

THE VISITOR

First United Church of Christ

248 Harding Way West

Galion, OH 44838

419-468-4380



*"United in Christ's Joy we
welcome, love and serve all"*

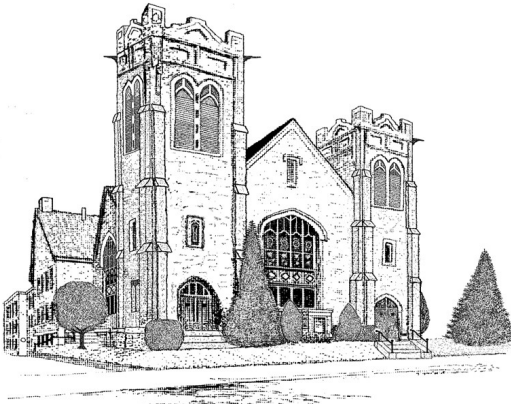
APRIL 2023

Volume 40 No. 4

April 2023

Rev. Bill Meyer

Intentional Interim Pastor



SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday School

9:00 a.m.

Worship Service

10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours

Monday—Thursday 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday 9:00am-12:00pm

419-468-4380 office@uccgalion.org

Your Congregational Strengths

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

During Lent and now during Holy Week, it is certainly appropriate to be doing searching self-appraisals of our lives and our congregation. It is appropriate to really seek to know -- through prayer and interacting with God during this season -- our sins and failings.

It is appropriate to seek God's vision -- to really see ourselves and our situations clearly.

It is appropriate to really seek to hear Jesus' voice, so we can really follow him and then do his work in our communities and in our lives.

As the hymn "Cleanse Me" (No. 657 in our hymnal) prays:

"Search me, O God, and know my heart today. Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be some wicked way in me. Cleanse me from every sin and set me free."

Nevertheless, as we do this, we can sometimes lose sight of the personal strengths and congregational strengths that God has also given us through Jesus Christ.

So even as we do searching congregational self-appraisals during our pastoral search process, I thought it would be helpful for me to name some of the congregational strengths that I have observed as your intentional interim pastor.

If we lose sight of our strengths, dealing with our sins and flaws can be overwhelming.

What has impressed me the most about First United Church of Christ of Galion is that you have a critical mass in leadership that is unusually responsive to the direction and lead of the Holy Spirit.

This is evidenced by the work of the Discernment Team, its affirmation by Consistory and then by the congregation at the annual meeting.

This sort of Holy-Spirited work is very, very fragile. It is very easy to subvert.

Even though there were some misgivings about this whole discernment process, it turned out to be very, very productive. God clearly showed up as the Discernment Team worked, prayed, studied and discussed things for half a year.

In my pastoral experience, I would rate this congregation as probably the No. 1 congregation I have served for its responsiveness to the direction and lead of the Holy Spirit. If not No. 1, it is certainly in a pretty close tie for the top spot. And many congregations lack this strength.

Another significant strength that you and I have discovered over the last year is that you really have the ability -- in group settings -- to collectively discuss and process difficult topics in civil and productive ways.

This is evidenced by the discussions about the difficult topics of race and how Christians should respond to racism that took place after our Lenten Love Feast with Communion several weeks ago. In responding to questions posed by the Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan Jr., each of our table groups had productive and surprisingly similar things to say. And participants in these discussions often began with quite divergent cultural perspectives.

(But I have witnessed similar discussions in other congregations go very badly astray.)

This strength of yours – the ability and potential in group settings to process difficult topics in a civil way – was also in evidence during most of our cottage meetings a year ago.

However, great congregational or individual strengths are often balanced by significant weaknesses. (We can see this with the publicly expressed courage but then private betrayals by Peter and the other Disciples discussed in Luke 22.)

Rather than despair about our weaknesses and sins -- perhaps even saying “There’s no hope” – I believe the solution is prayer.

Let’s prayerfully rejoice and praise God for God-given strengths. But then, especially during this season, let’s also faithfully entrust our weaknesses to God in prayer.

As we learn in I John 5: 14-15 (NIV):

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.”

May it be so for all of us collectively, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Fraternally, Bill Meyer



We are saddened to hear that Dale Miller passed away on Monday, March 27, at the age of 90. More information can be found at <https://www.masfh.com/obituary/>

Please also keep in your prayers:

Larry Ness has been recuperating at home.

Sandy Powell is also recuperating at home following her shoulder surgery.

Please pray for the family of Dorothy Wiggins. Her brother Dick Eusey passed away March 13 at the age of 89.

Please notify Rev. Meyer or the Church Office if you are aware of any pastoral care needs.

Recap of the Consistory meeting. Held Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 7:00 pm

In attendance were: Sue Bloom, Dan Brown, Dan Eichhorn, Judy Eichhorn, Sandy Keller, Sandy Kennedy, Shelly Kurtzman, Todd Rudolph, Bill Shifley, Janet Snyder, Doug Stone, and Brian Treisch. In Pastor's absence, Brian called the meeting to order, leading the group in prayer.

Elder's report – Doug Stone reported that the Elders met on Monday, March 13, 2023, with Reverend Meyer regarding preparing our Church for the new minister.

Deacon's report – Coverage for the Easter season was discussed and a monthly schedule of coverage was created. Nursery coverage discussed now that a family with young children are attending.

Trustees' report – Basketball hoop for parking lot still under consideration. Children's toilet and the urinal in the downstairs men's bathroom are not working due to the hard rain. A brief recap was given of other building projects such as painting, finishing and water seeping in from the kitchen door during the heavy rains.

Mission Committee – Blanket sales and Souper-Bowl fund raisers were well supported. Easter flowers are now available to be ordered until Friday, March 31. April's mission is the assembly of cleaning buckets and supplies for those in disaster areas. May's mission fundraiser will be the sale of geraniums. This committee meets quarterly. Next meeting is Tuesday, May 30 at 7:00pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

Finance Committee – Recap of endowment funds being charged for church usage. Error made, and subsequently corrected, that the funds actually were taken from the Capital fund. Two other transfers will be going to the Endowment Fund and are pending the final steps to complete the transfers.

Pastor's report – Pastor was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

New Business:

Constitution and Policy manuals were passed out to all Consistory members advising Consistory members to review.

(Continued next page)

36 EASTER BIBLE VERSES

John 3:16	Luke 24:2-3
Romans 10:9	Matthew 28:5-6
Revelation 1:17-18	Mark 15:29-32
John 14:6	Romans 8:11
1 Thessalonians 4:14	Luke 24:6-7
John 12:23-25	Ephesians 1:20
Mark 16:5-7	Philippians 3:10-11
Luke 23:44-47	Matthew 20:17-19
John 19:29-30	Acts 4:33
2 Corinthians 5:17	John 11:25-26
Mark 15:46-47	1 Peter 1:3
Mark 16:1-4	Philippians 2:8
Mark 8:31	1 Corinthians 6:14
Colossians 1:13-14	Romans 6:9
John 20:17-18	Romans 8:34
Mark 15:32	Romans 6:8-11
Romans 6:5-6	Acts 3:15
Luke 9:23	1 Corinthians 1:18
Hebrews 12:2	Hebrews 12:2
	1 Corinthians 15:3-4

THE GRACEFUL CHAPTER

March Consistory recap (continued)

Farmers Market – Presbyterian Church has requested use of our back parking lot for the Farmers Market each Saturday June 3 – Sept 30.

There will be no charge to them, presented as a ministry of faith.

Consistory was reminded that Rev. Meyer's contract comes to an end on June 30, 2023. The NWOA (North West OH Association) has been contacted about our church's options.

Search Committee status – They have completed the process of submitting to the NWOA a 24-page document as the step in the process. Next consistory meeting will be held Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Janet Snyder.
(Edited for brevity)

VSG Business:

Barb, reporting on missing members, shared that two are still recovering from surgeries and another, now over COVID, is doing tax preparation. She also shared that Dorothy, though no longer attending, is still supporting the volunteers. Also, Alissa did not yet have the Wish List and had to attend another meeting.

A thank you letter was received from Gloria Hurwitz, VP of Advancement for UC Homes, for the Christmas stockings received.

It was agreed to give a scholarship of \$500 to an employee. The determination of the employee will be made in the next two months.

The Gift Cart has been available at Fairhaven on three Tuesdays thus far this year (Jan. 10th, Feb 14th, and Mar. 14th). What is being offered is a mixture of items that used to be in the Gift Shop and some additional snack items. Gross donations received thus far are \$70, \$68, and \$50 respectively. There is not an overwhelming turnout of residents, but it must be remembered that the number of residents is much less than before the Gift Shop was closed. However, those residents who turn out each month seem to be very pleased with the cart. The next Gift Cart will be Tuesday, April 11th.

Staff:

Jean talked about part of the building being gone. The outside wall was repaired and preparations were made for fire doors on each floor. Clean up should be done by the end of March. There are no future plans for re-building at this time.

Pastor Darla announced that there would be an art show the end of April. Becky spoke about the success of the Gift Cart. She also spoke to the need of getting new volunteers.

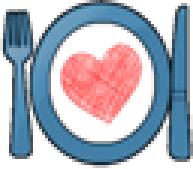
The next meeting will be Monday, April 17th.

Submitted by Jean Pratt

*Do you have a milestone you would like to share
with the congregation? Please send it to
office@uccgalion.org or call the Church Office.*

Community Outreach Meal

Last month we served 72 lasagna meals to the community. April's Fellowship and Outreach Meal will be held on Thursday, April 13, 2023. We can use the help of our bakers to provide a dessert of 2 dozen cookies. If you can help, please sign the sheet outside the office or call and let Jeanine know.



Disaster Response Kits

No one can predict when a natural disaster will happen, but with your help we can help the Church World Service disaster response team be one step closer to helping when there is a need.

During the month of April, we will be filling buckets with cleaning supplies and bags with personal care necessities.

The Mission Committee has a goal to provide 24 personal care kits and fill 24 buckets with cleaning supplies. Each bucket contains approximately \$75 of cleaning supplies. We are seeking cash donations to purchase the specific cleaning supplies to fill each bucket. There are gallon bags containing what is needed to fill a personal care kit available at the deacon's bench along with envelopes for contributions for the clean-up buckets.



Once you have filled your health kit, please leave it in the Heritage Room. On April 29th the disaster response kits will be delivered to the Northwest Ohio Association spring meeting held



April Mac & Cheese, Noodles, Cake Mix, Frosting

Please feel free to vary from the above list. Cookies, Kool-Aid, chips, paper products, detergents, cleaning supplies, toothpaste, toothbrushes, diapers, baby products, shampoos, conditioners, sanitary supplies, and deodorant are always helpful.

Thank you for your support!



Sunday, April 2 Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 6 Maundy Thursday Service Time: 7:00pm
Friday, April 7 Good Friday service held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 291 N. Union St. Galion.
Sat., April 8 Easter Vigil service offered at St. John's Lutheran Church, Leesville. 7:00pm
Sunday, April 9 Easter Sunday
Tuesday, April 11 Consistory meets 7:00pm
Thursday, April 13 April Community Meal 5:00pm
Finance Committee TBA

*Monday, April 17.
Special Genesis Friends 7:00pm!*

Our guest speaker is Sue Nigh. She will be taking about her book "Miracles." We will also be packing college packages afterward.



If you would love to spend 45 to 60 minutes with young, beautiful children, here is your opportunity!

We are in need of nursery attendants. You could serve once a month, once every third month, twice a month, the opportunities are endless.

And the pay is out of this world! Please let one of the deacons or the church office know if you are interested in serving. (via Sandy Kennedy)



April Birthdays!

- April 1** Alan Forry
- 3 Danielle Court
Addison Roesch
- 4 Jean Meck
Elin Swartzbaugh
- 6 Evan Swartzbaugh
- 7 Gary Reynolds
- 8 Jay Arbaugh
- 11 Barbara Perkins
- 12 Gary Neal
Jason Brown
Matt Harmon
- 13 Adair Pittman
- 14 Shawn Kurtzman
-
- 16 Dan Worthington
- 18 Denny Elmore
- 21 Tyler Koschnick
- 22 Jordan Cole
- 23 Angela Brocwell
-
- 24 Sandy Kennedy
- 29 Brian Treisch
Nancy Green
Jill Green

Happy Anniversary

- April 1** Dennis & Carla Russell
9 Robert Reid & Karen Meyers
16 Jeffrey & Shelly Kurtzman
21 Dennis & Marilyn Elmore
29 Nick & Kaylee Wise

UNITED CHURCH HOMES

Weren't the flowers beautiful? Thank you to all that beautified our sanctuary on Easter Sunday by purchasing a flower.



Any profit from the sale of the flowers and donations received will go to helping the folks that reside in one of the United Church Homes. (A list of individuals honored or given in memory of will appear in the May Visitor.)



A Note of Thanks...

Dear First Church friends, I want to thank you for all your thoughts, prayers, phone calls, and cards since my fall. Marcy Miller.

Ice Cream Social

Coming to a parking lot near you,
a BIG red truck!

Save the date of Wednesday, July 26th



We wish Alan & Jerri Mularski the very best as they have now officially moved to their new home in Texas! They will be missed!



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

248 Harding Way W.

Galion, OH 44833

Church E-mail: office@uccgalion.org

Rev. Meyer: pastor@uccgalion.org

Phone: 419-468-4380 www.uccgalion.org

- Rev. Bill Meyer Minister
- Jeanine Girard Office Secretary
- Mary Ann Stone Financial Secretary
- Stephanie Sikora.....Sr. & Bell Choir Director
- Jennifer Arbaugh Organist
- Jessica Hammond..... Organist
- Martha See.....Kitchen Custodian



Celebrating 175 years!!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
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