

Parish Visitor

Membership Edition
Volume LVI Issue 3



First Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Ecumenical Congregation in the Congregational Tradition
200 NORTH MAIN STREET • MOUNT VERNON, OHIO • 43050



INTERIM PASTOR Rev. Dr. Jay Marshall Groat OFFICE: 740-393-1736 www.mvucc.org

MARCH 2024



Palm Sunday
March 24
9:30 am

Maundy
Thursday
March 28
7:00 pm

Easter Sunday
March 31
9:30 am

CONTACT US



740-393-1736



office@mvucc.org



HOURS

Monday - Thursday

9:00 am to 12:00 noon,
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Friday

9:00 AM to 12:00 noon

FROM PASTOR JAY



Where Is He?

In the Gospel of John, chapter 20, early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, grief-stricken Mary Magdalene goes to visit Jesus' tomb. She is stunned to discover the stone door rolled away. She is alone. Being alone in grief is, well, hard.

She runs. She doesn't walk – she runs - to tell Peter and another disciple, Jesus' body is gone and – “we don't know where they have put him.” Where is he?

The two disciples run – they didn't walk – to the tomb. Ultimately they both end up in the tomb and see Jesus' empty burial clothes. Then they simply return to where they were hiding from the authorities who had ordered Jesus' death.

Mary returns to the tomb, does not enter, bends over to look in, and weeps. Being alone in grief is, well, hard. Where is he?

Then, everything changed. Grief often comes over us, out of nowhere, and knocks us to the ground, like a 30-foot wave at the beach. Somehow, some way, we get back up again, an inch at a time, and live in between the waves.

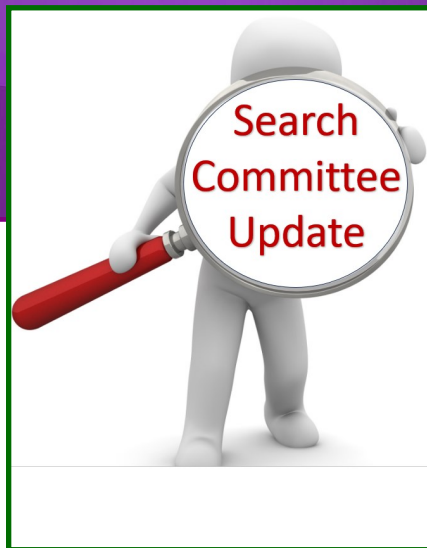
Where the two disciples saw burial clothes Mary sees two angels. The angels ask her why she is crying. Don't they know? What do they know that we don't?

Mary tells them why she is weeping. She turns around and sees Jesus but she doesn't recognize him through the darkness of the morning and her tears. Being alone in grief is, well, hard. It can effect your eyesight.

Eventually Jesus calls her by name – “Mary” – and she recognizes him.

It's the Easter moment. Where is he? Is our life calling us by name? Does the living spirit of Christ come to us disguised as our life?

Blessings,
Pastor Jay



The Search Committee has completed the Church Profile and sent it to the Association office. The Profile, as completed, turned out to be 44 pages long and full of information about our church and the surrounding community. We hope that it will attract the interest of multiple ministerial candidates.

As of this writing, we have confirmation that our contact at the Association has received the Profile, but we have not heard whether it has been validated and posted or whether we need to make some, hopefully minor, changes.

But for all practical purposes, our #1 task is done. We are very much looking forward to our next task – receiving Ministerial Profiles and beginning to read through them to find the best match for our church. We'll keep you posted. Please keep us in your prayers.

Ann L., Search Committee Chair

Homebound and Prayer List

The Easter Season is upon us! We have lots going on at Church and in our personal lives. It's also Easter for the six homebound members who can't make it to church. Or to family dinners. Or enjoy some pretty Easter flowers. Here is a wonderful opportunity for you to be a blessing to these folks by calling them, or asking if you can stop by for a visit. As Jesus said, *"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my people, you did it to me."* - Matthew 25:40



**FOR YOUR CHURCH
FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

*"To that end, keep alert and
always persevere in
supplication for all the saints."*

- Ephesians 6:18b

By the way, *WE* are the saints!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Palm Sunday Service	March 24 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Maundy Thursday Service	March 28 7:00 pm	Sanctuary <i>(Children are welcome to attend but no nursery is available.)</i>
Easter Service	March 31 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Regular Worship Service	Sundays 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Social Time	Sundays 10:30 am	Social Hall
Sunday School	Sundays 11:00 am	Gather in Social Hall
Adult Forum		Chapel
Health, Healing and Fitness Ministry	Saturdays 11:00 am	Sanctuary
Health, Healing and Fitness, Karate	Thursdays 6:00 pm	Chapel

March 10: Daylight Savings begins

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 21: National Renewable Energy Day

March 29: Good Friday

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.

Matthew 5:14-15 (The Message)

"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine...Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine..."

If Jesus had a playlist of music, surely this familiar hymn would be among the Top Five.

Jesus teaches that faith calls for action. Sharing our light, as the diverse and colorful expression of God's love here on earth, leads to making blankets, staffing food pantries, cooking meals, building houses and schools, signing petitions for worthy causes, and protesting injustices. A simple song with a simple message—our light is on a light stand, for all to see—shine and share. On any given day, light is shining because we are there through our gifts to OGHS.

Your contributions make a difference.
Your dollars count. Give generously.

Share the light.

Special Offering
Sunday March 10



SHARE THE LIGHT

One Great
HOUR
OF SHARING

75
YEARS



ucc.org/oghs

SPRING CLEANING



At our February Church Council meeting, it was agreed that there were a number of rooms in the church that needed to be cleared out so that a prospective pastoral candidate would find classrooms, for example, that looked inviting as classrooms and not as former classrooms that were now used as junk storage rooms.

We set Easter as a target deadline for the project. Things are coming along very well. We are especially grateful to Bryan and Quinn Bartsch from our church who helped the Mount Vernon Players move all of our set, props, costumes, etc. from our Community Family Players productions of *A Christmas Carol* to the Players' storage area on the square. We donated the items to the Players who were very glad to have them. We also donated some items to MTV Arts.

Both organizations offered to share with us (and with each other) if we decided to do productions in the future.



HISTORY

On January 10, at the Mount Vernon Library, Ron M. gave a talk about early Knox County history. Entitled *Pioneer Family Story*, Ron's talk was the story of his family here in Ohio, and their role in the history of the time.

The event was well-attended, with 25-30 attendees—several from our church. Ron's talk earned him an invitation for an encore presentation some time in June of this year. If you missed January's talk, plan to go to the June event. (Details to follow.)

Congratulations to Ron!

TEMPLED HILLS



Summer Camp 2024

As you may have heard, the association has made the difficult decision to sell Templed Hills. If you missed the letter, it can be found here: <https://heartlanducc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Pastoral-Letter-FAQ-Templd-Hills-11.27.2023-Updated.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2h23SOXfjaP1nPG->

Summer camps will continue for this summer and for summers to come.

Registration for Summer 2024 is open and can be accessed here: <https://heartlanducc.org/templd-hills/>.

FCUCC offers partial reimbursement for congregants and there are camperships available through the association.

Camps for interests in the arts to sports, intentional LGBTQ affirming, and adult-only to grandparent/grandchild camps.

Repair Cafe

IT'S FREE!!!

Do you need something repaired??

Bring any item you need repaired that would usually get thrown away and volunteers will give it their best shot toward getting it working again at **NO CHARGE!**



wooden items



electrical items



toys



computer repairs

Just about anything!!



bike repairs

Give your broken things a new life!
Too many things get thrown out when they can easily be repaired. Feel good about helping the Earth!!

2024 Dates

- February 17th
- May 18th
- August 17th
- November 16th

From 1 to 4:00 on a Saturday afternoon...

St. Paul's Church hall basement

100 E. High Street
Mt. Vernon



parking all around building and on the street

Repair Cafe' of Knox County just keeps on going, eh?

I'm very happy and proud of the good men and women who volunteered their time to keep material things out of the land-fill!

Hats off to you!

People who brought things to repair: 14

Number of items brought for repair: 21

Items brought in for repair:

- Lamp, wall lamp, drying rack, wooden chair, wooden chair, bicycle, clock radio, dehumidifier, wooden towel bar, TV, Oreck sweeper, microwave, space heater large, space heater Medium, space heater small, vaporizer, generator, metal detector, Shredder, computer tower



Are you handy with tools? Mechanically inclined? If you'd like to put those skills to work in the community, on May 18, give Mark a call at 740 291-9125.

on the lighter side...



**TO MAKE A
LONG STORY
SHORT, I
BECAME AN
EDITOR.**



“Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a raindance.” - Anonymous