

# The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

**January 2020**

**Pastor**

Rev. Arik Borstad

**Director, Christian Education**

Mary Karlovec

**Music Director**

Barbara Habecker

**Moderator**

Roy Dreger

**Vice-Moderator**

Nancy Franks

**Co-Chairs, Christian Education**

Kelsey Veliconia

Renee Dornan

**Co-Chairs, Deacons**

Diana Goode

Karen Veliconia

**Chair, Outreach**

Nancy Franks

**Chair, Trustees**

Jack Fitts

**Treasurer, Secretary**

Linda Matis

**From the Pastor's Pen**

The new year is upon us and somehow we find ourselves in the year 2020. Growing up, I always had the year 2020 in mind when I thought of some crazy far off future where we had flying cars and world peace. Unfortunately, it seems as though both of those realities are still far off in the future, but hopefully this year brings progress that is beneficial for all humankind.

It is in the spirit of newness that we have some exciting things planned for this month beginning with January 5, Epiphany Sunday. As we welcome the wise men who sought the star, so too will we watch as our wise ones process with their gifts in worship. Similar to last year, we will also be distributing "stars" of our own to follow for this new year. Each person will be receiving a wooden star with a word engraved upon it and you are invited to reflect upon the world to help guide your actions in the coming year.

Then, on the following Sunday, we will be having guest speakers come inform us about the circumstance of the Nepal refugees we have been supporting through our coat donations. Representatives from the school will be coming and speaking about the impact of our outreach program and will help us broaden our horizons as we examine how we can continue to support refugees in the future.

Then, on the 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be taking time in worship to celebrate the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the impact he has had on the civil rights movement in our country. Looking at how religious principles intersect with civil rights, we will look at how far we have come and how far left we still have to go.

Without a doubt, the beginning of the year is a great time to look ahead to the new and exciting possibilities that await us. As we imagine what might be possible in this new year, I invite us to keep ourselves open to the ways in which God is at work in our lives and our world.

Blessings and Peace,  
Pastor Arik



### **Moderator's Moment – Roy Dreger**

A new year, a clean slate? Maybe not a good idea. I know that Karen and I have told our children to enjoy their children now as they will grow up fast. I think they do more with their children than we were able to do given our work schedules, even though I know how busy they are. Just trying to get all the family together at the same time, on the same day, can be a task by itself. I also remember our parents saying something similar, but somehow life got in the way back then.

I believe there is a tendency towards thinking things will stay the same, or at least not forecasting the way things will change. Time progresses and things change; nothing remains "status quo". I know my retirement is nowhere near the way I pictured it.

I also know I never thought about what losing my parents would mean to the family history until after they were both gone. A connection with my past was broken. Yes, I still can reminisce about times gone by with my sister and brother, but we all remember different things, even about the same event, and the missing pieces for me now are the parents' memories. I don't want the slate to be too clean. I do want to lose the harmful baggage, the regrets and the hurt.

Perhaps there is a natural progression in perception as we grow older. It is as if we can be so busy living our lives that we don't take the time to reflect on how special some of these times really are. Maybe it is only with the passing of time that these concepts somehow come to life for us. If you have seen Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* you can, perhaps, get an idea of what I mean.

I hope everyone has a healthy and prosperous New Year. And as we go forward, may we still remember our past. Happy New Year!

### **Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec**

A new decade, new challenges. As we enter 2020, much dialogue will be taking place with all stakeholders in our congregation regarding the direction of Christian Education based in part on the suggestions at the October

all committee meeting. First up will be a meeting with parents of our youth to determine how we move forward serving them with their busy schedules due to outside activities. How do we balance this with our programming here at church? How do we make this just as important so they develop their faith foundation? In the last decade, this has become a major concern for churches in sustaining programming for youth across the denomination.

The second key component we are tackling as we start 2020 is the development of safety protocols for our church. You will notice that all adults who are working in the Sunday School wing are wearing safety/name badges. This is just one of many protocols we will be putting in place over the next year. I highly encourage you to fill out the emergency contact information form for each member of your family. It is vital that we have information about you on file in case of an emergency. None of this info is being shared with members of the congregation but without it, we do not have all the information that may save your life!

**Christian Education needs 2-3 NEW members!** As you may have noticed, we are a very visible and active committee! It takes many hands to execute an event as well as support Sunday mornings. I would hate to not be able to offer something because we do not have the manpower to support it. Please consider joining our team! Please talk to Renee Dornan, Kelsey Styrt or myself if interested.



Two Special **Upcoming Events:**

**February 2 - Immediately after the 10:30 service is our CHILI COOK OFF!!!**

Get your best chili recipe out and make a gallon or two to enter in the event! Prizes will be awarded to 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> place winners! See more details in this Messenger!

**February 23 - Immediately after the 10:30 service is our MARDI GRAS PANCAKE BREAKFAST!** More info in the February *Messenger!*

Finally a huge thank you goes out to the Board of CE for their hard work in 2019. A lot of extra time was given by them volunteering to support the programming we do. I could not do it without them!

### **Outreach Committee News – Nancy Franks**

Welcoming the New Year in with anticipation! Food for thought: Last year's commitment was to reengage with the world around you and work your way to healing past issues before creating new ones. Respect yourself and the process you choose to accomplish this goal. Let's get a fresh new start in a brand new year. How did you do with this last year? Perhaps we need to revisit the suggestion and make some changes this year. There are 365 days to accomplish our goals.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who participated in the giving tree project for it was a great success! All requests were picked up, purchased, wrapped and delivered on time, thanks to all of you elves in our congregation! Outreach elf Barb orchestrated the effort for Community Care families. Thank you from some very happy families!

The annual meeting of the church is January 19, 2020. Mark the date on your calendar so you are able to attend and meet your church council and board members, find out what they do, and maybe think about joining one of them to fulfill their plans for the future.

Blessings and thanksgiving are what Outreach is all about. We give God our thanks by living out caring for and sharing with others by what we all do through this committee, you included. Through this committee, our church becomes a blessing to so many unnamed people everywhere. That's OUTREACH!

The Hospitality with a Heart meal is a free meal once a month to those who need one at the end of every month. Along with other churches in our community we cover the seven days of the last week of each month with a free meal.

Community Care has the listing of churches and respective meal dates. Thanks to the volunteers in our church who help prepare the meals, serve



them, clean up and enjoy the fruits of their labor. Thanks to Carol and Fred Scharmann for setting the tables with festive table service each month. Thanks to Edie Phillips for coordinating our meals with Community Care. Thanks to YOU for donations of desserts when needed. Together, we accomplish a lot. We could not do this alone! Our next meal is Friday, January 31. Workers report at 4:00, dinner is served at 6:00, and clean up begins at 6:30. Come and join our merry men and women!

Word for today: "My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1-2

### **Deacons' Desk – Kathy Pero**



I would like to say THANK YOU to Lynne Petroff! Lynne has been a Deacon for our church since 2000. Her time as a lead Deacon has come to an end. It's time to open a new chapter in her book--one that might surprise her! During her 19 years of service, she enjoyed going to Deacon's meetings to find out what was happening in the life of the church. Lynne valued her role as a Deacon and took it very seriously. She was an excellent mentor to those of us who are new at being a Deacon. Lynne is a valuable member of our community as she is going to step right into the role of Clerk. We need to extend a warm thank you to Pat Kyle who has served as Clerk for 20 years. We are surrounded by dedicated UCC members who want the best for our UCC family.

Happy New Year! Stay warm and safe this winter season.

### **Trustees' Turn – Pete Veliconia**

I write this last newsletter article because my time as chairperson has ended. As of January 1 Jack Fitts will be taking over as Trustee chairperson and I will be just another member of the board. I am grateful of the hard

work that we have put into the church the last few years and I believe that we did a great job in using our resources in the best way possible. I want to thank all of the board members for their hard work and dedication and I know that the church is in great shape because of all of the caring and giving members of this congregation.

We leave the year in decent shape; not all projects were completed, but we look forward to plans for 2020 and up to the 200<sup>th</sup> celebration in 2022. Needless to say all of the projects will be needed and will enhance the life of the church. I hope that everyone will cooperate as we build on the momentum of this year and continue to move forward.



**Women's Book Club:** All book club gatherings are at 7 pm unless otherwise noted.

January 20: Education by Tara Westover

February 17: The Whole Town's Talking by Fannie Flagg

March 16: The Winemaker's Secret by Cynthia Ellingsen

### **Parish Nurse's Notes – Karen Dreger**

#### Preventing Falls

I know I've written on this topic before, but it is so important that it bears repeating. Also, last month I joined the list of people in our congregation who have fallen when I fell off the fireplace hearth while decorating.

According to the Ohio Department of Health, falls are the number one cause of injuries leading to emergency room visits, hospital stays and deaths among Ohioans age 65 or older. Many things can cause a fall: diabetes, heart disease, problems with your thyroid, eyesight, nerves, feet or blood vessels can cause you to feel dizzy or sleepy, making

you more likely to fall.

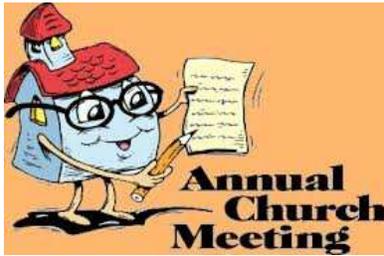
#### **Steps to prevent falls:**

- Stay physical. Talk to your doctor about an exercise program right for you, one that keeps you strong and flexible, like yoga.
- Have your eyes and hearing tested.
- Know the side effects of your medications.
- Increase lighting inside and outside your house. Use a night light in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways. Keep a flashlight by your bed. Make sure stairways and hallways are well lit.
- Consider putting handrails on both sides of stairs, and have a light switch at both the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Use nonskid treads on stairs.
- Use no-wax cleaners on floors.
- Remove rugs, or secure them with non-skid backing or carpet tape.
- Use non slip adhesive strips or a mat in shower or tub.
- Keep commonly used items in easy to reach places.
- Wear non-skid, rubber soled, low heeled shoes.
- Get up from bed or sitting S L O W L Y.
- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration, which can affect your balance.
- Carry a cell phone.

#### **Winter can be especially hazardous:**

- Wear sturdy shoes or boots with treads, even if you are just going out to get the newspaper.
- Replace worn rubber tips on canes and walkers. Ask a mobility equipment dealer about winter canes or cleats you can add to existing equipment.
- Make sure to dry off shoes, canes, crutches and walkers as soon as you get inside.
- Carry a cell phone.
- Consider staying inside when it is icy, and call a friend, neighbor or relative if there is an urgent need.
- If you live alone, consider a home monitoring system.

Be safe and have a Happy New Year!



**ATTN: Board Chairpersons!**

Annual reports for 2019 must be in the church office by January 13.

The **Annual Meeting for 2019** to hear the church boards' annual reports and to approve the updated 2020 budget will be held on Sunday, **January 19** in the sanctuary after the second service.

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**Ushers & Greeters**



**Ushers & Greeters:** If you would be interested in being added to the ushers/greeters rotation, please contact Linda in the church office (327-2921 or [secretary@fccalive.org](mailto:secretary@fccalive.org)). It's an easy job that consists of greeting worshipers, handing out bulletins, collecting the offering and helping clean up after the services.

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**Ushers & Greeters**

<b>Dec. 29</b>	Joe Pesch, Ric Sasse, Edie Phillips
<b>Jan. 5</b>	Becky Williams, Krista O'Neill, Nancy Findlay
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Lynne Petroff, Millie Gilly, Ann Olesen
<b>Jan. 19</b>	Tess Anderson, Pete Veliconia, Edie Phillips
<b>Jan. 26</b>	Regenia Comerford, Joe Pesch, Ric Sasse

**Acolytes**

<b>Dec. 29</b>	Abigail Packard
<b>Jan. 5</b>	Claire Wolanski
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Beth Dornan
<b>Jan. 19</b>	Rhys Kyser
<b>Jan. 26</b>	Ben Dornan

**Nursery**

<b>Jan. 5</b>	Allison Borstad
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Shirley Sunyak
<b>Jan. 19</b>	Amy Eaton
<b>Jan. 26</b>	Ann Olesen



- 1/3 Charis Meehan
- 1/3 Brian Zinsmeister
- 1/4 Evan Harrold
- 1/5 Nancy Findlay
- 1/7 Dale Williams
- 1/8 Karen Dreger
- 1/12 Karen Veliconia
- 1/13 Joe Pesch
- 1/18 Pete Veliconia
- 1/19 Marge Baker
- 1/25 Beth Dornan

**THANK YOU** all very much for the generous Christmas gifts. They are truly appreciated!

From the Staff of First Congregational Church



**Chili Cook Off**  
**Sunday, February 2**

Immediately after 10:30 service  
**Enter your favorite recipe by making 2 gallons of chili!**  
**Prizes awarded for 3 best chili recipes voted on by YOU-the congregation-as well as a Judges' Award!**  
**A \$5 donation (\$2.50 for 10 and under) gets you 3 tastings, cornbread and drinks!**  
**Registration forms for chili entries outside Mary's office.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED	2  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	3	4  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
5 Epiphany Outreach 9 am Communion Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00 Traditional Svc. 10:30  Remove Christmas decorations	6  AA Women 7 pm	7 CE 6:30 pm Trustees 7 pm  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	8 Choir practice 7 pm	9  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	10	11  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
12 Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00 Traditional Svc. 10:30 January birthdays' celebration	13 Annual reports due Council 7 pm  AA Women 7 pm	14  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	15 Choir practice 7 pm	16 Newsletter articles due  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	17	18  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
19 Communion Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00 Traditional Svc. 10:30  Annual Meeting	20 Women's book club 7 pm  AA Women 7 pm	21  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	22 Choir practice 7 pm	23  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	24	25 Norma Curren memorial service 1 pm  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
26 Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00 Traditional Svc. 10:30 Deacons 11:30	27  AA Women 7 pm	28  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	29 Choir practice 7 pm	30  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	31 Hospitality with a Heart	