

The Messenger

The monthly newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC of North Ridgeville

October 2021

Pastor

Rev. Arik Borstad

Director, Christian Education

Mary Karlovec

Music Director

Barb Habecker

Moderator

Roy Dreger

Vice-Moderator

Nancy Franks

Co-Chairs, Christian Education

Kelsey Styrt

Renee Dornan

Chair, Deacons

Kathy Pero

Chair, Outreach

Nancy Franks

Chair, Trustees

Paul Wolanski

Treasurer, Secretary

Linda Matis

From the Pastor's Pen

To my friends and family at First Congregational UCC,

Words cannot express the depth of gratitude and love that I have for you for what we have shared over the past seven years. You have been an essential part of our lives, from when you first took a chance on an inexperienced pastor straight out of seminary, to bearing witness to the major life events in my family's life. You were there when Allison and I were married, and you have supported us as we have welcomed two rambunctious boys into the world. While our part of this congregation's story draws to a close, I hold nothing but gratitude and love for each and every one of you. Thank you for letting me into your homes, your lives, and your hearts. It has been an incredible blessing to be with some of you in the best and worst days of your lives, as together we experienced the highs and lows of what life has to offer.

Because you have been such a big part of our life story, I wanted to give some space for the rest of my family to share their love and appreciation as well. So, here is a message from Allison: *Thank you, everyone, for your love and support over these past seven years. Many of you became adopted parents and grandparents to us, and the love and support you gave us means more than you could imagine. Since we are not going far, I'm sure we will bump into each other from time to time, so don't be strangers! I want to leave a special shout out to the yoga crew, who has been a blessing to get to know over the years. I love you all! From the bottom of my heart, thank you!*

Additionally, here is a message transcribed from Sage (in his own words): *Thank you church for being cool and thank you Miss Linda and Miss Mary for being my best friends. I loved playing in the*



nursery and playing in the sanctuary and playing with the blocks in the classroom. I love you very much!

I'd include a message from Leo, but he has a limited vocabulary, so the best we can do is thank you on his behalf.

So, once again, on behalf of my family, and from the bottom of our hearts, thank you. While we are very excited for what the future holds for our family, we wish our church family nothing but the best.

Love always,
The Borstads

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Want to be involved in searching for our new settled minister? First Congregational Church will be starting the process to look for a called minister. As part of that, a Search Committee needs to be assembled. The search for a new settled minister will involve a small and discrete Search Committee, according to most church bylaws. The commitment of the Search Committee, in the tradition of the United Church of Christ, is to pray and discern together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in consideration of the best pastoral leadership for the congregation. The Search Committee will receive UCC Ministerial Profiles of candidates, conduct interviews, check references, meet candidates, and select a final candidate for vote by the congregation.

If you feel the call to be a part of this discernment, please let one of the council members know or call the office. Thank you!

Moderator's Moment – Roy Dreger

Friends, there is no gentle way to put this, so I'm not going to try. Financially we are hurting. One thing that has come up

repeatedly in our search for an interim minister is our pay package for the minister. Our current package is about two-thirds of what the association recommends, and the wage section is about half of what is set forth in the guidelines. (And less than half of the average wage for a college graduate male in Ohio according to census data from 2021.) I have to believe that Pastor Arik's ability to provide for his family and his current pay package have played a role in his decision to leave. We have some hard choices to make.



One choice would be to eliminate all paid staff except the minister (secretary, Christian Ed director, music director, cleaner, and maintenance). This is not workable unless **everyone** is willing to take turns filling in at the different positions. This means even when there are school, sports or family activities, people would be responsible for one job or another. Let's face it, this won't work. I think we all have seen the level of volunteer participation in the congregation and adding to it isn't realistic.

Another possibility would be to use the endowment funds to supplement the budget. This is a quick fix, but it is not sustainable for more than a few years. Our endowment funds are not that extensive. Were we to take, say \$20,000.00 from the funds every year, they would only last about six years, if that. One unfortunate side effect of this would be that there would be a tendency to let the endowment funds pick up any unfunded amount and this would deplete these funds even faster.

Increased pledging is a simple answer, but not necessarily realistic, and I

doubt this would result in completely offsetting the amount needed. I pray that our pledges for 2022 increase and ask that you take a serious look at your ability to do so. Increasing our membership would help in this area and word of mouth invitations are the best.

There is also the option of closing our doors and merging with another church. I would not personally be in favor of this, but it has been the trend among churches as of late. I see this as a last resort.

One final option that council is exploring is making the minister's position part time. This could take many different forms and would not eliminate the need to fund the rest of the church operations from education to snow removal. The congregation would be expected to take up any unmet pastoral needs should we pursue this option, and, yes, **congregation means everyone**. While I see this as the only real viable option, it does not preclude having a financially healthy church working to make our financial situation even better so that we can make our faith more visible in North Ridgeville.

Christian Education Corner – Mary Karlovec

A huge shout out to Kris and Kurt Dornan and Heather Smith for their support of the confirmation program this year. Ten students were eligible and 5-6 have started the process. It is a very intensive nine months but an important part of our faith journey. **BUT...** I need your help (especially from our young adults)! I need a commitment from 3-4 more people to be a mentor for these amazing youth! It is a commitment of one hour a month from now



until May. Mentors play an important role in the faith journey of our confirmands. I realize that we are going through a transition period and that lives are busy but that makes it more important than ever to support our youth on this journey! **PLEASE** consider this important role and volunteer!

Sunday School has started and we are averaging 18-20 kids already! **But again...we need more hands**. Both our Pre-K through grade 2 and grades 3-6 need **TWO** adults in the room each Sunday. Please consider volunteering two Sundays a month so our current volunteers can attend church part of the Sundays each month. This quarter we are working on “Being A Bucket Filler, NOT a Bucket Dipper!” We are discussing positive characteristics and values we need to follow each and every day. Lessons will be available for you with all the supplies. Another small way that you can help with the faith formation of our amazing children at First Congregational UCC!

On Sunday, **October 24 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.** we will be having **TRUNK OR TREAT** in our church parking lot for those 6th grade and younger! Decorate your car, bring candy to pass out, and join in the fun! We will be providing hot dogs, chips and a drink for everyone who attends. So that we know how many to plan for, **please sign up** outside my office on one or both of the sign-up sheets: 1) **Cars passing out candy** and 2) **Number of family members attending**. *We ask that everyone wear masks when going from car to car.*



Outreach Committee News – Nancy Franks

“Be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God, is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Joshua 1:9

Though the winds howl, the days are growing shorter, the night are much darker, take heart faithful friends, the Lord is watching over his flock and will protect us in all things.

The blood drive on September 12 was a success even though the bus was late. Everyone remained patient and most of our signed-up donors gave their life saving donation of whole blood to Vitalant workers for safe keeping. Thank you for the 11 pints of life!

Our Texas Roadhouse fundraiser went very well with 10% of food sales coming back to our church. The total will be announced in our next newsletter and will be given to the 200th Anniversary Committee to help defray costs they incur.

Canned food, paper products, and cleaning supplies will be collected for Community Care during September and October. A collection receptacle is in the Sunday school hallway. Thank you for your generosity.

The Swiss Steak Dinner will be a drive through pick up from 4-6:30 p.m. on October 9 this year. Former paid dinner tickets accepted. New tickets available for purchase. See Linda Matis for payment and/or questions.

The Giving Tree will begin in November to be ready for distribution in early December. This worked very well last year and we are grateful to be able to do it again. More information coming soon. Isaiah 41:13 “For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you ‘Fear not, I will help you.’”



The **Neighbors in Need** offering, which we will be **collecting through November**, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through ucc.org/justice, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

Please mark your donations "NIN". Thank you.

Deacons' Desk – Kathy Pero

Our church family is truly a family. We work together, support each other, listen to each other, and laugh with each other!

The Deacon team has two positions open. If you are feeling called to become a church Deacon, please contact Kris, Kurt, Diane, Deb, Karen, or myself. We meet once a month, and we take turns running each service. We would love to have you!

The Deacons would also like to send our best wishes to Pastor Arik and his family. We hope your next journey is filled with lots of good times. Thank you for your time and talents.

Change is not always easy, but it does help us grow in our faith. I'm looking forward to our next chapter together.

Trustees' Turn – Paul Wolanski

Hello, North Ridgeville First Congregational United Church of Christ members and friends from the Board of Trustees. There is not much to report from the Trustees this month. We had to do an emergency tree limb removal from the back of our property. Recent storms left huge branches hanging onto our neighbor's yard. North Ridgeville's own Sherwood Stump Grinding and Tree Service squeezed us into their busy schedule when other services were weeks behind. They brought out a 20–30 foot boom and did a great job. Roy Dreger, although not officially a Trustee, did some light electrical work at the church and changed the oil on the lawn mower, while Geisel took care of a pipe leak. Thank you, Geisel. Thank you, Roy! Lastly, Wilson's Tree Service will be removing the tree in the front of the church property in the next few months. It was determined the tree is not healthy long term.

We thank each and every one of you for being our family aside from of regular families. We appreciate you all.

From the 200th Anniversary Committee:

Design a banner to celebrate our upcoming anniversary! We are looking for those imaginative people in our congregation who want to get creative and design a banner for our 200th

Anniversary in 2022! We have someone willing to make the banner, we just need a design! So, get your creativity flowing and sketch your idea on an 8 ½ x 11" piece of paper in color and submit it to Mary Karlovec by November 15! The winning design will be featured in the sanctuary and throughout the anniversary year!

Women's Book Club

Upcoming books: All meetings at church at 7:00 pm

October 18: The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson

November 15: The Daughters of Erietown: A Novel by Connie Schultz

December 20: Still Life by Louise Penny

January 17: Origin by Dan Brown

February 21: Space Between Us by Thrity Umrigar



Family Game Night

Saturday, November 13, 6-7 pm

Cost: \$5.00 per person (all proceeds will go to the 200th anniversary events)

All members, friends, neighbors, and families are welcome to join us!

Bring a pillowcase with 10-15 random items from your home.

Snacks & drinks will be provided but you can bring your own snacks, too!

RSVP: secretary@fccalive.org



Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 10/1 Elizabeth Feigi | 10/11 Dean & Lynne Lipperman |
| 10/2 Bruce Griswold | 10/11 Jon & Amy Eaton |
| 10/6 Ronda Van Den Bossche | 10/12 Ryan & Holly Hengartner |
| 10/7 Lynne Lipperman | 10/18 Mike & Joan Bier |
| 10/8 Pat Kyle | 10/18 Paul & Liz Wolanski |
| 10/9 Chase Dornan | 10/20 Gary & Gayle Hannold |
| 10/11 Nate Schupbach | 10/27 Bob & Dreama Stamper |
| 10/11 Jennie Vulcan | |
| 10/20 Dreama Stamper | |
| 10/23 Nancy Long | |
| 10/26 Matt Karlovec | |



SWISS STEAK DINNER

Saturday, October 9

4 – 6:30 p.m.

Drive through pick up only

Come any time from 4:00 to 6:30
to pick up your meals.

If you bought tickets for the 2020 SSD and still have them, they will be honored (they must be presented at time of pick up). If you paid for tickets in 2020, **please contact Linda Matis (327-2921 M-F 9am-noon) to confirm the number of dinners you have paid for & will be picking up.**

The meals will consist of Swiss steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, corn, salad, roll, and piece of pie.

Tickets are available for sale and must be paid for in advance by October 1.

Adults are \$12 and children under 12 are \$7.

SWISS STEAK DINNER -- VOLUNTEERS & DONATIONS

Please circle the area in which you are willing to volunteer.

"Job"	Number needed	Time
Prepare Swiss steak	5	9:30 am
Cut, box, label pies	2-3	11:00 am
Prepare potatoes	1	1:00 pm
Prepare veggies	2	1:00 pm
Prepare gravy	1	2:00 pm
Portion & bag salad; bag rolls	1	2:00 pm
Box meals	4	3:00 pm
Direct traffic	4-5	3:00 pm
Take tickets/orders	3	3:00 pm
Fill orders	1 adult & 3 youth	3:00 pm
Check orders & take to cars	1	3:30 pm

We need to borrow **roasters and crock pots** for the dinner. If you have any of the following you are willing to loan us, please put the number and size available on the lines below.

2 regular size roasters 4 small/shallow roasters

Monetary donations: The money donated for the 2020 dinner was needed during the last year's pandemic to cover everyday church expenses since there was no attendance and pledged income was off. Therefore, we are asking for monetary donations to purchase supplies for this year's dinner. Mark your check/envelope "SSD".

Name: _____

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Outreach 9:30 am Worship service 10:30 World Communion AA Men 7:30 pm	4 AA Women 7 pm	5 CE 7 pm Trustees 7 pm AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	6 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	7 AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	8	9 Swiss Steak Dinner 4-6:30 pick up AA Couples 6 pm
10 Worship service 10:30 Farewell reception for Pastor Arik 11:30 am AA Men 7:30 pm	11 Council 7 pm AA Women 7 pm	12 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	13 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	14 AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	15	16 Newsletter articles due AA Couples 6 pm
17 Worship service 10:30 Girl Scouts 3-4 pm AA Men 7:30 pm	18 Women's Book Club 7 pm AA Women 7 pm	19 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	20 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	21 200th anniversary meeting 7 pm AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	22	23 AA Couples 6 pm
24 Worship service 10:30 Trunk or Treat 5:30- 6:30 pm AA Men 7:30 pm	25 AA Women 7 pm	26 AA 1 st Step 8:30 pm	27 Bell choir 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	28 AA Women 6 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm	29	30 AA Couples 6 pm
31 Worship service 10:30  AA Men 7:30 pm						