

The Courier

Worship With Us
Sundays

10AM

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

Large print bulletins
and hearing devices
available to aid in
worship

The New Year

For many, the New Year prompts us to reflect on the past year and look forward to a clean slate to fill with possibilities for the year to come. Over the past year, First Church has made itself a vital and integral part of the Elyria community. The different groups that call First Church their home have all grown in numbers of participants and have spread the word of the extravagant welcome they experience at First Church. The Chancel Choir, under the direction of Dylan has expanded its repertoire and enhanced our Worship Services. The Campanella Ringers have further enriched our worship with their incredible talent. We also made some changes in our worship and our worship space. We have continued our commitment to being a vital part of the community and developing our relationships with God, one another, the community, and our global family.

What does the New Year bring for First Church? I am not completely sure, however the possibilities are abundant! Our trustees and committees are busy considering the maintenance of the physical structure of our church, our place in the community in "being a church", and enhancing everyone's experiences at First Church.

As we look to 2019 at First Church, we must first pray and discern in regards to what God wishes us to do. Our chosen routes must strive to enhance our relationship with God, one another, our community, and the global family. First Church has made an enormous difference in the lives of many in Elyria and I am positive our impact will continue in the new year and beyond. We should be quite proud of what has been accomplished, yet not consider our work done as we are on an infinite journey. As the New Year begins and unfolds before us, may we be open to hearing God's voice speaking to us and willing to go where God is calling us.

I wish all a very happy and blessed New Year!

Pastor Patrick

Communion

During the Advent and Christmas seasons we celebrated Communion together each Sunday. This came about as a result of my participation with the Worship Lab at the U.C.C. National Offices this past year and my readings concerning Communion being offered to Congregations on a more regular basis. With this in mind, I brought the concept to the Faith Team, explaining the rationale and thinking put forth in the national setting of The United Church of Christ. No matter what our own personal thinking or theology concerning Communion, Eucharist or Sharing at The Lords Table, the reality is that in some unique way we encounter The Risen and Glorified Christ.

Communion or Eucharist is the celebration of Jesus' last meal with His disciples. Through the Gospel accounts, we learn of that last meal and its importance to the first followers and the subsequent Church. When we come together to celebrate Communion or Eucharist, we are encountering Jesus The Christ in a unique way. As a community we are sharing at one table and celebrating God's unconditional love, poured out for each of us. My hope is to celebrate Communion or Eucharist more often. Possibly we will celebrate Communion or Eucharist each Sunday during the Lent and Easter seasons. I hope and pray that this celebration of Communion or Eucharist is meaningful for you and enriches each of our spiritual lives.

Blessings,
Pastor Patrick

Merci Gratitude Thanks Gracias Grazi Danke

I would like to thank everyone who helped with or attended worships and other events over the Advent and Christmas seasons. It was a beautiful and faithful experience. You are the Church.

Pastor Patrick

A word...

It is hard to imagine that there is actually blank space that needs to be filled. I have edited, pruned, reduced typefaces, squeezed and squoze in order to get the Courier articles to fit the space available on so many occasions. But this time... THIS TIME... there is room for me to say Thank you to all the people who continue to submit news and articles for publication. Sometimes it's like pulling teeth (as my dad would say) to pry those words out of people, but I still feel that this mode, this venue, this paper thread that appears in your mailbox (or virtual mailbox) once a month, is still the one way we can communicate with each other. Keep finding those typos... - Genny Dangerfield

First Church Book Club

Meeting

**January 9th 2019 at 7:00 PM.
in the Gathering Room**

We will discuss

A Road To Somewhere,

**by
Ramona Robinson**

**Good food,
Good fellowship,
Good discussion.**

From The ONA Team

The ONA (Open and Affirming) Team, would like to invite you to participate in an upcoming program.

On January 27, 2019, join us in the Great Hall for a special Round Table Discussion following Worship. We will be discussing the book All The Bright Places by Jennifer Niven. We are giving you advanced notice so that you have plenty of time to get a copy of the book and read it before the Round Table. This book has been nominated and has won many awards and is being turned into a movie. The movie is being filmed in many locations around Elyria including right here at First Church. This *New York Times* bestseller looks at the issue of depression and mental health as it follows two teenagers struggling to come to terms with their lives.

Our study of this book begins our journey as a faith community to better understand mental health issues as part of our ongoing commitment to our ONA covenant.

Confirmation

Any Youth currently in grade 8 or above are invited.
For additional details, please contact Pastor Patrick.

Angel Trees

The Angel Trees can still be found outside of the Sanctuary and Great Hall, and will remain there until Sunday, January 13th.

Your gifts of winter hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, and socks, may be put on the trees to decorate them this holiday season.

The items collected will be given to our neighbors in need of a little extra warmth this winter.

Thank you to all of you who have already donated so many beautiful things, and to those of you who will.

-Tracy Rue

New Opportunity

January is the beginning of a new calendar year and brings with it the hopes, dreams, and possibilities of a new year. Here at First Church the New Year is bringing with it a new group that will call First Church home. The new group will be meeting on Saturdays at 6:00 pm in the Upper Room, beginning on January 5th. The group is a support group for anyone in recovery and is based on the 12 step model. We look forward to this new group calling First Church its home, bringing support and comfort to those who will be part of this group.

\$2000.00 Grant awarded to Food Pantry from Second Harvest

This amount will be credited to our account with Second Harvest. Thanks to the fundraiser put on by WOBL/WDLW & Burger King, we were able to pack 200 bonus bags for our pantry customers. The bags contained the fixings for a meal for 4 people: Meat: a turkey ham (approx. 2 or 2 1/2 lbs.); 2 cans of green beans, 1 can of fruit cocktail, 1 boxed mix of instant potatoes, 1 stick of butter, and 1 package of Little Debbie Christmas-themed brownies.

(We left out the rolls/biscuits this year because when we went shopping we had no idea how generous Second Harvest might be this year; depends on donations.)

Mary H.

Quilting and Crafting Group

**We will meet on January 9th.
Feel free to join us at noon at The Foundry
for lunch and social time
before our work meeting.**

**It's time to consider new crafts and projects
that can be used to enhance our worship
experience and serve our community.**

**Join us and be a part of the decision making
process.**

GOD SQUAD MEETINGS

The God Squad will meet on Thursday, January 3rd and January 17th. The group gathers beginning at 6:00 pm and finishes around 8:00 pm. All youths grades 7 and above are welcome. Come and have some Jesus Time and a lot of fun.

Community Breakfast

Our Community Breakfast this month will occur on **Sunday, January 13th** in the Great Hall, **following the 10:00 am Worship.**

Once again The God Squad will demonstrate their culinary talents with delicious and delectable breakfast treats.

All are invited to share in these tantalizing treats and wonderful conversation. A free-will offering offsets the cost and proceeds go to subsidize Youth Programming

C.Y.A.T.C.

The Young adult group will meet each Wednesday in January (January 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th). The group is open to all Young Adults ages 18 and above. All are welcome. The group begins each Wednesday at 6 p.m.. And ends at 9 p.m. Come and make some new friends reconnect with old ones or just come and have a great discussion and fun.

From Libby Thomas and Blessing House:

Thank you so much for opening your hearts and your wallets to provide gift cards for Blessing House. This wonderful program provides temporary shelter for children of Lorain County when their parents are simply unable to do so.

Sometimes a parent must spend time in hospital or away for whatever reason, and their children have no adult to take care of them. Blessing House steps in where extended family cannot, and takes care of those children for a short time. The children are taken to their regular schools and activities, and are surrounded by a warm, loving temporary family.

*May God Grace
Your New Year
With Love and Kindness*

First Church Book Club Upcoming books:

Please feel free to join us any time you like.

We have a brief discussion and snacks in the Gathering Room at 7:00 pm on the second Wednesday of each month.

During the summer we get together for a picnic with our sister book club from North Ridgeville UCC.

For that meeting both clubs read the same book and enjoy a rousing discussion and potluck picnic dinner at one of the Metroparks.

It is great fun and enlightening to share with another congregation.

The High Tide Club. Mary Kay Andrews

The Last Letter From Your Lover. Jojo Moyes

Before We Were Yours. Lisa Wingate

The Beach House. Mary Alice Monroe

By Invitation Only. Dorothea B. Frank

Little Fires Everywhere. Cleste Ng

Family Tree. Susan Wiggs

Great Alone. Kristin Hannah

Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper.

Phaedra Patrick

Standard Deviation. Katherine Heiny

Feel free to cut this section off and use it as a bookmark or reminder.

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encouraged to contribute articles.
Please send articles and
announcements via email to:
courier@firstcongelyria.org
Deadline for February, 2019
articles is January 15, 2018

Change Service Requested
Dated Material.
Please deliver by December 31, 2018

Save the date
BUNCO-BUNCO-BUNCO RETURNS!
Saturday, Feb. 23

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. Taqualia and Rex, Assistant Sextons.