

*Worship  
With Us  
Sundays*  
**10A**

# *The Courier*

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First Congregational Church, Elyria,  
Ohio. March, 2019 [courier@firstcongelyria.org](mailto:courier@firstcongelyria.org)

## *Lent*

*Lent is the 40 days of preparation for the celebration of Easter, the Resurrection of Jesus The Christ. Lent begins this year on Wednesday, March 6th. Lent is a time to reflect upon how each of us have lived out our call to be a follower of Jesus. It is a time of reflection and growth. This Lenten season, may our lives be filled with prayer, reflection, and random acts of kindness. Through our prayer, words, and actions, may we prepare to walk more closely in the example of Jesus and bring God's love to others.*

*May the community of Elyria know that we are Christians by our love, words, and actions.*

**We observe Ash Wednesday on March 6th this year.** Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season. We will join our U.C.C. sisters and brothers from Pilgrim and Congregation of Faith at Pilgrim U.C.C. for the Ash Wednesday service.

We will begin by sharing a small meal of soup and bread at 6:00 pm, followed by our Ash Wednesday service beginning at 7:00 pm.

**Please mark your calendars to join together for a light meal and service on March 6th.**

**Soup and Bread-- 6:00 pm**

**Ash Wednesday service-- 7:00 pm**

# ***What's Happening***

## **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

---The UCC at work for disaster response/relief around the world

In March we and other UCC churches will take an offering for OGHS to send assistance after natural disasters and refugee emergencies in the U.S. and around the world.

For instance in 2018 this program sent 421 volunteers to repair 86 homes in four U.S. states that had been battered by Hurricanes Matthew, Harvey, Irma, or Maria. The UCC maintains "strategic partnerships and direct relationships with organizations and faith communities engaged in disaster response in more than 125 countries."

For pictures and notes from some volunteers look on: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com/onegreathourofsharingucc) for onegreathourofsharingucc.

## **The God Squad**

The God Squad will meet on Thursday, **March 7<sup>th</sup> and March 21<sup>st</sup>**. 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.

## **Salvation Army Hot Meals**

First Church is responsible for preparing and serving six Hot Meals at the Salvation Army during 2019. These are scheduled for the third Sunday of each month.

Community of Faith youth are handling the meal for the even -numbered months.

We are looking for cooks/helpers for the 6:00 p.m. Hot Meal the **3rd Sunday in March, May, July, September (tricky - Apple Fest. weekend), and November.**

There's a sign-up sheet at the foot of the stairs before you go up to the Great Hall, or you could call Mary Haskins at 322-4905 to volunteer.

**Let's keep this worthwhile project going!!**

-Mary Haskins

## The Mayflower Guild

Meets on the third Tuesday of every month.

The March meeting will be held  
in the parlor  
on March 19th,  
at 1:00 PM.

Dessert Will Be Served

Program details to be announced.

## Pretzel Sunday!

That's right Pretzel Sunday is almost here!  
Pretzel Sunday will be **Sunday, March 10th**.  
We hope that you and your family will once  
again join us for this opportunity to work  
together to support a great cause.

Extra hands are always needed to help  
prepare the dough prior to actually forming  
the pretzels. If you would like to come early  
to help prepare the dough, please check with  
Sue Schillig to see what time you should  
arrive.

Pretzel Sunday is our way of supporting One  
Great Hour of Sharing, which is part of Our  
Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), and is one  
of our favorite traditions here at First Church.  
Your donation for the pretzels will go to help  
OCWM to "provide sources of clean water  
and food, education and health care, small  
business micro-credit, emergency relief, and  
advocacy and resettlement for refugees and  
displaced persons.

OGHS also supports domestic and  
international ministries for disaster  
preparedness and response".

## The First Church Craft Group

is meeting on  
**March 13 and 27,**  
**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!

## 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

## ***Mardi Gras Celebration***

Bring your **beads, bangles, and boas**  
for our celebration of Mardi Gras on  
**Sunday, March 3, 2019.**

The festivities will follow the 10:00 am worship  
as the spirit of New Orleans fills the Great Hall.

**Mardi Gras** is the final celebration  
before **Ash Wednesday**  
and the beginning of **Lent**.

***See you there with your beads, bangles, and boas!***

The Young Adult Group will demonstrate their culinary talents  
with delicious and delectable breakfast treats  
in the spirit of New Orleans.

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

## ***Join us for Dinner and Discussion***

Lent Study will be **Wednesdays March 13, 20, 27, and April 3, 10, 17.**  
We will eat at **6:00pm**, the study will begin at **6:30pm**, and will last about an hour.

During this year's Lenten study, Patrick will take us back through our journey of  
confirmation; discussing topics both central to our faith, as well as our church traditions.

The title theme we have decided on for the study is "**Reaffirmation**"

-Anthony

## **First Church Book Club March 13, 2019**

**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.

Our March Book is:

**The Last Letter From Your Mother.**

JoJo Moyes

## **C.Y.A.T.C.**

**The Young adult group meets each Wednesday in March: 13th, 20th, and 27th.**

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.

## **Confirmation**

The members of the **2019** Confirmation Class will have a meeting on **Sunday, March 10th**

Following Worship. The meeting will be held in the parlor.

Sponsors are invited and encouraged to participate.

The meeting will last approximately 1 hour.

-Pastor Patrick

## **First Church Women Meeting-March 6, 2019**

On Wednesday, **March 6th**, First Church Women will meet in the Great Hall for lunch and a very informative program.

Sister Mary Berigan, the Executive Director of Blessing House will be our speaker.

**Blessing House** is a children's crisis care center located in Lorain and open 24/7.

They are licensed to care for up to ten children ranging in age from birth through twelve years.

These are children whose parents or caregivers are facing a crisis or emergency or in a situation that might put a child at risk.

At Christmas, the Outreach Team collected gift cards to be donated to Blessing House.

At the March meeting, you will hear more about the wonderful work that Blessing House does.

Won't you plan to join us for a delicious lunch and a very interesting program?

Be sure to sign up and reserve your place by noon

**on Monday, March 4th. We hope to see you there.**

-First Church Women Board

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

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***ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE***  
***March 24, 2019***  
***Service and meeting in Great Hall***

**Ashes To Go**

On Ash Wednesday, **March 6, 2019**, Pastor Patrick will be outside the Atrium doors offering ashes to those walking by between **noon and 1:00 pm**.

This will make ashes and a short prayer available to our neighbors or anyone just walking by.

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](mailto:courier@firstcongelyria.org) ), Candice Dangerfield, Artist in Residence. Rick Lawrence, Sexton. Taquala and Rex, Assistant Sextons.