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FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

MAY 2021



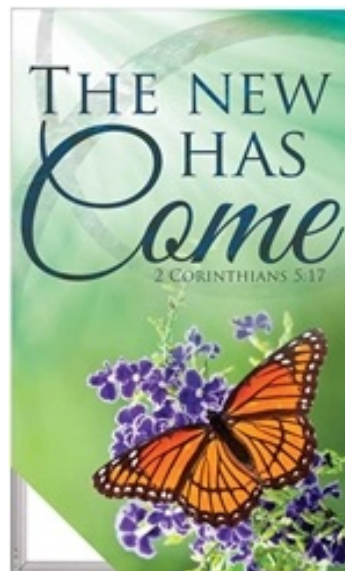
From the
MINISTER

As many of you know, we sold the old building, and this time it is for sure - the money is in the bank! The young couple who bought it are former Sanduskians now living in Columbus. They are filled with excitement as they envision what they hope to do with our old church home.

My understanding is that they will leave the sanctuary as a sanctuary, using it for weddings and as a venue for concerts and special programs. There will be an art studio in the basement (Monet on the Bay) and the rest will be turned into Airbnb rentals.

While there is much to be thankful for, now is not the time for us to sit back and think our financial troubles are over. The money from the sale has been invested and needs to be left untouched so it can grow in value to secure our future. That means we need to continue to watch our spending, keep our pledges up to date and get serious about fund raising.

Without the burden of maintaining the old building weighing us down, we are now free to think creatively about our future. Like every church across the country, we have the exciting opportunity now to revision who we will be and how we will promote the church once the pandemic is finally over. To remind us of that, these two new banners will soon be displayed in the church entranceway.



Shalom,
Rev. Lenore

MAY 2ND - MENTAL HEALTH SUNDAY

Since 1949 May has been designated Mental Health Month. In light of that, the UCC Mental Health Network has encouraged us to highlight mental health awareness on May 2nd. Knowing that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of people of all ages, we will do so. Now, more than ever, it is critical to reduce the stigma around mental health struggles, because that stigma often prevents individuals from seeking help.

Care & Share has reopened so we will once again be collecting non-perishable food items, plastic grocery bags and egg cartons on the first Sunday of the month. Our thanks to Dave Shipley for delivering our contributions.

Rev. Lenore will be on vacation May 4 - 10, finally getting to visit with her granddaughter and San Diego and Reno children. If you should have a pastoral emergency during that time, please contact Rev. Jerry Fenske at 952-797-3590.



The Center for Peace Through Understanding will meet at the church Thursday, May 13th at 6:00 p.m.. Among other topics to be discussed is the anti-gun violence event they have now scheduled for Sunday, September 19th at the Mylander Pavilion at the Jackson Street Pier. Come and share your thoughts as they plan for this important community event.

Start rounding up your coins for Loose Change Sunday, May 30th. The donation jar is now at the back of the sanctuary every Sunday. The money will be added to the Parish Relief Fund to be used to help the needy.



Loose Change Sunday

Pentecost is May 23rd. To symbolize the “tongues of fire” (*Acts 2:3, NSRV*) that came upon the disciples at Pentecost, we display the color red in the sanctuary that day and ask everyone to wear red.

SHORELINE WORSHIP BEGINS MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

The first Shoreline service of the season will be May 30th. Don't forget, we meet rain or shine at 8:00 a.m. at the Shoreline Park pavilion. Your help is needed in recruiting speakers and sponsors.

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

The Board of Mission & Outreach wishes to thank everyone who contributed to last month's One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

BIRTHDAYS

Rhonda Roberts	5/2
Joseph Judy	5/3
Olivia Badamy, Rhonda Neese	5/5
Anne Johnstone	5/12
Punky Porto	5/13
Marty Anderson	5/16
Johnnie Lee Turner, Jr.	5/17
Glenn Gast	5/18
Evalyn Vroman	5/26



Duane Gast & Lisa Jones Gast, Iretta Gast & Ruth Asmus, Sam Greenman Sr., Karen Hand, Liz Hessler, Debby Keller, Mark, Will Maier, Debby Neese-Voltz, Adam Smith, Tim Sprouse, Ann Wagnitz, Gina & Family, the Dwight Family. Homebound members and friends: Ruth Baker, Anne Johnstone, Elmeda Schwartz and Christine Vroman



At the Church Life Meeting April 13th the following topics were discussed.

Financial Matters: While unpledged giving was up in March, the pledged giving was down. The first quarter giving statements are to go out soon with notes on those who are behind in their pledges asking them to please try to catch up.

Until we are able to investigate other investment opportunities, the bulk of the money from the sale of the old building will go in our current Endowment Fund. Approximately \$3000 will remain in the checking account. This will be earmarked for the painting.

Painting: Robin and Patsy will meet with the painter to choose the colors for the sanctuary and fellowship room. The Peace Room will be the same color as the offices. After the sanctuary is painted it will be decided whether or not we want a chair rail.

Rentals: The 11th Step Group will resume meeting weekly in May on Thursdays at noon. An Al-Anon group will begin renting from us for their weekly meetings in September.

Organ Purchase: Members have been asking when we will be getting an organ. It is hoped that Charles will be making a decision soon now that finances are less strained with the sale of the old building. In the meantime, we have another piano. It was donated by St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Lawsuit: Not much progress has been made with the lawsuit as our attorney has been attending to his ailing father in Florida. He will be checking in with his partner in Columbus, who will be handling the case, and get back to Rev. Lenore

The next Church Life Meeting will be May 11th at 6:00 p.m.. It is open to all church members with a willingness to help with minor decision making.

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Anne Johnstone who will turn 100 on May 12th!

Rev. Bob Bottoms for accepting the part-time, 6-month position as Interim Transitional Senior Pastor at St. Paul UCC in Oak Harbor.

Dyson Leffler, son of Halley & Mike Leffler. He is graduating from Perkins High School at the end of the month and will attend The Ohio State University, College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, this fall.



Sometimes wrapping yourself in a blanket and holding it close is reminiscent of childhood and the sense of comfort and security you found in your mother's loving embrace. That's why Mother's Day is the perfect time for our Blanket Offering. For just \$10 Church World Service will provide blankets for refugees and those involved in natural disasters in the United States and all over the world, giving them a sense comfort and security in the midst of the crisis they are going through. They distributed thousands of blankets around the world in 2020.

Last year our congregation's contributions were diminished by the pandemic. We hope to make up for it this year with a great response. The offering will be taken on Mother's Day, May 9th. Envelopes are available on the back table in the sanctuary for your donation. If you won't be in church that day, you may donate anytime throughout the month.