

**Worship
With Us
Sundays
10AM**

The Courier

Large print
bulletins
and hearing
devices
available to
aid in
worship

First Congregational Church, Elyria,
Ohio. April, 2019 courier@firstcongelyria.org

Holy Week

Holy Week is the time in which we remember the actions of Jesus from Palm Sunday through the Easter Vigil. **There are four primary days of celebration and remembrance, however Easter Sunday is not one of the days. Easter Sunday is considered the first day of the Easter season.**

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday is the remembrance of the triumphant entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem, hailed as Messiah and King. The liturgy on Palm Sunday begins with the telling of Jesus' entry into the city, led by the crowd waving palm branches and exclaiming; "hosanna, blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." Our worship on Palm Sunday also includes a reading of the Passion from either the Mark, Matthew or Luke Gospel. This provides us with the tension that is associated with Palm Sunday. He, Jesus, is hailed as Messiah and King by the crowds, but less than a week later is condemned to death. The crowds turn on Him and together with the religious authorities, ask for His death. As the week progresses we walk with Jesus through those last days and actions.

We find ourselves gathered with Jesus and His friends on Maundy Thursday, to celebrate The Passover meal. Over the course of that meal, we recall and celebrate Jesus' mandate to be of service to others. The readings for Maundy Thursday recall the liberation of the Hebrew people from slavery and their last meal as an enslaved people. The Gospel is from John and tells of Jesus washing the feet of His friends. Jesus gives, as His last instruction to His followers, the Act of Service, His last mandate or mandatum. His love for them is infinite and demonstrated through His action of being the servant to each of them.

Good Friday finds us involved in the remembrance of the Passion of Jesus. The One who was their teacher, friend, and hope is arrested, tried, and put to death. His disciples abandon, deny, and hide, fearing their own incrimination and possible death. When it seems that all is lost and has come to a crashing end, we find ourselves at the evening of Holy Saturday.

Gathered in the shadows and growing darkness of night, the Church involves itself in a Vigil. The Holy Saturday liturgy or Vigil of Easter, begins in darkness and the Pascal or Easter Candle is lit. The Candle is the symbol of Jesus The Christ, the Light of the World. The Light dispels the darkness of night and Christ dispels the darkness of sin. The Vigil liturgy moves through Scripture readings recalling the story of Salvation History, finishing with the Resurrection Narrative. The Alleluia is heard for the first time since the Sunday prior to Ash Wednesday. The worship then moves into the blessing of new water and the recalling of our own Baptisms. The liturgy concludes with the celebration of Communion.

Holy Week is truly a week filled with many events which draw us into the life of Jesus The Christ. May this Holy Week be one filled with growth and a deeper relationship with God for all of us.

-Pastor Patrick

What's Happening

C.Y.A.T.C.

The Young adult group meets each Wednesday in April 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th. The group is open to all Young Adults ages 18 and above.

All are welcome.

The group begins each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. And ends at 9:00 p.m. Come and make some new friends reconnect with old ones or just come and have a great discussion and fun.

The Mayflower Guild

Meets on the third Tuesday of every month.

The April meeting will be held in the parlor on April 16th, at 1:00 PM.

Dessert Will Be Served

Program details to be announced.

Confirmation Field Trip

The Confirmation class will have a field trip on Sunday, April 7, 2019.

The confirmands and their sponsors will gather at First Church at 1:00 p.m.

We will caravan to The Maltz Museum to experience the current exhibit, **Israel: Then & Now.**

After viewing the exhibit, we will gather at a Jewish delicatessen to share a meal.

There will be **no Community Breakfast** in April due to the busy schedules of our God Squad cooks

The First Church Craft Group

will meet on **April 10th and 24th, in the Gates Room.**

You can come and iron or cut fabrics, sew, plan, assemble, or bind quilts. We are making quilts for Blessing House children and other charity causes.

We have a wonderful assortment of fabrics to work with, and if you have fabrics you'll never use, consider donating to the church's stash. All the quilts will be used by LOCAL charities. By the way... we are still taking T-shirts for food pantry tote bags!

The God Squad

The God Squad will meet on Thursday, April 4, 2019.

The group gathers beginning at 6:00 pm and finishes around 8:00 pm.

All youth in grades 7 and above are welcome. Come and have some Jesus Time and a lot of fun.

Trustee Connection

“Taxes & the Church”

At this time of the year, many of us are immersed in taxes doing our tax returns. What makes this year particularly interesting is that late in December, 2017 Congress passed a sweeping income tax legislation called the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA)”. Many of those changes took effect for 2018 as we are now finding out as we do our tax returns. One major change was an almost doubling of the standard deduction to \$12,000 for single taxpayers and \$24,000 for married taxpayers. As a result of this change, fewer and fewer taxpayers are able to itemize deductions.

Although charitable contributions are still allowed as an itemized deduction, for many people the grand total of all their itemized deductions gets them nowhere near the standard deduction amount. One way to continue to get a tax benefit from your contributions to our Church is to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). This allows you to keep the contribution out of your taxable income, but continues to help our Church! For those who are age 70 1/2 or older and have to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) but really don’t want or need to, this works especially well. Just remember that the funds need to go directly to the Church.

So consider this in your financial and tax planning for 2019. The Church would welcome your gift. This could be one way to fulfill your annual pledge. Remember the Qualified Charitable Distribution is not limited to the Required Minimum Distribution amount.

Your comments and ideas are welcome. You can contact me by phone or at cschillig@forestcitytech.com

Charles Schillig
Board of Trustees

Maundy Thursday

On Maundy Thursday
we will gather at
Community of Faith
to share worship
with our UCC sister congregations.
The evening will begin
with a simple meal of soup and bread
at 6:00 p.m.
The meal will be followed by
our **Maundy Thursday Service**
at 7:00p.m.
Come and share
this special evening with
our U.C.C. sisters and brothers
at Community of Faith
-Pastor Patrick

Counseling Office

The lower level Christian Education office is now being used as a counseling office for the students of S.O.C. and E.T.A.S.

The S.O.C. and E.T.A.S. programs have secured funding for counseling services to occur.

The counselors will be provided through Ohio Guidestone, and will conduct both small group and individual counseling. This is a phenomenal use of this space and will provide much needed services to children.

I am so happy that First Church has the available space to house this wonderful service for the children and teens.

-Patrick

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ITS 194TH YEAR
HELD MARCH 24, 2019

Moderator Genny Dangerfield called the meeting to order in the sanctuary at 11:11 a.m., immediately following the morning worship service.

Pastor Patrick had made his remarks concerning our future as his sermon, emphasizing that our building is in use seven days a week and is an active, vital place.

The minutes of the 2018 annual meeting were printed in the annual meeting booklet. It was moved by Mary Haskins, seconded by Carol Haywood and unanimously carried that the reading of those minutes be waived. The Leadership Team approved the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting on March 26, 2018.

Chuck Schillig gave the treasurer's report in the absence of Nancy Martier, who was ill. He reviewed the 2018 operating revenue and expenditures and Outreach revenue and expenditures. Less was taken from endowments than budgeted due to the receipt of two bequests. He also reported on the Memorial funds and investments and endowments, the Courtyard fund and a Statement of Financial Position, the details of all of which are printed in the annual meeting booklet. There were no questions or discussion.

Chuck then briefly explained that pledges for 2019 totaled \$124,534 and that it was necessary to take \$115,007 from investments to balance the 2019 proposed budget. A full copy is printed in the annual meeting booklet. The Trustees prepared the budget and the Leadership Team approved it for submission to the congregation. There were no questions or discussion. Bob Yost moved that the 2019 operating and Outreach budgets as printed be accepted. Tyler Holtzman seconded. Motion carried with no nays or abstentions.

The new fifty-year members were recognized and presented with gold nametags. They were Mary Hof, Carole Holl, and John Holl, who were present, and Clarence Casey, Jr., Rebecca Karpinski, James Pollock, Robert Valentine, and Peggy Wegner who were unable to be present. The other fifty-year members who were present were: Grace Lounsbrough, Martha Pollock, Carol Haywood, Lynn Newell, Gary Sutorius, Norm Lundberg, Mary Haskins, Ross Kingman, Dennis Scholle, and Pam Scholle. Jane Coven, previously our longest living member, died in January and J. C. Wm. Tattersall is now our longest living member.

Genny recognized and thanked those present who had been serving as members of Teams. She asked for nominations from the floor and Erin Smith and Raymal Stone were nominated for the Faith Team. Both agreed to serve. There were no further nominations or volunteers. Genny encouraged everyone to consider joining a team and to contact her if interested. Genny Dangerfield as Moderator, Nancy Martier as Treasurer, and Diane DeFazio as Clerk agreed to serve an additional term. It was moved by Allison Gallaher and seconded by Anthony Beall that the nominees, both listed and implied, be accepted and elected to serve. Motion carried with no nays or abstentions.

Genny then remarked that her job as moderator is not as a leader but as a helper for the congregation to reach a consensus. She would like to hear comments, concerns, and suggestions from the members of the congregation.

We sang "In the Midst of New Dimensions," after the meeting was officially adjourned at 11:34 p.m. upon motion of Clare Gallaher, seconded by Mary Haskins and unanimously carried.

Diane DeFazio, Clerk

First Church Book Club

Will meet on April 17th

Gathering Room

7:00 PM

Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate

Refreshments will be served

Come for the companionship
Even if you didn't read the book

Fellowship Report:

The Fellowship team continues to look for opportunities to promote fellowship in our church and in our community. We are working on Volunteer Appreciation and the all UCC church picnic.

We are open to suggestions and new ideas. Some of these may include coordinating with SOC and ESTA on a venture for the fall of 2019. Stay Tuned!

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Smith
Betty Salisbury
Mary Smith
Allison Gallaher
Candice Dangerfield
Staff support:
Pastor Patrick
Tracy Belcher
Your Fellowship Team

First Church Women May Luncheon:

Save the Date!! Wednesday May 1,
2019 at 12 Noon

Elyria Country Club

Program: Debra Rose

singing those wonderful Old
Standards from the 40's and 50's

Details to follow

**in April Sunday Bulletins and First
Cong Weekly Thursday E-News –**

See you there!

***There will be no meeting of
First Church Women in
April***

Lenten Study

Continues on Wednesdays,
**April
3,10, and 17**

Come to the parlor at 6PM
and enjoy a light meal
and discussion

The Courier is published monthly. All interested parties are encouraged to contribute articles. Please send articles and announcements via email to: courier@firstcongelyria.org Deadline for April, 2019 articles is March 15, 2019

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Easter Sunday

Easter is the most important celebration within the Christian tradition. **Easter Sunday this year is on April 21st. Our Celebration of the Resurrection will begin at 10:00 a.m.** The Easter season continues for 50 days and ends with the celebration of Pentecost.

Easter Sunday bring with it the joy of the Resurrection and the promise of life eternal. Christ has risen and has broken the chains of sin, the power of death. Christ the Eternal Light of the world has dispelled the darkness of sin and gives to each of us the hope and promise of life eternal. The resurrection brings with it the reality of Gods unconditional love made known through Jesus The Christ.

The alleluia which are sung throughout Easter Sunday, remind us of the great joy of our redemption and salvation. On this Easter Sunday and throughout the entire Easter Season, may our lives reflect the Joy of the Resurrection and may our Alleluias resound. May others know our Joy and may our Joy bring others closer in relationship to God. Alleluia! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

First Church Staff

Reverend Patrick Nicolino, Pastor. Bette Lou Higgins, Administrative Assistant, ext. 10. Andrew Page, Business Manager. Tracy Belcher, Education and Outreach Coordinator. Dylan Sanzenbacher, Organist and Choir Director. Ross Kingman, Campanella Ringers Director. Genny Dangerfield, Courier Editor.(courier@firstcongelyria.org), Candice Dangerfield, Artist in Residence. Rick Lawrence, Sexton. Taquala and Rex, Assistant Sextons.