 16 and will report back to the congregation about his total collection and what he learned about housing insecurity during worship on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Movie Night

The feature for this month's Movie Night, Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, is *Immortal Beloved*. Gary Oldman stars in this tale of a man of genius, a woman of passion and the mystery of a lifetime. It's the untold story of Ludwig van Beethoven. Showtime is 6:30 p.m.. Popcorn is provided. All are welcome!





Our Lenten journey begins February 26<sup>th</sup> with what has become our own traditional Ash Wednesday service, including Holy Communion, but not the imposition of ashes. If you have yet to experience this meaningful service, you won't want to miss it. Please join us in the Boardman Room at 7:00 p.m.

Our next Community Breakfast will be held Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup> from 9 -11 a.m.. Please spread the word - anyone who needs a meal or would enjoy having someone to share breakfast with is welcome to come. Volunteers and financial contributions are needed. There is a sign up sheet for workers on the back bulletin board in the sanctuary. Donations can be sent to the church or put in a pew envelope and marked "Community Breakfast." If you have any questions, please see Mark or Cathy Pifer.



*Community Breakfast*

### BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY

Barbara Petersen	2/3
Jerry Boros	2/8
Robert Baker	2/11
Joy Berquist	2/12
Jacki Warren	2/15
Gary & Scarlet Berry	2/16
Nette Simon	2/21
Kathy (Harris) Collins	2/25
Elmeda Schwartz	2/27

Jeff Berquist, Deb Butler, Tom Csarny, Pam DeCaro, Carrie & Sam Greenman, Meredith Holman, Kathy Hunscke, Jackie's grandson, Debbi Keller, Mary & Neal Lindsley, Debbie Neese-Voltz, Mark Pifer and the VOSH Mission Team, Willene Pifer, Barb Reilly, Big T Turner, Jacki Warren, Laurie Jo Webb, Alex Wilhelm and the Dilly, Fenske, Parbanic, Schlitzkus and Work Families. Homebound members and friends: Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz, and Christine Vroman



**We extend our deepest sympathy** to Tim Work and his family on the passing of his beloved wife, Cathleen, January 14<sup>th</sup>.



We received letters of thanks from Ability Works, Crossroad, Erie County Senior Center, LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland, United Church Homes (Parkvue Community) and the Volunteers of America for our quarterly donations. Heifer International also thanked us for our \$300 donation and the Ovarian Cancer Connection expressed their gratitude for the share of the Shoreline offerings they received.

---

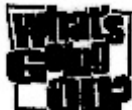
## EMERGENCY CANCELLATIONS

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](http://www.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 also call Rev. Lenore to find out what is, or isn't, going on (419-366-8729).

---



## REPORTS FROM OUR BOARDS

### Christian Education

*Jacki Warren - Chairperson*

Members of the Board (Jacki, Patsy, Kathy, Phyllis) met with Rev. Lenore on Tuesday, January 07, 2020.

**Study Group:** The group will begin Introducing the New Testament on Thursday (1/9/20) and continue through February 13<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion about whether or no to do a special Lenten study, possibly including the book Silence is Not The Answer.

**Sunday School:** Patsy and the class are still going.

**Parkvue Book Club:** The Christmas Tea was a fun party with gifts, goodies and discussion of the book Mr. Dickens and His Carol. Patsy offered a list of suggested titles for upcoming months: Say Goodbye for Now; Plain Truth, My Sister's Keeper and Small Great Things by Jodi Picoult and The Rainbow Comes and Goes by Anderson Cooper. For the January meeting, Marlee Wobser stepped in for Rev. Lenore to help lead the book group.

**Confirmation Class:** Sammy is doing well. His confirmation is scheduled for Pentecost Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. There was discussion about whether to have a potluck or just a special cake that day because Shoreline will have started on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

All members of the Board agreed to serve for another year. Jacki will continue as chair. There was discussion about what Phyllis should include in the annual report.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

### Board of Finance

The Board is grateful to Marlee Wobser for joining the Board and to Robin Pratt for volunteering to take charge of fund raising.

### Board of Mission & Outreach

*Barb Petersen - Chairperson*

The Board wishes to thank the congregation for contributions to mission projects and special missions in 2019.

Their next scheduled meeting is February 9<sup>th</sup>.

---

The following slate of officers and board members was  
voted in at the Annual Meeting on January 19, 2020.

<b>LEADERSHIP TEAM</b>	Glenn Gast, Karen Mork, Mark Pifer (Chair) Cheryl Negrey
<b>TREASURER</b>	Scarlet Berry
<b>RECORDER</b>	Meredith Holman
<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b>	Jim Negrey (Coordinator), Bill Roche, Tim Work
<b>BOARD OF ELDERS</b>	Sammy Greenman, Kathy Hunscke, Nette Simon (Chair)
<b>BOARD OF MISSION &amp; OUTREACH</b>	Barb Petersen (Chair), Karen Mork (Secretary)
<b>BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</b>	Phyllis Bottoms (Secretary), Patsy Hicks, Kathy Hunscke, Jacki Warren (Chair)
<b>BOARD OF FINANCE</b>	Scarlet Berry, Cathy Pifer, Marlee Wobser
<b>BOARD OF DEACONS</b>	Kim Nemeth (Chair), David Shipley, Kathie Simon

---