

The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

February 2018

Pastor

Rev. Arik Borstad

Director, Christian Education

Mary Karlovec

Music Director

Lynne Lipperman

Moderator

Roy Dreger

Vice-Moderator

Nancy Franks

Chair, Christian Education

Kelsey Veliconia

Co-Chairs, Deacons

Diana Goode

Lynne Petroff

Chair, Outreach

Nancy Franks

Chair, Trustees

Pete Veliconia

Treasurer, Secretary

Linda Matis



From the Pastor's Pen

"Where there is love, there is life." – Mahatma Gandhi

February is here and with it comes a time when we celebrate the relationships we have made and the love that we share. With Valentine's Day fast approaching this month (on Ash Wednesday no less), I want to take some time to remind us all that the entirety of our faith can be condensed down to a single thing – love.

From the beginning of scripture to the final pages, the Bible is unified around this central theme of love. It was a love that God had for the world and God's creation that is recorded for us and has been passed down through the ages. Through the act of creation, God sculpted the world and the universe as we know it, and in God's infinite wisdom declared it "good." God breathed life into humanity and looked upon us with compassion and unconditional love, as a parent looks upon their children.

It was this love that spurred God to send the prophets of old to remind the people to love one another, especially those left out on the margins. It was this love that is recorded through the psalms, that same love that has remained with us since our births. It was this same love that has granted us forgiveness and mercy, no matter how many times we may falter or stray.

Finally, it was this same love that sent Jesus into the world to remind us how powerful love can truly be. God came into this world to remind us above all else that we are called to love one another. It is a love that we are given without conditions or criteria. Just for being who we are, we are loved more fully than we can ever imagine, and we have been called to share that same love with all our brothers and sisters across the world.

If you ever wonder how to explain your faith to those around you who are curious, I can't think of a better way than to say that our faith is "love." So as we take time this month to celebrate our loved ones and to share valentines with the people that mean the most to us, let us not forget that the story of our faith is rooted in a love beyond imagining. Let us remember and celebrate this love as we move begin our Lenten pilgrimage toward the cross.



Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Arik



Ash Wednesday Supper & Service

February 14 in Fellowship Hall
Soup & Bread Supper – 6 p.m.
Service – 7 p.m.

Moderator's Moment – Roy Dreger

Jim was a good wrestler so it was no surprise when he received the award for wrestler of the year at the sports banquet. While my memory of this event is not one hundred percent, what follows is what I do remember and also explains why this was so memorable. Jim thanked all those that you would expect: his coach, parents, and other wrestlers. What followed was not at all expected.

Jim talked about how there was one more person that deserved his thanks the most. He then called the equipment manager (who looked as confused as those of us in the audience) up to the podium. Jim explained that although the young man did not wrestle one match all year long, he was there every day taking care of the equipment. Not only that, but he would "spar" with Jim whenever he needed someone to practice with, even if it meant staying after everyone else had left and practice was over. (I think that he actually gave the young man, whose name I can't remember, his trophy; but I am not sure if this really happened or if I just think it would have been fitting.) Jim recognized that there are those not always visible that contribute greatly to our success.

This congregation has many people that fit this description, people that operate out of the spotlight but they are important to the worship experience and outreach of our church. I thought about listing some of these people and their contributions, but the list was too long and I was afraid I would leave someone out. However, I bet that if you look around you will see the fruits of their work even if you don't see the person. This is an example of having enough love for your church that you are willing to go that extra mile to help it and not worry about recognition.

February is the month of Valentine's Day and we celebrate it by showing our love for those closest to us. Maybe we should also show some love to others that we see making their own contributions to the success of our church without any fanfare, much as Jim recognized the contributions of his equipment manager.

May you and those you hold in your heart have a great Valentine's Day!



superbowl.org

On February 4 our kids will be stationed at the entrances to the sanctuary with soup pots, ready to collect your spare change and dollars. This is a grassroots effort throughout the United States to promote support for soup kitchens and food pantries in local communities. Our donations will go to Community Care so please give generously!

Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec

As we prepare for the 40 days of Lent, I am reminded of how different our sanctuary and schedules look compared to Advent. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of Jesus by decorating with trees, wreaths, candles and poinsettias. The joyous sights and sounds, the hustle and bustle of the busy days, the baking, gift wrapping...the list goes on and on. Many times I get to Christmas Day exhausted.

Now as we approach Lent and the death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection on Easter Sunday, it is a totally different scenario. Instead of decorating the sanctuary, we put things away such as the Alleluias and we even strip the altar in preparation of Holy Week. Both seasons of the church calendar remind us who we are as Christians. Just as I encourage you to take part in Advent activities and programming, I encourage you as A FAMILY (remember that a family can be just one person) to participate in our Lenten activities starting with...

Our **Mardi Gras** celebration will be on **Sunday, February 11** immediately following the 10:30



worship service. We will be putting away the Alleluias, eating our traditional pancake and sausage meal and having our inter-generational pancake races. Grab your beads and festive outfits and join us! A freewill offering will be taken to help defray the costs of the meal.

Join us **February 14** at 6 p.m. for our soup and bread supper followed by the Ash Wednesday service at 7 p.m.

Friday, February 23 is the monthly Hospitality with a Heart community outreach meal. The youth group will be helping with the preparation and serving of the meal.

Looking ahead to March...

On **Saturday, March 3** will be our **Intergenerational Journey through Prayer** Event. Similar to last year's Journey



through Holy Week, we will begin at 4 p.m. with activities that are based on a program called "Messy Church." We will break for **a potluck dinner** and then continue with workshops

that include praying in color, yoga/meditation, praying with objects and pretzel making to name a few. Please sign up outside my office or in Fellowship Hall by February 20 so I know how many to plan for.

Sunday, March 4 is our second annual **Chili Cook-off** immediately following the second worship service. We need people to sign up to enter their best chili recipe in the challenge. If you are willing to make a large pot of chili for the challenge, please sign up outside my office or in Fellowship Hall. You need to give your chili a name, too. Prizes will be given for the best chili voted on by the congregation, best chili voted on by the "chili panel" and best chili name. Tickets for the event will be \$5.00 for adults and \$2.50 for children ages 5-12 and children under 5 are free! Proceeds benefit VBS and the Women's Retreat.



Andreschick, 157809054

On **Friday, March 16** the youth group will be doing a lock-in starting at 7:30 p.m. through 9 a.m. on the 17th. More information will be coming home to parents sometime in February.

Sunday, March 25 is Palm Sunday.

We will be having an "Egg-Palooza" including our annual Easter Egg Hunt immediately after the second service. More information will be in the March Messenger.

Outreach Committee News – Nancy Franks

Valentine's Day will be here soon so don't forget your favorite someone (or better yet, someone who isn't a favorite) with a cheerful greeting or unexpected hug. The idea is to make someone else's day special and in doing so will make your day special, too!

The Fiesta Jalapeños dining out fundraiser was a huge success and thank you all for coming out to make that happen. When we got there, we saw so many familiar faces! Great going for this neighborhood establishment and for our church! The total amount raised will be announced next month.

The Hospitality with a Heart meal will be Friday, February 23 and our youth will be making favors, helping with the set-up and serving of the meals as well as clean up afterwards...but we still need YOU!! Many hands make the preparation and serving go smoothly. Thank you in advance.

Lent begins on Valentine's Day. I wonder if that will affect candy sales. Remember our presidential forefathers Abraham Lincoln and George Washington who have birthdays this month.

FYI—May 19 is Rummage Sale Saturday! Items will be accepted the week of May 13 ONLY. Help is always needed. This is an all-church fundraiser to benefit the rebuilding of the rear entranceway of the church. More information will be available closer to the event.

Food for thought: "This, then, is how you should pray; 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.'" Matthew 6:9 NIV Jesus gave us The Lord's Prayer to help attune our hearts to God. When we follow Jesus' example and pray consistently, specifically and expectantly, we'll feel His presence in our lives. Copied from: 60 days of prayer/Guideposts

Deacons' Desk – Diana Goode

On **April 15** at 2 pm North Ridgeville First Congregational UCC will be hosting a **benefit concert** for North Ridgeville



Community Care. We are looking for performers so if you know someone that would be an asset to our performance, please have them call the church office at 327-2921. We are hoping for organist, pianists, singers, and other musicians. There will be a reception afterwards offering finger foods. If you are willing to provide food for the reception, please call the church so we can have a list of people we can work with.

USHERS & LITURGISTS - Please consider giving your time/talents to ushering and/or reading as liturgist. By simply calling the office, Linda can include you on the schedule. The more people we have will make lighter work for all.

Usher responsibilities are to be at church 30 to 45 minutes before the second service starts to hand out bulletins and greet people as they come in, to help collect the offering, and after the service help with straightening books and collecting communion cups and sign-in sheets with the lead deacon.

Liturgists walk up with Pastor at the beginning of the service and lead the congregation in the call to worship, prayer of adoration and confession, words of assurance, and reading of two scriptures.

Trustees' Turn – Pete Veliconia

I want to share something that I have been reading for work, it is called "Managing from the Heart". There are five basic principles that the book talks about.

1. Please don't make me wrong, even if you disagree.
2. Hear and understand me.
3. Tell me the truth with compassion.
4. Remember to look for my loving intentions.
5. Acknowledge the greatness within me.

Let's look at each further.

●Please don't make me wrong, even if you disagree. This, simply put, means you can

disagree but these differences cannot be personal; you don't have to be 100% in agreement on everything but don't make it a personal attack. Remember the big picture and don't sweat the small stuff.

●Hear and understand me. Sometimes we forget the biggest responsibility when communicating, it is to listen. We have two ears and one mouth; we tend to hear what we want and often forget what the other person is saying. Even if we repeat what the other person is saying so that we know what their intentions are, that will go a long way to understanding.

●Tell me the truth with compassion. Sometimes the truth hurts and it's not easy to hurt someone but it is easier to tell the truth with the intention of not hurting someone personally. Please do tell when something or someone can do better, but do it as a decent person.

●Remember to look for my loving intentions is sometimes the hardest principle to master. We don't always know why an idea is brought up or an action taken; don't look for the negative in these, there is usually a positive reason for why things are done. Look for them.

●Acknowledge the greatness within me. We all have positives, the good qualities that lie with us. These qualities are sometimes hard to find, but everyone has them. Look for them.

I share this because we as a Church have many of these qualities (especially within the last few years) and I think that we need to grow with others outside our walls to ensure that our hearts are shared with those who need it.

Parish Nurse's Notes – Karen Dreger

The heart has played an important role in understanding the body since antiquity. In the fourth century B.C. the Greek philosopher Aristotle identified the heart as the most important organ of the body. In the second century A.D. the Greek physician Galen observed "The heart is a hard flesh, not easily injured." In hardness, tension, general strength, and resistance to injury, the fibers of the heart far surpass all others, for no other

instrument performs such continuous hard work as the heart. In 1653 William Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, metaphorically described the heart as the "King" or "Sun" of the body.

The heart shape grew especially popular during the Renaissance when it was used in religious art depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The heart is an emblematic symbol in other religions signifying truth, conscience or moral courage – the temple or throne of God in Islamic and Judeo-Christian thought, the divine center or "atman" of transcendent wisdom in Hinduism, the diamond of purity and essence of the Buddha, the Taoist center of understanding.

We now have more accurate knowledge about the heart and how to keep it healthy. Heart disease is a leading cause of death in men and women. However, the good news is that heart disease can be prevented. Here are some reminders of ways you can care for your heart:

- ✓ regular checkups
- ✓ know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers
- ✓ eat heart healthy foods such as vegetables, fruit, whole grains and fish
- ✓ exercise 30 minutes of moderate activity each day
- ✓ limit food high in saturated fats and cholesterol
- ✓ limit sodium intake to 2,300 mg a day

Live for your heart: for you and those you love. Happy Valentine's Day!

Parish Nurses Present: On February 18 during coffee hour there will be a brief presentation by Linda McVey about the Prediabetes Program and the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program. The Parish Nurses will also be doing blood pressure and glucose screenings.

Women's Book Club: Below are listed our upcoming books. All meetings are at 7:00 pm at the church except when noted.

February 19: The Silver Star by Jeannette Walls

March 19: Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng

- 2/2 Dawn Truskot
- 2/9 Mary Karlovec
Jacob Chalkwater
Sean Hannold
- 2/11 Taylar Chrosniak
- 2/13 Anne Schreiber
- 2/15 Harry Berg
Gwen Poe
- 2/17 Bob Elliott
- 2/18 Abby Anderson
Nancy Franks
- 2/19 Claire Wolanski
Peg Hopkins
- 2/22 Jean Gardner
- 2/25 Shirley McVeigh
- 2/26 Fred Scharmann
Ethan Williams
- 2/28 Daryl Von Benken
- 2/1 Bill & Regenia Comerford
- 2/14 Conrad & Carol Schubert



Ushers & Greeters

February	
4	Lynne Petroff, Linda Matis, Joe Pesch
11	Ric Sasse, Edie Phillips, Krista O'Neill
18	Nancy Findlay, Dale & Becky Williams
25	Pete Veliconia, Shirley Sunyak, Vi Elrod

Please note: Usher's responsibilities are also to collect attendance sheets and Communion cups after the service. If you would like to be added to the Usher List, please call the church office.

Acolytes

February	
4	Jillian Smoker
11	Rhys Kyser
18	Lexi Webb
25	Ben Dornan

If a child is unable to serve as acolyte on their scheduled Sunday, please contact the church office.

Nursery

February	
4	Shirley Sunyak
11	Dawn Truskot
18	Ann Olesen
25	Linda Matis



**Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
No matter what your singing talent,
we welcome you to join us!
We are a fun group!!**



Dear Friends at First Congregational Church,
Thank you for continuing to collaborate with us on the St. Pauly Textile clothing drop off shed project! In 2017 roughly 25,470 garments of clothing were donated to your shed. This was enough to clothe an estimated 3,088 people. This clothing is being used right now by people in one or more of 44 different countries (including the US) to which our clothing is likely to have been distributed this past year.

Your congregation raised \$1,548.33 in 2017 through hosting this shed.

We ask that you continue to spread the word about the clothing shed to other community members. Thank you for all your support!

Sincerely,
The Team at St. Pauly Textile, Inc.

(All proceeds from the St. Pauly Textile clothing shed are used to fund the monthly Hospitality with a Heart community outreach meals.)



We just wanted to thank our church family for the cards and gifts at Christmas. It was very unexpected and much appreciated. We are so thankful for all of you at FCC!

Lynne Lipperman, Linda Matis, Jo Ann Griswold, Mary Karlovec, Pastor Arik, & Dave Varney

Swiss Steak Dinner

*Treat yourself to a home cooked meal...
Dinner includes salad, rolls, Swiss steak,
mashed potatoes & gravy, corn,
green beans, pie, and beverage.*



Date:
Saturday,
March 10, 2018

Serving Times:
4:30 pm
6:00 pm

Place:
First Congregational
United Church of Christ
36363 Center Ridge Rd.
North Ridgeville, Ohio

ADULTS:

\$12.00

**CHILDREN
UNDER 12:**

\$7.00

**CARRY OUTS
AVAILABLE**

RESERVATIONS / PRE-SALE TICKETS ONLY by March 5
For reservations or to purchase tickets,
call the church office at 440-327-2921

Volunteers: Please see the sign-up sheet and select the area(s) where you would be willing to help out.

Donations: We would also appreciate **donations of the food items listed** on the sign-up sheets. Please fill in your name and the amount of food you will be donating. Or you may **donate money** for the other items needed that are not listed, i.e. salad bowls, carry out trays, etc. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please mark "SSD" and the amount on your offering envelope.

Pie Sponsors: Once again we are asking for "pie sponsors". Pie sponsors simply donate \$10 per pie and we take care of the rest! Mark your check or envelope with "pies" and the number of pies you are sponsoring.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	2	3 Couples Recovery 7 pm
4 Outreach 9 am Communion Souper Bowl of Caring Coffee Shop Service 9:00 Traditional Service 10:30	5 AA Women 7 pm	6 CE 7 pm Trustees 7 pm AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	7 Choir practice 7 pm 4-H 7 pm	8 Al-Anon anniversary 6 pm AA Women 6 pm (up)	9	10 CE decorate for Mardi Gras 9:30 am Couples Recovery 7 pm
11 Coffee Shop Service 9:00 February birthdays' celebration Traditional Service 10:30 Mardi Gras celebration 	12 AA Women 7 pm	13 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	14 Ash Wednesday Soup & Bread Supper 6 pm; Service 7 pm 	15 Council 7 pm AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	16 Newsletter articles due	17 Couples Recovery 7 pm
18 First Sunday in Lent Communion Coffee Shop Service 9:00 Parish Nurse Program during coffee hour Traditional Service 10:30	19 OFFICE CLOSED Presidents' Day Women's Book Club 7 pm AA Women 7 pm	20 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	21 Choir practice 7 pm 4-H 7 pm	22 AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	23 Hospitality with a Heart meal LCAS 6:30 pm	24 Soup for the Spirit Fellowship Hall rented 12:40-4:30 pm (West) Couples Recovery 7 pm
25 Second Sunday in Lent Coffee Shop Service 9:00 Traditional Service 10:30 Deacons 11:30 am	26 AA Women 7 pm	27 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	28 Choir practice 7 pm			