

# The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

**March 2020**

**Pastor**

Rev. Arik Borstad

**Director, Christian Education**

Mary Karlovec

**Music Director**

Barb Habecker

**Moderator**

Roy Dreger

**Vice-Moderator**

Nancy Franks

**Co-Chairs, Christian Education**

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Diana Goode

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**Chair, Outreach**

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Linda Matis

**From the Pastor's Pen**

There's a story recounted by Thomas Merton that tells of a man named Abbot John. The story goes that Abbot John prayed to the Lord that all passion be taken from him. His prayer was granted. He became impassible. In this condition he went to one of the elders and said, "You see before you a man who is completely at rest and has no more temptations." The elder surprised him. Instead of praising him, the elder said, "Go and pray to the Lord to command some struggle to be stirred up in you, for the soul is matured only in battles." Abbot John did this, and when the temptations started up again, he did not pray that the struggle be taken away from him. Instead he prayed, "Lord, give me strength to get through the fight."

As we begin our Lenten journey together, it is my hope that we take the message from this story to heart. Lent is not a time when we sacrifice all that makes us human – flawed as we might be. Instead, we take the time to reorient ourselves and make better choices so that we might learn from the mistakes we have made as we forge a new path on our way to Jerusalem. May we not pray that the cup of temptation and trials may pass us by, but rather that we might have the strength to see our journey through to the end.

As we enter into this season of reflection, may we continue to ponder the ways in which we have fallen short, and the ways in which God continues to beckon us home. Amen.

Blessings and Peace,  
Pastor Arik

**Lent comes providentially  
to reawaken us, to shake  
us from our lethargy.**

Pope Francis

**Moderator's Moment – Roy Dreger**

If you have preconceived ideas about something, you have already formed an opinion about it before you have enough information or experience. Have you ever gone somewhere and expected one thing, only to find the reality is different? A movie, perhaps, that you thought would be funny and it wasn't? A person that you thought would act one way, but acted in a way you never expected? I believe most of us have had this



experience, but did you ever think about others having the same experience? I imagine people visiting our church have come in expecting one thing and finding something they never expected, good or bad. I know at least one person that did. The only thing that determines someone else's experience are our actions when we interact with them...or not.

The willingness of our congregation to be welcoming is a job for each of us, myself included. We all have people we tend to gravitate to because of shared activities or experiences; this is normal. The willingness to go past our "comfort zone" can be the determining factor in someone feeling welcome, or feeling that they aren't a part of the "group". So all of us have a job, even if you aren't part of one of the boards or volunteer groups, and it is a very important one.

On an unrelated topic, St. Patrick's Day is coming so I thought I would share what Winston Churchill had to say about the Irish: "We have always found the Irish a bit odd. They refuse to be English."

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

It seems like we just celebrated Advent and Lent is already here! I have copied a Lenten calendar for our church school families of ideas of things to do during the 40 days of Lent. There are extra copies outside my office. Please feel free to take one. Please mark Saturday,

**April 4** on your calendar as we are having an **ALL Church "Journey through Holy Week"** event. It will start at 4:00 with our

annual Easter Egg Hunt followed by a potluck dinner at 4:45. By 5:30ish, we will begin our journey upstairs learning about the days leading up to Easter. Each stop on the journey will have a different hands-on activity that will appeal to both young and old. Every "family" will go home with a resurrection garden and an egg carton filled with "symbols of Holy Week" to share with family and friends. We will conclude our evening decorating eggs together. Please join us for this event. RSVP's are a **MUST** by March 29. Sign up is outside of my office and



be sure to take a "What to Bring List" so you have the supplies you need to bring. To help defray the cost of this event, we ask that families of three or more members contribute \$20, couples \$10, and singles \$5.

We are having a **family movie night** on Saturday, March 14 from 6:30-8:30. This is open to anyone who wants to have some family time watching a movie on the "big screen" at church. Popcorn and drinks will be provided and pajamas, blankets and pillows are encouraged! The movie to be shown will be announced after the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Christian Ed meeting.



Tickets for the May 9<sup>th</sup> Clague Playhouse production of **"Pump Boys and Dinettes"** ("The 'Pump Boys' sell high octane on Highway 57 in Grand Ole Opry country and the 'Dinettes', Prudie and Rhettta Cupp, run the Double Cupp diner next door. Together they fashion an evening of country western songs that received unanimous raves on and off-Broadway. With heartbreak and hilarity, they perform on guitars, piano, bass and, yes, kitchen utensils.") go on sale Sunday, March 1. Reservation slips will be in the Sunday bulletin or you can call the church. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$17 for children. Tickets will be distributed once all tickets are sold. This is open to anyone so bring your friends and family. Snacks will be provided at intermission.

Looking ahead...Keep **October 10-11** open for **Family Camp at Temple Hills!** This will be a fun get away weekend and is open to anyone in the congregation! Registration will open in mid-June!

Thank you to everyone who donated chili for the Chili Cook-off in February. The winning entry for fan favorite went to Karen and Roy Dreger for their vegetarian chili. CE favorite went to Beth and Ben Dornan **and** Kris Dornan. Naming rights went to Kathy and Mackenzie Pero. We made a profit of over \$200 which will support family camp.

Finally, I received this (next page) from Jen Anderson recently. Abby had to do this for her religion class at St. Jude's recently. I wanted to share it with you. We truly have amazing kids in our congregation. Also, a shout out to Beth Dornan who is going to the regional

science fair completion in Akron this month!  
Awesome jobs, girls!

Remember when you read this passage that Jesus is teaching the people and speaking for himself and God.

Your answer

Turned In

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.

To me this passage means that God loves me more than anyone else does. People want to be loved by me. I will love people how God loves me. By following this rule, I will become a happier person and my peers will be happy also. When Jesus was teaching the people this he was asking for a small task to be done on a daily basis. That makes it easy because it is such an easy task to do but so many people don't think about doing it. When I was at church and I saw an older lady walking with a walker towards the door, I went and opened the door for her. Later she came up to me and told me how much she appreciated the kind gesture. Jesus says love one another as I love you.

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

As a new year Outreach program possibility, we explore suggestions. Last month we had a speaker from the Grafton Correctional Facility visit with us telling us about some of the residents living there and how we might help prepare them to be released into the civilian arena. We were deeply moved by our speaker's concern for the rehabilitation and release of "her boys". We will be discussing what we heard on Sunday.

We have been discussing a drive-through food drive sometime in the summer at Community Care with Outreach and other interested First Congregational persons hosting the event which would be open to the public as well.

The Swiss Steak Dinner is on Saturday, March 21 with seatings at 4:30 and 6:00. Have you gotten your tickets yet??

One World Shop will be at the church on Sunday, April 26 after the second worship service. Plan to view and purchase gifts for Mother's Day from a one-of-a-kind selection of specialty offerings priced to encourage you to buy.

Please mark on your calendars a Taco Bar eat in/take out fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity on Sunday, May 17 immediately following the second service.

Please remember our military families and servicemen and women at home and overseas. We are still collecting items and names for them. Our contact person is looking for help and personal, travel size items. Thank you for remembering our military.

As with all of the events at First Congregational Church, sharing them via word-of-mouth and any social media platforms is greatly appreciated!!

From MORNINGS with JESUS publication: "FAITH STEP: Don't walk past the picture that needs straightening or the weed that needs pulling today. And take note of the people around you who are thirsty for what you're carrying in your soul's canteen."

### **Deacons' Desk – Kath Schoonover**

The month of March is here. This year is moving fast already which means we are on the back side of old man winter. I feel we truly can't complain about this winter. It has been a little cold but we were well below normal snowfall which we can all appreciate. A couple of fun facts for March: We start to gain 2 1/2 minutes of daylight per day, which means soon we won't be going to and coming home from work in the dark which will help with our moods. Hopefully we become more vibrant like the flowers that will be popping out of the ground soon!

March 8 is daylight saving time when we "spring forward" our clocks one hour. Boy, the word "spring" sure sounds great! Birds will be singing to us and we will start thinking about gearing up for yard prep and planting some flowers. That is goodness that gets the blood pumping!

March 19 brings about the March Equinox, also called Vernal or Spring Equinox, marking the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere. On this day the sun stands directly over the earth's equator.

Hopefully you made it through winter without catching too bad of a cold or the dreaded flu that has been pretty nasty t6his season.

Have a safe and blessed March!



## Inside the Trustees – Chris Dlugosz

What weighs 800 lbs. and feels immovable? A brand new stove for the church! On the evening of January 23, a small group of Trustees came up to the church to move the large crate from the parking lot, down the back stairs, and across the fellowship hall floor. After a few of us tried to lift a single corner of this behemoth, we realized we were in a bit over our heads.

We began to brainstorm ideas on how to get it moving. Remove all the packaging? Chain it to a truck and lower it down the stairs? Nothing seemed feasible or safe, let alone the damage we may cause to the stove, the stairs, or the floor in fellowship hall. We were at a standstill.... and then it happened.

Slowly, five guys turned into seven guys as more people began to show up. Then seven guys turned into 11 guys. Ramps came out. Jacks came out. Wheelie carts came out. Everyone began working together. This immovable object all of a sudden seemed very light and movable. In about 15 minutes, the job was done.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with this gargantuan task. It is great to see so many people give up their time to get it done. We have contracted with Geisel Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning to have the old stove removed and the new one moved in and connected...all in time for the Swiss Steak Dinner!

## Parish Nurse's Notes – Karen Dreger

I bet most of you know someone with a thyroid dysfunction or have a thyroid dysfunction yourself. If you are a woman, you are five times more likely to be affected than a man. I have hyperthyroidism.

What you should know:

The thyroid is a butterfly shaped organ located in the base of your neck. It releases hormones that control metabolism – the way your body uses energy. The thyroid hormones regulate vital body functions, including:

Breathing, menstrual cycles, heart rate, body temperature, body weight, cholesterol levels, muscle strength, central and peripheral nervous systems, and more!

Two of the most common thyroid disorders are hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism. **Hyperthyroidism** is when your thyroid is overactive, producing too much of its own hormone. Some symptoms are: anxiety, hand trembling, sweating, racing heart, weight loss, irritability or moodiness, nervousness, hyperactivity, and missed or light menstrual periods. **Hypothyroidism** is the thyroid producing too little of its own hormone. Some symptoms of hypothyroidism are: fatigue, dry skin and hair, trouble sleeping, depression, sensitivity to cold temperatures, weight gain, frequent heavy periods, constipation, and joint and muscle pain. Symptoms will vary from person to person.

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed, contact your doctor's office for an appointment and/or appropriate blood tests. With a proper diagnosis, thyroid disorders can be successfully treated.



## 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 21, 2020

**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 14**  
For reservations or to purchase tickets,  
call the church office at 440-327-2921





Join our handbell choir! Interested? Practices are on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Stop in to find out what it's all about!

(And don't miss the handbell choir debut on Palm Sunday, April 5!)

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

March 16: The Winemaker's Secret by Cynthia Ellingsen

April 20: The Force of Nature by Jane Harper



Want to improve your health, increase flexibility, reduce stress, and rejuvenate your mind, body and spirit?  
**Come to yoga!**

Registered Yoga Instructor, Allison Borstad, offers a gentle yoga class every Saturday at First Congregational U.C.C. at 11 am.

Suggested donation is \$5 for the hour-long class.

This class is beginner-friendly and always tailored to whoever shows up. Drop in one Saturday and see what we're all about! Bring a yoga/fitness mat and wear clothes you can move and stretch in.

Class updates can be found on Facebook at "Namaste Your Day with Allison".

- 3/2 Mikey Feigi
- 3/2 Nema Saleem Green
- 3/4 Vonnie Packard
- 3/7 Jane Woravka
- 3/8 Amy Eaton
- 3/16 Barb vonBenken
- 3/21 Allison Borstad
- 3/25 Jamie Schupbach
- 3/25 Dominic Truskot
- 3/27 Jim Yost
- 3/30 Arden Dlugosz
- 3/31 Grayson Pero-Luter



- 3/7 Larry & Karen Mytnick
- 3/11 Joe & Dolores Pesch

**Ushers & Greeters**

<b>March 1</b>	Ric Sasse, Ann Olesen, Shirley Sunyak
<b>March 8</b>	Becky Williams, Krista O'Neill, Vonnie Packard
<b>March 15</b>	Lynne Petroff, Regenia Comerford, Millie Gilly
<b>March 22</b>	Tess Anderson, Pete Veliconia, Edie Phillips
<b>March 29</b>	Joe Pesch, Vonnie Packard, Ric Sasse

**Acolytes**

<b>March 1</b>	Mackenzie Pero-Luter
<b>March 8</b>	Abby Anderson
<b>March 15</b>	Nate Schupbach
<b>March 22</b>	Jillian Smoker
<b>March 29</b>	Abigail Packard

**Nursery**

<b>March 1</b>	Allison Borstad
<b>March 8</b>	Shirley Sunyak
<b>March 15</b>	Amy Eaton
<b>March 22</b>	Ann Olesen
<b>March 29</b>	Allison Borstad

## St. Pauly Used Clothing Drop Off Shed

Sponsored By:  
First Congregational Church UCC

Location:  
16363 Center Ridge Rd.  
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

Benefits:

- Send Clothing to people who can use it all over the United States and the world.
- Help the environment by keeping your clothing out of a landfill.
- Receive a tax deduction for your donation. Receipts are available on the shed.

All proceeds from clothing donations go toward funding the Hospitality with a Heart monthly community outreach meals!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Outreach 9 am</b> <b>Communion</b> <b>Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00</b> <b>Traditional Svc. 10:30</b> <b>Youth parent mtg.</b>	<b>2</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>3</b> <b>CE 6:30 pm</b> <b>Trustees 7 pm</b>  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>4</b> <b>Bell Choir 6 pm</b> <b>Choir 7 pm</b>	<b>5</b>  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	<b>6</b>  World Day of Prayer	<b>7</b>  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
<b>8</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00</b> <b>Traditional Svc. 10:30</b> <b>March</b> <b>birthdays</b> 	<b>9</b> <b>Council 7 pm</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>10</b>  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>11</b> <b>Bell Choir 6 pm</b> <b>Choir 7 pm</b>  4-H 7 pm	<b>12</b>  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	<b>13</b> <b>Suicide awareness/  survivor svc. 6:30 pm</b>	<b>14</b> <b>CE movie night  6:30 pm</b>  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
<b>15</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Communion</b> <b>Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00</b> <b>Traditional Svc. 10:30</b>	<b>16</b> <b>Women's book club  7 pm</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>17</b>   AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>18</b> <b>Bell Choir 6 pm</b> <b>Choir 7 pm</b>	<b>19</b>   AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	<b>20</b> <b>Swiss Steak Dinner  prep 6 pm</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Swiss Steak Dinner  4:30/6:00</b>  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
<b>22</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00</b> <b>Traditional Svc. 10:30</b>  Hall rented 1-4 (Kish)	<b>23</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>24</b>  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm	<b>25</b> <b>Bell Choir 6 pm</b> <b>Choir 7 pm</b>  4-H 7 pm	<b>26</b>  AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 8 pm	<b>27</b> <b>Hospitality with a  Heart</b>	<b>28</b>  Yoga 11 am Couples Recovery 6 pm
<b>29</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Coffee Shop Svc. 9:00</b> <b>Traditional Svc. 10:30</b> <b>Deacons 11:30 am</b>	<b>30</b>  AA Women 7 pm	<b>31</b>  AA 1 <sup>st</sup> Step 8:30 pm				