



Church Chatter

MAY 2021

Mission Statement:

We, the members of the United Church of Christ Congregational, Vermilion, strive to love, serve, and grow as we live God's message in our families, our church, our community and our world, now and forever more.

Office Info:

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Worship: Sunday 10:30

Office Hours: M-F, 9-2

Staff:

Rev. Melinda Quellhorst, Pastor

Judy Brizzolara, Administrative Asst.

Jerry Boros, Treasurer

Jim Innes, Financial Recorder

Shelly Innes, Christian Ed

Morgen Baker, Director, DNS



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Sunday, May 23rd

Facebook link to Worship Videos:

<https://www.facebook.com/207535775991402/videos>

Find us on YouTube & subscribe to our channel!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6ilxQOMqB-OEJ2SorcbQHA>

May 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				Boy Scouts every Thursday 7pm		1
2 Orthodox Easter	3	4	5	6 National Day of Prayer Town Gazebo Noon	7	8
9 OUTDOOR WORSHIP!! Finance 9am Missions 9am	10	11	12	13 Ascension Day Stewardship 8pm	14 COUNCIL DOCS DUE	15
16 Children's Sunday Mental Health Sunday	17	18	19 COUNCIL 7pm	20	21	22
23 Pentacost Strengthen the Church Offering	24 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	25	26	27	28 NEWSLETTER	29
30	31 Memorial Day					

BIRTHDAYS

1 Nihla Strittmather
3 Matt Hector
5 Jeff Davis
6 Luke Cutcher
7 Gayle Farschman
Tom Stahl
12 Sana Orphan
14 Katy Ruetenik

16 Xavier Flemister
19 Steve Mauer
20 Barb Akers
Julia Clark
24 Ken Lewis
Dan Martin
25 Brian Beckwith
26 Clark Fitzgibbons
28 Ryan McGuinn

ANNIVERSARIES

20 Jane & Danny Dean '72

If your birthday or anniversary is missing or if any changes are needed, please let the office know!

From the Pastor...

On June 19, 1988 at St. Peter's UCC in Carmel, Indiana, I had hands laid upon me with hope, love and the Spirit. My dad prayed the prayer of ordination as I was blessed with family, friends, colleagues, local church members, wider church members, and parishioners from my first call. They were gathered around me with love as hands were laid upon me with the Spirit of God. I could feel the weight and the love. The whole congregation was connected, with the Spirit of God, to bless my ordination. What a wonderful celebration it was!

There are times I remember it like it was yesterday, and there are other times it seems like it was a lifetime ago. I can hear the words of The Rev. Dr. Reuben Sheares preaching from Second Timothy 2:6ff NRSV ⁶ *For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands;* ⁷ *for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.* Reuben was reminding me that I was not alone, that I had been taught, and that I would continue to teach and preach; that at times it would be really hard, and at times it wouldn't be as hard. That there would be times when the church would be ready for growth and hope and there would be other times that I would become frustrated because God was working through me, but the ears and eyes of those I was ministering with were not opened yet. I was to continue to push on, to not have a spirit of cowardice, but to listen for what God was helping me to do, calling me to do and be, that I would never be alone.

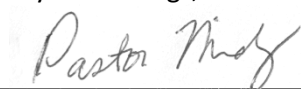
On April 28, 2019, United Church of Christ Congregational Vermilion, in covenant with the Living Water Association, the Heartland Conference and the United Church of Christ, installed me as Pastor/Teacher of this congregation. The Rev. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the UCC, dear friend, and classmate, preached on Isaiah 43:18ff *Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?* John was reminding me, that we are doing a new thing. God will be with us. Transformational change will help us to be witnesses to the love of the Gospel of the Risen Christ. My dad, through the voice of my spouse, led the prayer of installation with the gathered community laying hands upon me. I could feel the weight and the love of the Spirit.

Throughout these 33 years, there have been times that I have loved what I am doing, and there are times where I have been quite frustrated. There are times when the work that I have done has been appreciated and there have been times when I have been looked at, like, what is she doing? There have been times that I have kept my boundaries of personal sabbath, rest, renewal, continuing education really well, and there have been times that I have struggled with that. This last year plus of Covid-19 pandemic have been some of the most challenging and growth that I have encountered. I have studied more science than ever before, and science is really not a love of mine. I have learned technology in ways I never knew possible... (remember I began authorized ministry in 1988 and I had no computer, or cell phone, or even copy machine at my church). I have found new ways to keep people connected and grow in faith. I have not done well at taking care of myself, in those boundaries, because I have been focused on taking care of you. I have stayed positive, and tried to keep everyone safe, and have worked really hard to "Be the church in this time and space". I have never worked harder in my life.

The skies are brightening up. On May 9, we will gather outside with our lawn chairs and blankets, masks and distanced, to worship together for the first time in a very long time. Some of us are still not vaccinated, or are not comfortable being around people yet, and so we will also Facebook Live the service. We will need to follow protocols and continue to keep people safe. Each family group will be invited to distance themselves from other family groups. There will be hand sanitizer, and you will need to wear a mask. We will sing, but you will need to leave your mask on, we will not be sharing hugs or handshakes, but we will be able to see into one another's eyes. It will be awesome!

33 years has flown by. It hardly seems possible that it has been that long. Teaching and preaching, being authentic and challenging, following God's call, all are ways that I am called to be Christ's disciple. "For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline." Thanks be to God for the call that God placed on my life and I answered.

Joyful blessings,





Prayers Lifted

JoAnn Bard
Bryan Davis
Mike Haynes
Devin Jarvis
Gara Jones
Nancy & Lou Konery
Shirley Lehky
Megan
Dave Munger
Gretchen Neiding
Friends and Family of Jack Seith
Carolyn Strittmather
Ginny Wilkes
Leah Woodings-Ruble



Join us in celebrating our first in-person worship in over a year!! The road has been a long, bumpy one but we have been blessed by God, leadership and science in the development and distribution of the vaccine and are now preparing for the next stage.

Sunday, May 9

10:30am

Church Pavilion & Yard

Bring blankets & chairs for seating. Please be sure to keep physical distance between family units and wear a mask! Hand sanitizer will be available. Please do not park in the back of the church as this area will be needed for seating. Diaconate will have folks available to help with seating, a worship service sheet will be available and yes ... there will be singing!! (Masked, of course)



There are 21 special people in our congregation who shared their time and talent this past weekend to brighten and enlighten everyone's day! The Porch Presents focusing on Earth Day were delivered to you by members of the Membership committee, Stewardship Committee and volunteers eager to participate in this ministry of the church.

Mary Ann & Joe Brizzolara and Aayden, Bella & Junior Kruszynski

Judy Brizzolara, Diana Pierson and Sophia Kruszynski

Sana and Tom Orphan

Rich, Lori & Anthony Ozmun

Linda Estle and Annaliese Henkel-Spears

Jim Estle and James Henkel-Spears

Gayle Farschman and Kathie Fitzgibbons

Anne Stock and Judy Klucas

A huge thank you also to the Stewardship team who developed this program to celebrate Earth Day, Mary Ann Brizzolara, Rich Ozmun, and Sana and Tom Orphan. Tom designed **and** produced the tri-fold recycling brochure and envelope & Mary Ann Brizzolara donated the Earth Seed Pods included in your present. And thank you Judy B. for helping put the presents together.

Well done everyone! Heartfelt thanks to you all.

Judy Klucas, Chair

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Matt Greiner is leaving for boot camp on Tuesday, May 4. Matt will have a few minutes free time every evening as well as 3-4 hours on Sundays for divine hours and correspondence. If you would like to share a quick note of encouragement with Matt, please address the envelope as follows:

SR Greiner, Matthew  
Recruit Company Romeo 200  
USCG Training Center  
1 Munro Avenue  
Cape May, NJ 08204-5083

Thanks, Matt, for all you have done for the church. We appreciate you & your dedication to serve in so many different capacities!

### Finance Committee Quarterly Report

Total income for the first quarter 2021 was \$54,373 with \$49,964 of that total coming from our member giving. (92%) Total income for the first quarter 2020 was \$65,034 with \$43,038 coming from member giving. (66%) The biggest difference between 2020 and 2021 is the DNS tuition paid in 2020 during the first quarter, \$16,305. At this time member giving is the only regular source of income for the church.

Total expenses for the first quarter, \$61,340, were operational (staff, building maintenance, insurance etc.) Total expenses for first quarter 2020 were \$73,062. Again, the difference in expenses was DNS teacher salaries of \$13,376. A major purchase this quarter was a security system for the church that includes an alarm system and motion detector covering both the inside and outside of the building. Our system is monitored by Life Safety Technologies, Vermilion.

The General Endowment balance on March 31st is \$703,060 up \$32,000 from the December 31, 2020 balance of \$671,056. The Sunset Shores Outreach Fund balance on March 31, 2021 is \$569,912. The Gift committee has recommended to the Finance committee that the annual income received from the Dawn Full Trust last December (\$14,124) be divided 50% for landscaping the church and 50% into the General Endowment for operating expenses.

The finance committee is currently working on developing a cash handling policy for the church. We are also working on developing a computer program that will improve the communication between the Finance Secretary and the Treasurer.

As always questions regarding church finances can be addressed to any member of the Finance committee. Monthly reports are on the bulletin board across from the church office,

#### Finance committee

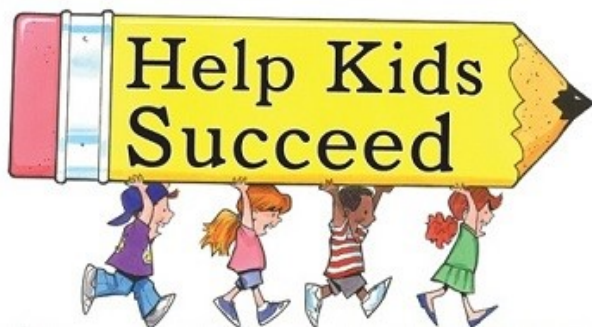
Judy Klucas, Chair

Tim Fenton

Peter Hart

Judy Kernell

Anne Stock



DNS is now accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year. Please call the church office to have one mailed to you. We are looking forward to a great year ahead!

Morgen Baker  
DNS Director  
440-308-6403



SUNSET SHORES OUTREACH FUND  
A NEW CHANCE FOR CONNECTION

The SSOF Grant Application requires a sponsor from our church. Some individuals applying for a large or small grant may not be connected to someone in our church. Recently, it was mentioned to me that some individuals would not be comfortable sponsoring someone they did not know. I can certainly understand that but it got me to thinking. What a wonderful way for us to get to know someone and spread God's Love. With a phone conversation, emailing or an in-person meeting, a sponsor could get to understand a project or a need of those applying for grants. So, I am compiling a list of those willing to sponsor others in need. You would always be called and apprised of the situation before being asked to sponsor a grant. You would never be responsible for verifying need. If you would be willing to sponsor someone, please call me at 4190565-7256 or email me at [stockae@gmail.com](mailto:stockae@gmail.com).

Thanks for considering this.  
Anne Stock

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Christian Ed News

Children's Day, the celebration of the end of the Sunday School year, will be on Sunday, May 16th. It will look a little different again this year due to COVID, but we will be able to gather together in person with a worship service in the church parking lot. The children will be helping out during worship as readers and talking about what being a hero means to them. Members of the congregation will also be encouraged to talk about being a hero (so start thinking about it now!). Unfortunately, we will not be able to gather for a luncheon as we typically do on Children's Day.

This Sunday School year we have been learning about heroes of the Bible. What is a hero? You may think that a hero is someone who wears a cape. Actually, heroes are all around us. Being a hero is about connecting with others, some of whom we never meet. It is about placing the safety, health, welfare and protection of others first and foremost. Heroes come in many ages, shapes, and sizes. Many of our heroes are everyday people like you and me.

From April 11th through May 2nd, our Faith Formation lessons have come from Heifer International's Faith Program "A Kid Can Change the World." These lessons have helped the children to learn how each one of us can be a hero and help others in different parts of the world, as well as in our own community. A Kid Can Change the World features four weeks of colorful, age-appropriate resources that help you to Pass on the Gift of generosity and compassion. It teaches about the importance of generous giving while exploring how Heifer helps end hunger and poverty. Heifer International helps families around the world by giving gifts of animals and training.

As we learned about Heifer International in the faith formation lessons, the children were asked to determine if there was a certain story or person that stuck out to them. How can they be a hero and help them? One way to help is by telling others about Heifer. You can also make a donation — even small amounts can do big things! On Children's Day, May 16th, we will have a collection for Heifer International. We can put Jesus' charge to Love Your Neighbor in action.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as the Director of Christian Education on May 17th. I have truly enjoyed being involved in the faith formation of the children of our church for the past 13 years. I have been blessed with a wonderful Christian Education Committee to work with. A great big thank you to Connie Greiner, Lori Ozmun, Krista Peters, Cathy Tucker and Becky Wade for all of their help! Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Christian Education Director for so many years. It has been a blessing!



The Roundabout Way *Where Is The Church Going?*

NAYIRI KARJIAN, GENERAL MINISTER, LIVING WATER ASSOCIATION, OHIO NORTHEAST, UCC • APRIL 22, 2021

According to my GPS there are different routes to every destination. One can choose the shortest distance, or mostly highways, or scenic routes. Usually my GPS is set on "mostly Highways" but sometimes, feeling adventurous, I choose the shortest distance. That is when my GPS takes me off the highway then back on, off again only to get me back on again. The route may be the shortest distance but it is not the most direct or most practical.

I think of the Israelites and their journey through the wilderness when God's GPS took them the "roundabout way."

After years of exile, following the ten plagues, all the issues between Moses and Pharaoh, "God does not lead them by way of land, even though it was nearer. God leads them the roundabout way of the wilderness!" The people get stranded in the dessert for forty years while there was an easier and a more direct, nonstop route to their destination, the Promised Land. That is God's GPS for you.

This roundabout way may not make sense to us but it seems it makes sense to God. Our churches have been on a roundabout way for the last many years. We cannot deny that the Christian faith today is living through a reformation. We are holding rummage sales, as Phyllis Tickle writes in her book, *the Great Emergence*, suggesting that the Church goes through a "rummage sale" turnover, a revolution, every 500 years, discarding what was in order to birth what is, and transforming what was to make it relevant for the day.

For the last many years, we have tired our best to keep

our churches thriving and our faith relevant with no avail. Many of us have tried strategic planning, different music styles, variety styles in preaching, creative liturgy, accessibility and welcoming all, etc... but we have struggled. None have made our congregations thrive and grow as we wished and imagined.

It is time to accept that God is taking us a roundabout way, that there is not one clear answer to church growth or to what the future holds for our churches. Hence, my invitation to us a few months ago to – *Explore, Experiment, Excite*. There is no one way, right way, or one answer. It seems we have to figure it out as we go. So it is time to accept this roundabout way, and explore, imagine, innovate, experiment, be creative for adaptive transformation.

I urge you, pastors and lay leaders, all of you who are invested in the present and future of your churches to attend and participate in **the Spring Vitality Festival this Saturday, April 24, 9 am - 11:30 pm via zoom**. Come, to discuss what the future may hold for your church, to ponder what the purpose of your church is and what God is calling your church to become. If your church is struggling, come to discover what the options and alternatives are for your church. Come, hear from your sibling churches and be part of this roundabout journey. The journey will feel lighter as we share its burdens.

God is taking the Church somewhere in a roundabout way. We don't know the destination but we trust the One who holds the GPS and the journey.

See you on Saturday!



Reset for Renewal

Part of the Strengthen the Church Offering supports youth and young adult ministry. 2020 scabbled many plans for such ministries, including the delay of the much-appreciated National Youth Event. Youth and Young Adult Ministers wondered how to effectively reach out during the pandemic and sought peers'support.

In part supported by Strengthen the Church funds, the Rev. Trayce Potter organized a "Reset for Renewal" event for people working with youth and young adults. "Reset for Renewal" was a virtual gathering to foster relationships that provided space for leaders to reclaim their resilience and ministerial gifts and reconnect with young people's pulse amid today's world. Throughout three days, participants had the opportunity to meet and gather with like-minded individuals who are doing youth ministry in various contexts within the United Church of Christ and beyond. A diverse group of keynote speakers brought thoughtful and timely messages to help participants as leaders called to disciple young people in difficult times.

"Reset for Renewal" occurred during this unique time of a global pandemic, the uprising of white supremacy, a chaotic election season, and a general dis-ease across the country. Participants openly wept as they processed the weight of their calls and position, shared the challenges in their personal lives, and looked forward to a time when life returned to a routine that allowed face to face interaction with the youth in their lives.

A few quotes highlight the joy and experiences shared.

***"Best conference EVER! Genuine and so full of the Holy Spirit Thank you all!"
- Dorine DeCarli***

"It's been such a blessing to be with everyone. Just what I needed, right when I needed it <3" - Kim Looney

"This was what so many in our churches and other ministry settings were desperately in need of during this extraordinary time." - Lisa Hart

**Gifts to the Strengthen the Church Offering
make meaningful events like **Reset for Renewal**
possible.**

Mental Health Awareness Month (MHAM) began in the United States in 1949, started by Mental Health America (now known as National Alliance on Mental Illness or NAMI). Each year in mid-March, a toolkit of materials to guide preparation for outreach activities is released by NAMI and is centered around a different theme each year.

In 2020, NAMI began the theme of You Are Not Alone, chosen to spread a message of unity when physical distancing made it difficult to feel connected. The theme became a rallying cry for the mental health community to come together and show that no one is ever really alone. This theme has carried into 2021 and has been expanded to focus on the healing value of connections however they occur and to acknowledge that it's okay to not be okay. You may have seen PSAs on Facebook, tv, or print ads or heard them within sports or entertainment broadcasts.

The main purpose of MHAM is to educate the public about mental illnesses such as body image distortion, depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder as well as the realities of living with these conditions. Mental Health Awareness Month also informs of strategies for attaining mental health and wellness. A very important aim is to draw attention to suicide, which is a leading cause of death in teens and young adults and has more recently become a rapid-growing problem for pre-teens and children. Additionally, Mental Health Awareness Month strives to reduce the stigma that surrounds mental illnesses.

This last goal has been greatly aided by individuals like Kevin Love of the Cleveland Cavaliers coming forward with their own personal stories. KLove has not only spoken out about his battle with anxiety and depression but has created a foundation, The Kevin Love Fund, which is part of his commitment to normalizing the conversation about mental health. The Fund provides the tools needed to achieve both emotional and physical well-being.

As stated on NAMI's website: Together, we can realize our shared vision of a nation where anyone affected by mental illness can get the appropriate support and quality of care to live healthy, fulfilling lives - a nation where **no one feels alone** in their struggle. For a PDF filled with information as well as ways you can get involved, please click [HERE](#)

Two excellent resources on mental health are [NAMI](#) and [Children's Mental Health Network](#).

YOU ARE LOVED

If you or someone you love is having thoughts of suicide, emotional support is available 24/7.

Call: 1-800-273-8255

Text: HOME to 741741





No matter who you are
Or where you are on life's journey
You are always welcome here.
As we journey together we discover...
Love is the key!
Love of neighbor, children, and creation.

United Church of Christ Congregational

990 State Street
Vermilion, OH 44089



United Church of Christ
MENTAL HEALTH™
NETWORK

<https://www.mhn-ucc.org/>