

Worship  
With Us  
Sundays  
10AM

# The Courier

Large print  
bulletins and  
hearing  
devices  
available to aid  
in worship

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

## Change Is In The Air...

**The seasons of the year** change from one to another, each bringing with it particular nuances. Change is a sign of life, we are constantly in flux or change. Our bodies are changing, nature is changing around us, concepts and understandings change. Think for a moment: do we communicate in the same ways we did 25 years ago? Do we dress in the same fashion as we did 10 years ago? Have the sophistication of our modes of transportation changed? Is the Church the same as She was 5 years ago? I suspect that the answers to those questions would be "no". We have smart phones. Suits and ties, dresses and skirts in the workplace have been replaced by casual Friday. Our cars have computers and even park themselves. Many changes have indeed occurred.

**The Church** is an institution which both remains the same and also changes. The Church remains constant and unchanging in Her message, yet the way in which She, The Church operates should be constantly changing. What does this mean? It means that the mission of The Church to spread or bring the Gospel message to others, through our actions and words is consistent and unchanging, but **how we go about** proclaiming The Good News message may and should be very different from what it was in the past. By way of example, consider that mission trips or rather mission experiences are extremely important to the life of many. The emphasis is no longer on going and doing for others, "those in need", but rather it is experiencing the life of others and becoming more understanding of their life conditions and to walk in solidarity with them.

**The Trustees and Leaders and I** will be looking at possible changes at First Church. The changes may involve staffing, the physical plant, how we may better live out our mission and how we are Church to the community. We will be looking at increasing our social media presence, streaming Worship Services, and better connecting with those groups who call First Church their home. . I know that change is never easy, yet it is necessary to continue our vitality and mission. Remember, Jesus came to bring change and bring change He did. The Trustees and Leaders and I are not suggesting change simply for the sake of change, but rather in order to keep First Church relevant and a vital embedded part of the Elyria community.

**Blessings,**

**Pastor Patrick**

## Mark Your Calendar For These Upcoming Events

### Youth Lock In

First Church will host a lock in for all youth in grades 8 and above on **November 1st and 2nd**. The lock in will begin at 7:00 pm on Friday, November 1st and end at 10:00 am on Saturday, November 2nd. All youth in grades 8 and above as well as their friends are welcome.

Each youth must have a permission form signed by their parent, guardian, or custodian before being allowed into the church building for the lock in.

**Please see or talk with Pastor Patrick concerning permission forms.**

### Community Breakfast

The God Squad will be back in the kitchen one Sunday of each month.

#### **Date To Be Announced**

Join us immediately following worship in the Great Hall to enjoy a wonderful breakfast prepared by the members of the **God Squad**.

This group of talented young people will once again demonstrate their culinary expertise.

All donations from the community breakfast will go towards Youth programming for the God Squad.

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

The Young adult group meets each **Wednesday**.

**November 6, 13, 20, and 27**

The group is open to all Young Adults ages 18 and above. All are welcome.

**The group begins 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 God Squad

The God Squad will meet on **Thursdays, November 7th and 21st**.

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.

## Reformation Sunday

We will celebrate Reformation Sunday on **November 3, 2019**. On this day, we remember and celebrate the lives and work of the Reformers. The Reformers were responsible for bringing about the Reformation and the birth of Protestantism. The Reformation and the Reformers are part of our rich history and it is important to remember their contributions were instrumental to why First Church exists. May we continue the bold work of the Reformers and their vision for a more authentic Church.

## DID YOU KNOW

**At Save Our Children (SOC)**, we see the many faces of poverty. Most of our children come from families who are living more than 185% below the poverty level. They don't live in far-off countries; they are our neighbors right down the street; the ones who don't have transportation or medical care; the ones who have the weight of the world on their shoulders but are often forgotten. First Congregational UCC is the most stable home that some of these children will experience. Save Our Children is the calm in their storm, their gateway and connection to the rest of the world. Through rich cultural experience and mentoring, we encourage our students to reach their full and unlimited potential.

**Save Our Children** is funded completely through grants and donations. The majority of the grants are awarded for a specific program or need. And there is no guarantee that the grant or donation will be available for the following school year. The pursuit of grants and donations is an ongoing process that keeps Save Our Children up and running.

Over the past twelve months SOC proudly served the needs of 150 children in our K – 12th grade after school and summer programs. Grants and donations allowed us to dedicate over 1,200 hours of homework assistance – a minimum 520 homework assignments completed every week. They enabled us to serve 27,040 meals, as well as to transport our students to and from our program at a rate of 4,160 pickups/drop-offs per month during the school year and 5,120 trips during the summer.

FYI:

\$2500	sends a child to SOC for a school year
\$1500	covers field trips and special events for a year
\$1000	sends a child to the summer program for 8 weeks
\$500	covers the transportation costs for 1 month
\$250	covers internet and technology fees
\$100	provides food for one child the entire school year
\$50	provides milk/juice for one child for the entire school year

Due to grants received over the past 5 years, SOC has been able to make some much-needed improvements to the areas of the church that they use. Rooms have been painted and air conditioners have been installed. Grants from Bendix have been instrumental in many of these improvements: the kitchen in the lower level has been updated (new appliances and disposals) for easier meal preparation, LED lighting has been installed in the lower level for energy savings and increased visibility, and high-speed WiFi is now up and running throughout the building due to a partnership with Bendix and the Elyria City Schools. **Over \$18,000 worth of equipment and labor has been invested since SOC began renting the space at First Congregational UCC.**

SOC would love for the members of First Congregational UCC to stop by for a tour of the updates and the amazing program!

Brenda Yost

## CLOTHES FOR CHRISTMAS

Can you believe that Christmas is just around the corner? The Great Hall will soon be filled with excitement, as the kids from Save Our Children enjoy their annual Christmas party. Since the program began making its home here, First Church has been giving socks, underwear and pajamas to every child and teen as part of their Christmas gift bags. (We provide these gifts to the more than 100 participants of SOC.) Each child receives a large gift bag with items that they have requested from their Christmas wish list. As hard as it might be to believe, for some kids new socks, underwear and pajamas are a welcome surprise to find in their bags.

You may sponsor a child for \$25, which is the approximate cost of purchasing the items for each child. I can accept donations until December 2, 2019. If you would like to sponsor a gift, please see me for an envelope for your tax-deductible contribution. For additional information or to arrange a donation, please contact me at 323-5454 ext. 15 or [tbelcher@firstconglyria.org](mailto:tbelcher@firstconglyria.org).

Peace and blessings,  
Tracy

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### Angel Trees

The Angel Trees can be found outside of the Sanctuary and Great Hall beginning Sunday, **December 1** and will remain there during the Advent and Christmas season, until Sunday, **January 12, 2020**.

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.

**Consider these,  
the Missions  
of our Church**

## OUTREACH

Outreach has been offered a \$600 grant from LCCAA (Lorain County Community Action Agency) to help with our Holiday Cheer (bonus bag of food) distribution to 200 of our Food Pantry customers.

This year we hope to offer a little roasting chicken, plus potato, vegetable, fruit, and dessert - packaged and distributed in early December.

Mary H.

## NEIGHBORS IN NEED

This fall's annual Neighbors in Need offering has the theme "Love of Children." Donations from all UCC churches support national ministries of compassion and justice throughout the United States.

The Justice and Peace Action Network, for example, has many advocates who work on such issues as voting rights, immigration, hate crimes, and environmental justice as part of the UCC's activist efforts.

One-third of this offering supports the American Indian Ministries program. You may remember that several years ago First Church sent a mission party of youths and adults to South Dakota to help out on a reservation. (UCC forebears established churches in the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and Nebraska.)

You'll find special Neighbors In Need envelopes in the pew pockets. Or you may donate online at [ucc.org/nin](http://ucc.org/nin) or by sending your donation to the church office.

Thank you in advance for considering this donation.

- Mary Haskins

## Regarding Thanksgiving Service At Wesleyan Village

The Elyria Ministerial Association has decided to forego a Thanksgiving Service at the Wesleyan Village this year due to declining attendance.

## Book Club

First Church Book Club will meet  
on **November 13th.**

Join us in the Gathering Room at **7:00PM**  
We will discuss the book  
***Standard Deviation,***  
by Katherine Heiny.

Our meeting and discussion always  
includes  
tasty refreshments,  
hosted by a member of the group.

## Mayflower Guild

Please Join us in the parlor  
**November 19th**

for a program brought to you by  
the Mayflower Guild.

Our guest this month will be Sue  
Schillig, who will give a presentation and  
book talk about the novel

***Where The Crawdads Sing.***

We will meet at 1:00 PM for dessert and  
refreshments.  
Hostess: Carol Haywood

## FIRST CHURCH WOMEN- WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6th

When those chilly days of early November  
arrive,  
follow the wonderful aromas of baking bread and  
soup emanating from the church kitchen.

Yes, Sue, Dennis, and Pam will be there  
preparing a favorite lunch for First Church  
Women.

This particular meal is always popular, so don't  
miss out. Homemade jams and a yummy  
dessert complete the menu.

Presenting the program for November is

**Ann Schloss,  
Superintendent of the Elyria City Schools.**

What an exciting time for Elyria! All of the school  
buildings except Elyria High School are being  
rebuilt. Some will be a campus style plan.

Come to learn about the new state-of-the-art  
buildings and the technology benefits included in  
them.

As always, the cost for lunch and the program is  
**\$6.00. Punch will be served at 11:30 am  
and lunch served at noon.**

You can make your reservation by signing-up  
outside the Great Hall, on the table in the  
Narthex, in the church office,  
or by calling the church at **323-5454.**

**Reservations must be made by noon on  
Monday, November 4th.**

If you make a reservation and find you cannot  
attend, please cancel by noon on Tuesday,  
November 5th.

**Trustee Connection  
“Christian Enlistment Campaign”**

**Sunday November 17th is “Pledge Sunday”**, where we ask you to bring your 2020 pledge card to church that day. Pledge cards for next year were mailed during October, and we asked that you bring your pledge card to church on November 17th as part of the worship service and to bless our pledges for next year for the work of the church. If you are away that Sunday, an envelope addressed to the church was provided with the pledge card mailing, so you can just mail it back to the church. Some folks may prefer to mail it back anyway, and that is fine. But if you can attend worship that day we will acknowledge as part of the worship service that we are a community of faith and committing our pledge is an expression of that faith. If you misplaced your pledge card, please call the church office or stop in during the week and we can get you another one. Also some blank pledge card will be available in the back of the church.

**As Trustees**, knowing what we can expect in pledge payments for 2020 gives us a basis for setting the annual budget and what we can expect in income next year. It is an important part of the budget process. So we ask that if you want to mail in your pledge card, please get it to the church by December 1st. Most of us are familiar with this stewardship process and we thank our members for supporting the church and returning their pledge cards timely.

**Please join with me in worship on November 17th!**

**You can contact me by phone at 440-315-3417 or at [cschillig@forestcitytech.com](mailto:cschillig@forestcitytech.com)**

**Chuck Schillig**

**Please Read.  
Give Your Thoughtful Attention.  
Consider the Needs of the  
Church,  
And the Needs of Others.**

**THE OUTREACH TEAM REACHES OUT-  
WITH YOUR HELP**

During the month of November and until Sunday, December 15th, the Outreach Team will be collecting gift cards for Blessing House and Genesis House. Genesis House is a safe haven for victims of domestic abuse and provides services for victims and their families. Blessing House is a children’s crisis center located in Lorain. They care for children, birth through 12 years, whose parents or caregivers are facing a crisis or emergency that might put their children at risk.

We have supported both of these worthy organizations in the past, and they have been extremely grateful for our help. Although we collect the cards now, the cards are given out during the entire year as needed. Both Blessing House and Genesis House suggest that \$25 cards from Giant Eagle, Walmart or Target are the most useful. You can give a card/cards to Mary Haskins, Mary Sutorius, Patti Thomin, or Marty Perry. It would be helpful if you put the card/cards in an envelope with your name on the envelope.

Our congregation has been very generous in supporting this project in the past. We hope you will again.

Sincerely,

The Outreach Team

## Thanksgiving Blessings

**On December 26, 1941, President Roosevelt** signed a resolution designating the fourth Thursday of each November as the Federal Thanksgiving Day holiday. This occurred after several changes as to when Thanksgiving should be celebrated over a period of about 150 years. Despite the changes, it still remained and remains a day to give thanks. Our Thanksgiving of today still brings about talk and feelings of giving thanks, but is also a major celebration typically centered upon a large meal, watching parades and football, and the kick off the holiday shopping season.

**On Thanksgiving Day 2019**, join me in a commitment to take some time and concentrate on giving thanks for all that God has done for us and all that we have. May we also remember those who are in need of food and do not have the resources to have the big meal or even shelter or perhaps to even gather as a family. Say a prayer that their needs may be met or if possible take action to meet such needs of a family finding themselves without our blessings.

As for myself, on Thanksgiving Day, I will give thanks for the incredible ministry of First Church and the wonderful community of faith that is First Church.

Happy Thanksgiving and blessings to each of you, your families, and loved ones.

-Pastor Patrick

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## WALLS OF LOVE

Outreach sponsors a special collection 4 times a year in the months that have a FIFTH Sunday. Instead of asking for donations of toiletries/personal care products to distribute to our Food Pantry customers, for the next year those 5th Sunday donations will go to S.O.C. (Save Our Children) for their Walls of Love project. The children bag up the items, and tie the bags to the fences near our church for ANYONE in our community who is need to take and use.

### **Laity Sunday was a huge success!**

With the combined efforts of the Faith and Fellowship teams, we had a very meaningful worship service, a delightful and educational speaker, and a delicious meal.

This tradition gives members of the congregation an opportunity to come forward with their own expressions of faith, and celebrates the many volunteers who work hard giving their time and talents in support of our church.

**Thank you to all who participated.**

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 December 2019 articles is November 15, 2019**

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Change Service Requested Dated Material  
**Please deliver by October 30, 2019**

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**Save the Date!**  
**The annual Advent Gathering will be held on December 8th, after the  
worship service.**

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.