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FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

APRIL 2021



From the
MINISTER

Now in the midst of Holy Week, I can't help but remember the state of mind we were all in last year at this point. In our third week of a national shut down, we struggled to accept the fact that it would be an Easter like no other. No family gatherings, no egg hunts, and as a church we would be forced to celebrate our Lord's resurrection "alone together" via live streaming for those who had that capability. Worst of all, we were facing what the Surgeon General called "our 9-11, our Pearl Harbor moment," as the pandemic was expected to peek in many areas across the country Easter week. Little did we know that would just be the first of three horrific waves of heightened deaths and hospitalizations, with over 500,000 Americans dying from COVID-19 within a year.

Reading over what I wrote in the newsletter at that time, I realize, like most pastors, how hard I tried hard to overcome my own despair in order to inspire hope. This is what I said...

Remembering the suffering and death of Jesus is always emotionally draining this time of year, but we console ourselves knowing that his death is not God's final word. The resurrection is coming!

To emotionally survive this pandemic, think of it in similar terms. We may feel like we are entombed in our homes, isolated from our loved ones and cut off from the outside world, but this is not the end of our story. We will eventually be released and gather together again.

And so we shall, in just a few days. Even though we are not out of the woods yet, it is safe for us to be together if we follow CDC guidelines, as we have the past few months. Those who are fully vaccinated can even hug one another once again. What a joyous day it will be! I hope you will be here.

In our joy we must not forget all those who have lost a loved one during the past 12 months. Pray they will find comfort in the blessing of eternal life that comes to us through the Resurrection. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." John 11:25-26

Alleluia! Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
Shalom, Rev. Lenore

Since the year 2007 April 5th has been designated as **International Golden Rule Day** in a effort to remind everyone to live according to this basic principle to make the world a better place. Accordingly, the Center for Peace Through Understanding is collecting non-perishable food items for the Blessing Box on Shelby Street and baby items for a grandmother raising her young granddaughters. There will be a basket at the back of the sanctuary for donations through Easter.



"Do to others
as you would have
them do to you."

**Center for Peace Through Understanding
to Plan Community Anti- Gun Violence Program**

At their next meeting, Thursday, April 8th, CPTU members will begin planning for an anti-gun violence program to be held later this year in cooperation with other community organizations. They will also be discussing what to do for Earth Day and how they will participate in the Sandusky Old Fashioned Stars and Stripes Celebration July 4th. All are welcome to the meeting - your input is valued and needed. They meet at the church at 6:00 p.m..

ROOTED IN LOVE

Northwest Ohio Association (Zoom) Meeting

April 25th 9:30 a.m.

Two members are needed to volunteer to be delegates representing our church at this meeting. It's an opportunity to join in worship, meet ordination candidates, elect those who will provide leadership in the Association, vote on the NWOA Mission Spending Plan for 2022, and celebrate the ministries we share with the other churches in our Association. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Richanne Mankey, Defiance College President, addressing the topic "Giving Our Best as Servants in a World of Uncertainty." Best of all, you don't have to leave home to attend! If interested, please let Rev. Lenore know so she can register you.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY

April 1 - Patsty Hicks

April 5 - Harry Boguszewski

April 13 - Cheryl Negrey

April 15 - Sam Greenman

April 16 - Kyndra Yates

April 17 - Debbi Keller

April 20 - Eric Warren

April 22 - Jessica Croll

April 25 - Meredith & Samson Greenman



Memorials were received for Ruth Maier from Scarlet Berry, Joe Conroy, Glenn Gast, Halley Leffler, Darlene Lowery and Nancy & Doug O'Brien.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS



Peggy Anderson, Iretta Gast & Ruth Asmus, Sam Greenman Sr., Debbi Keller, Debby Neese-Voltz, Tim Sprouse, Brittany Stahl, Lisa Wobser, Homebound: Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz and Christine Vroman

Since our last newsletter we received a letter of thanks from United Church Homes for our quarterly donation to Parkvue Community.



Easter Sunday

Celebrating the Resurrection

Come and celebrate with us at our 10:00 a.m. service which will include holy communion. Afterwards there will be a (safe) reception.

The Easter Celebration Continues!

April 11th ~ Holy Humor Sunday

"Putting on the Dog"

Following the tradition of the Early Church for the Sunday after Easter, fun will be the main ingredient in our light-hearted worship that day. The theme this year is "Putting on the Dog," an old expression meaning "to make a display of wealth or importance, especially by dressing stylishly and flashily." So if you want to join the fun, wear something accordingly, or something silly related to dogs. You are also encouraged to bring a joke or two to share that morning, but if you just want to come and observe it all, that's fine too.

