



431 Columbus Avenue  
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FIRST  
CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

Coronavirus Edition #5  
April 23, 2020

## **“A ROAD TRIP”**

### **Based on Luke 24:13-35**



**JOIN OUR LIVE STREAM SERVICE APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup> at 10:00 a.m.**



*From the*  
**MINISTER**

What a difference a few weeks and a pandemic make! It used to be everyone was asking me about the sale of our church building. Now they want to know my opinion on when we will be open for worship again. I honestly have no idea when that might be, but I do know that no wants us to be together again more than I do.

I intensely dislike doing the live stream services. They involve more work and a lot more anxiety for me than our typical services. I'm tired of standing in front of an empty sanctuary, looking at a camera. I miss all of you and our interaction during worship. My soul longs to be nourished by Charles and Robin playing and the choir singing. However, more than anything, I want us all to be safe and healthy. So, when we reopen will depend on the advice of the experts, not the whims of this pastor.

The Governor has said he will begin reopening Ohio on May 1<sup>st</sup>, but as of this writing he has not disclosed the details of how this will happen. Until then, we are in the dark as to when we can worship together again in our building. In the meantime, I will contact the Erie County Health Department

for their advice on the best practices for gathering together once again.

As soon as the Governor discloses his plan for reopening Ohio, our Leadership Team will decide when the church will open and how we will conduct worship in the safest way possible. If you have an opinion and/or suggestions, please contact one of the Team members: Glenn Gast (419-357-2945), Karen Mork (419-357-7780), Cheryl Negrey (419-602-3227) and Mark Pifer (419-626-2626). We will then inform everyone who regularly worships with us about the plan.

I sincerely hope we will open sometime in May. For that reason I will publish a regular monthly newsletter next week with the understanding that the schedule of services and meetings is tentative. Unfortunately, I seriously doubt that our Shoreline services will be able to begin at the end of the month. The cleanliness of the pavilion is an issue, along with the fact that the scheduling of speakers and soliciting sponsors was halted with the shelter-at-home order. Perhaps we will be able to begin halfway through the summer. Like everything else, we will just have to wait and see how the situation evolves in the weeks ahead. That reminds me of this little prayer, "Lord, please give me patience, and give it to me NOW!"

Shalom, Rev. Lenore

**Live stream trivia:** Last Sunday (Holy Humor) 249 people watched the service! There were 76 likes, comments and shares on that post.



Meredith Holman and Samson Greenman invite you to their live stream wedding ceremony this Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 p.m.. It can be accessed through Meredith's Facebook page.

Our bills need to be paid even when we are not able to worship together in the building. If at all possible, **please mail in your pledges and contributions.**

### Upcoming Birthdays

May 2 - Rhonda Roberts

May 5 - Rhonda Neese, Olivia Badamy

### In our prayers...



All those lonely and sheltering, the first responders and our first line medical staff, those still working for pharmacies, grocery stores and funeral homes, our nation, Jessica Croll, Pam DeCaro, Shannon Risk Dietrich, Beverly Earl & Sam Park, Kathy Hunscke, Debbi Keller, Drew Kreimes, Jack Neese, Kelly O'Brien, Punky Porto, Betsy Reynolds & her co-workers, Linda & Rob Szempruch, Owen Thompson, Jacki Warren, the Groff, Rodriguez, Siegel, Vroman and Wilson Families, and Don Keyes & Family.

**Our homebound members are now all of us**, but we want to especially remember Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz and Christine Vroman

## A Report from The Research & Exploration Team

Due to Covid-19 and the stay-at-home order, there has been no activity on the sale of our building. The last time the Research & Exploration Team met was March 10<sup>th</sup>, following the Leadership Team meeting. Below is the report Meredith Holman submitted for the newsletter about that meeting.

We (members of our Team, the Leadership Team and Rev. Lenore) began with a prayer and then discussed old business. We went around the table expressing our individual thoughts and reactions to the tour we made of Trinity United Methodist Church.

We had a wide range of thoughts, emotions, and opinions. There were some positives we all agreed on such as their kitchen, fellowship hall, and location downtown. There were some concerns by many such as the parking lot off of Hancock St., the distance to the entrance, no elevator/elevette to all floors, and the size of the building. This was a healthy discussion and everyone's opinions were respected and appreciated. We ultimately cannot move on anything until we know someone is buying our building.

Currently the most promising buyer that walked through our building three times has made it clear, they are not going to buy. There are still others walking through. We have not lost faith.

The *Sandusky Register* contacted Rev. Lenore and John Bauer for information about us and our building. John gave the reporter a detailed positive overview of the building. If asked, Rev. Lenore will do a positive write up of our congregation, missions, and passion for our future worship together wherever that may be.

New business: Meredith will reach out to Jim Peters, our real estate attorney, to find out what suggestions he has of other rental properties that might meet our needs. Meredith will line up tours and reach out to both teams and Robin. This will be a solid control group to review the options and come up with suggestions and ideas for the congregation if/when the time comes.

We concluded with a reading of Deuteronomy 31:6. Our next meeting will be, Wednesday May 27<sup>th</sup> at First Congregational UCC at 6:45 p.m.. We hope to have toured a few locations by then.

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### OOPS!

Cheryl Negrey's April 13<sup>th</sup> birthday was inadvertently omitted from the monthly birthday list. Apologies are extended to her.

In the April 8<sup>th</sup> newsletter the phone number for Judy Harris was incorrect. It is 419-626-5650.

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### What's new?

Last weekend Kim Nemeth found out that her unborn grandchild is a girl. Her daughter Kaitlyn is expected to deliver in July. Meanwhile Jim & Cheryl Negrey are in the final countdown for the birth of their first grandchild, due early in May.



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Many people have taken advantage of the opportunity to develop new hobbies or complete unfinished projects while sheltered at home these last few weeks. Our organist Charles Scroggy decided to do something he always wanted to do, grow a beard! We will all get to see the result when the church reopens because he says he plans to keep it for awhile.

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## Staying sober in a new digital age

By ANDY OURIEL  
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**SANDUSKY**  
Keep your distance from others. Stay at home. Go into quarantine. Remain isolated from all others.

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, and among the many downfalls caused by COVID-19, it can get quite lonely for people these days.

It's especially true for locals in recovery, who depend upon large support networks to help them maintain their sobriety.

Luckily for them, immediately after Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine banned mass public gatherings in March, Sandusky Artisans Recovery Community Center



**LEFT:** Through Sandusky Artisans Recovery Community Center, spouses and Huron residents Emily and Michael Werner, recently started to offer online classes to help people in recovery remain sober.  
**RIGHT:** Sandusky resident Sharon Lichtcsien recently started to offer online yoga classes to help people in recovery remain sober.

■ See **SOBER**, Page A3

Two of our former Shoreline speakers were featured on the front page of the Sandusky Register April 21<sup>st</sup> in an article about how people in recovery are dealing with the pandemic. **Emily Werner** was a speaker last summer. She and her husband, Michael, also participated in our Sandusky Sunrise event last September.

**Sharon Lichtcsien** was a speaker in 2017. She is the instructor of a water yoga class held at Parkvue three times a week before the shut down. **John**

**Rainey & Gene Finnegan, Neal Lindsley** and Rev. Lenore's mother, **Ruth Maier**, attend the class.

Joey Supina was quoted in the article. He was one of our speakers in 2014. He and his wife founded Sandusky Artisans.

If you have not yet returned your ballot for the **Primary Election**, please do so immediately. It may be returned by mail in the provided postage-paid envelope to the Erie County Board of Elections, 2900 Columbus Ave., Sandusky 44870, postmarked no later than Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. It can also be dropped off at the secured drop box located outside of the Erie County Service Building, 2900 Columbus Ave., Sandusky. It must be received by 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.