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FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

JUNE 2020



From the
MINISTER

Monday was an anxiety filled day for me. The large bold headline on the front page of the *Sandusky Register* read, “Rage in America.” It talked about all the violent protesting and looting taking place across the country in reaction to the lynching of George Floyd in Minneapolis last week.

Then there were rumors on the street that an outside group was coming to town that afternoon to stir up trouble at a protest/march scheduled to take place downtown in the afternoon. Supposedly, churches were going to be “targeted.” Local pastors were urged to come to an early morning gathering to pray for God’s protection. Some business closed early.

I firmly stand in solidarity with our black brothers and sisters in protesting Floyd’s death and the countless atrocities that have been afflicted on people of color for over 400 years. However, the looting and destruction that is taking place leaves me baffled. Having participated in the Women’s March on Washington with a million people, as well as several other peaceful demonstrations, I’ve struggled to understand what is going on. A friend’s post on facebook was helpful.

He said, “We can’t judge the real purpose, intent, and goals of the masses of people in the streets, who are trying to get justice - by making the mistake of including the criminals and ‘agitators’ who are acting only for self-gain and racial agitation. Looting is NOT protesting. Looters represent no one but themselves. As we watch the protests day and night, we can separate out the real righteous protestors, from the criminals taking advantage of the situation, from the ‘partygoers’ out to have fun.”

As it turned out, Sandusky did us proud. Our protest was as it should be, a peaceful, organized march. There are two lessons here: 1) Remember the words of my friend. Every violent riot you see on the media probably has at its core a group of peaceful protestors who had their purpose hijacked by outside agitators and looters. Don’t judge everyone by the misdeeds of some. 2) Don’t believe everything you hear from others. Check things out before you end up spreading rumors and inciting fear and panic. If you can’t verify something, don’t pass it on. Shalom, Rev. Lenore

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR WORSHIP

When worshipping with us Sunday mornings, please remember these safety guidelines set forth by our Leadership Team: wear a mask or face covering at all times (they will be available for anyone needing one), sanitize your hands upon entering the sanctuary (remember you touched a door handle and a handrail, or two elevator buttons to get to the sanctuary), and practice social distancing (given the large size of our sanctuary and the small size of our congregation, this is not a problem.) If you are not feeling well, please stay home.



You will have **three options** for partaking of the **communion elements** June 7th: (1) a Fellowship Cup (pre-filled cup with wafer), (2) juice & bread in the usual form, however the bread cube will be in a plastic bag, (3) if you don't like the wafer in the Fellowship Cup, you may take it along with a bagged bread cube.

Supper Club, Book Club and Movie Night have been postponed for at least another month.

How About A Longest Day Service?

In light of the fact that all our usual summer community activities have been cancelled, a suggestion has been made that we hold a Celebration of Creation service on Saturday, June 20th, literally the longest day of the year. Similar to our Longest Night Service in December, it would include scripture, reflection and music. Like that service, it would most likely not attract a big crowd so social distancing in the sanctuary would be possible. Details have yet to be worked out, depending on comments and suggestions from the congregation. Please let Rev. Lenore know what you think.

We received **letters of thanks** from the LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland and Volunteers of America (Crossroad Homeless Shelter) for our quarterly donations.



Shane Klauss	6/1
Meredith Greenman, Shane Klauss & Paul Fries	6/3
Jeffrey & Joy Berquist	6/5
Nette & Kathie Simon	6/16
Sari Kelley	6/18
Laura Elliott	6/20
Jack Neese	6/22
Christopher Ketchum	6/25
Heyley Ketchum	6/26
Mike & Halley Leffler	6/27
Daryl & Virginia Becker	6/30

PRAYER LIST

Brian Berry, Jessica Croll, Pam DeCaro, Debbi Keller, Drew Kreimes, Brenda Lucas, Kim Nemeth, Kayli Reno, Jennifer Routt, Kathie Simon, Diamond & Sterling Sharp, Jacki Warren, the Robinson, Ruffin, Vroman and Zeier Families,

Requests related to the pandemic: the first responders and our first line medical staff, all those feeling lonely during the pandemic, including those with depression, anxiety and other mental health issues, those working for pharmacies, grocery stores and funeral homes, our nation, the staff and residents at OVH, Beverly Earl & Sam Park, Kelly O'Brien, Betsy Reynolds & her co-workers

Our homebound members and friends: Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz and Christine Vroman



REPORTS FROM OUR BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Board of Mission & Outreach

Barb Petersen - Chairperson

The Board wishes to thank everyone who contributed to the Blanket+ offering last week. We collected \$200.

Research & Exploration Team

Meredith Greenman -Chairperson

We met on May 27th and discussed new ideas as well as revisited our discussion on previous topics. The first discussion was about the storefront option in the Sandusky Plaza. It is immediately available, fully handicap accessible, with plenty of off street parking and a location we could make our own. However, in the long run, monthly costs would be more than we really wanted to spend. There was discussion on how some people prefer a more traditional church setting as well. However, once our items go into the location, it would be all First Congregational United Church of Christ.

We discussed the tour of a church for sale on the corner of Central Ave. and Tyler St. that several of us took. This location was not handicap accessible at all with steep staircases throughout, loads of maintenance and repairs needed, as well as very little parking. This is not going to work for us.

Joy had double checked on two previously discussed churches and came up with no new results. The Wedding Chapel is not willing to rent, and if anything, they would only sell and it would cost about the same as we are asking for our building. She also checked on Resurrection Lutheran Church. The owner did not respond to her inquiry so it appears they are not interested.

Joy asked if we had looked into space sharing with the Presbyterian Church. We hadn't, so she said she will see if that is an option.

Space sharing seems to be more cost effective, however we would need to work out the kinks of co-existing, time sharing of both groups, and ability to work out the differences in denominations and keep our uniqueness and our ONA.

We will meet again June 23, 2020 @ 6:45 p.m. unless we are notified there is a need to move up the next meeting. We need to start thinking about our "best option(s)" to present to the congregation and the pro's and con's of the top 2 or 3 locations.



This offering provides the financial resources for the United Church of Christ to be a Spirit-inspired and world-changing Christian movement. STC funds ministry that allows us to benefit from best practices, insights, and innovations across the life of the UCC. Because of your support, new church starts will emerge, congregations will be revitalized, and leadership skills enhanced.

The Strengthen the Church offering of the United Church of Christ reflects the shared commitment of all settings of the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. This offering embodies the wisdom, “together we grow stronger.”

We will be collecting the Strengthen the Church offering June 21st, but you may donate anytime during the month. Envelopes are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

TOGETHER WE GROW STRONGER

After this newsletter was published we learned that City Commissioner Blake Harris has organized a peaceful rally to raise awareness for racial inequality, **Sandusky United**, Sunday afternoon, June 7th, at the Jackson Street Pier at 3:00 p.m.. He said, “This event strives to not only shed light on the injustices that many people of color face throughout our nation, but also strengthen our community as we begin building that bridge to equality, understanding and justice for all.”

It sounds like a great opportunity to show support and learn how we can work together as a community to bring equality for all. However, so far there has been no mention of social distancing being maintained at the event. Please consider that, and your own personal health challenges, when deciding whether or not to participate.

