

Parish Visitor

Web Edition

Volume LVI Issue #10



First Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

An Ecumenical Congregation in the Congregational Tradition

200 NORTH MAIN STREET • MOUNT VERNON, OHIO • 43050



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www.mvucc.org

IT'S OCTOBER ALREADY!



OCTOBER 9
METEOR
SHOWER

UNITED
NATIONS DAY



October 24

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



Get Busy Living

The Old Testament book Ecclesiastes is considered part of the Wisdom Literature of the Bible. The author is unknown and it was written sometime between 450 BCE – 180 BCE. Any way you cut it, a long, long time ago.

And just yesterday – YESTERDAY – not such a long time ago – a young man of thirty years of age expressed inspiration at the words of Ecclesiastes 3.

You know about Ecclesiastes 3 – it is the famous “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven – a time to be born, and a time to die,” etc.

The setting for this young man’s hearing of Ecclesiastes 3 was his beloved mother’s funeral service. Can there be a more personal and vulnerable setting? The person who read the words of Ecclesiastes 3 was me. I always read Ecclesiastes 3 at funerals. Don’t tell anyone but I don’t just read it for the gathered grieving – I read it for me too.

Wisdom literature indeed – Ecclesiastes 3 crosses my mind every day. Timing in life is everything. It also makes me think of the line the protagonist Andy Dufresne speaks in the film *Shawshank Redemption*. The chips are down and it looks like Andy is never going to get out of prison for crimes he did not commit. He says to his friend Red – “*Get busy living—or get busy dying.*”

Andy gets busy living and busts out of the unjust life he had been thrown into.

The day my parents dropped me off at Mount Union College to begin my freshman year I fought back the tears as my mother softly cried openly. As the saying goes, to this day I can take you to the spot on campus where this happened. I know now I wasn’t totally ready emotionally to leave home but I went anyway.

Mom cried, I fought the tears, and my dad smiled. His last words to me as they turned to walk back to their car were – “work hard, and play hard.”

Wisdom – a time to work hard, a time to play hard, a time to be born, and a time to get busy living.

Blessings—Pastor Jay



Ohio Underground Railroad Whistle-Stop Poetry Tour

The Ohio Underground Railroad Whistle-Stop Poetry Tour is making its way to our church and all are welcome.

When: October 5, 2024 at 1:30 pm

Where: First Congregational United Church of Christ, 200 N Main Street., Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

Cost: Free

Agenda:

1:30-3:30: History of First Congregational United Church of Christ in relation to the anti-slavery movement, presented by Jené S. Musical performance from the FCUCC Church Choir, led by Christa B. Poetry Readings by Mark S., Jordan, Karen S., Chiquita M.-L.

3:30: Refreshments

4:00-5:00: Writing Workshop, led by Rikki S.

For information about the Ohio Underground Railroad Whistle-Stop Poetry Tour, go to:

<https://www.ohiopoetryassn.org/underground-railroad-poetry-tour>

Neighbors in Need

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 6, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The majority of the offering is used by the UCC's Love of Church Unit to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through the national Love of Church Unit, <https://tinyurl.com/2bfytatb>, you can find resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues.

Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), the Love of Church Unit continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

It's Coming!



The Finance Committee is laying plans for the coming Stewardship/Pledge campaign. This past spring we reviewed the choices of campaigns we could utilize, and decided we should defer changes in the program until we welcomed our next chosen minister.

We will be mailing pledge cards and Time and Talent forms to each member's home in October. We hope to have Stewardship moments on the three Sundays leading up to the Stewardship Sunday on November 10, 2024. Completed forms can be dropped into the designated box in the Sanctuary during November or can be mailed to the church office.

The membership of the church has been very supportive in past years, and we are hopeful the trend continues!

Ian W.

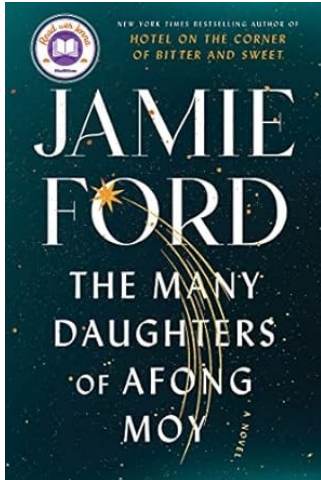
Chair, Finance Committee

A Sister's Passing

Dave P.'s mother, Patricia passed away on September 17. Please pray for Dave, and for Patricia's family.



Book Review



The Many Daughters of Afong Moy: A Novel

by Jamie Ford, Simon & Schuster, Inc. 2022.

Although this is a piece of historical fiction, the story threading the pages of *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy* could someday be real history. It explores the concept of inherited trauma, also known as epigenetics. Is it possible that the trauma of one generation can be suffered by the next generations? Neuroscientists are studying this, and fiction writers are intrigued.

Mr. Ford is descended from a Nevada mining pioneer, Min Chung, who left his family in Hoiping, China, and changed his name to Ford.

The novel, however, is about several women's lives. They are not easy to distinguish in the telling, as there are five of them, and the narration moves back and forth. There is painful motherhood, depression, creativity, supportive and loving men in several generations, and many landmarks in Seattle. There is no obvious conclusion or message, but an interesting glimpse into the experiences of Chinese women whose life events and decisions have shaped their own legacies, and shown us a little of what it is like to cross many enormous borders. It takes courage, and perseverance, and letting go of some of what is old. We also glimpse the comfort of a familiar temple, a Buddhist one, staffed by caring nuns.

Beautiful writing helps us readers feel that we are traveling too, and we are spared the seasickness.

- Kris S.



Mental Health

MENTAL HEALTH JUSTICE FOR ALL

Mental
Health
is a
Universal
Human
Right



"God will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth."
(Isaiah 42:4)

A World with Mental Health Justice for all is God's Dream for Us

This year's Neighbors in Need theme "**Mental Health Justice for All: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right**" highlights our God-given right to mental health.

Everyone is created in God's image, and everybody should receive quality mental health care.

In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health.

A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life's mental health journey.

We believe we all have a God-given right to the following to support mental health:

1. The right to be protected from known harms to mental health; a universal right which applies to the entire population, but especially the vulnerable including children and oppressed peoples.
2. The right to access quality and affordable care when a person is experiencing mental health challenges.
3. The right to freedom and dignity, including the right of choice for mental health care.

Visit www.mhn-ucc.org to learn more about these mental health principles.

The 2024 Neighbors in Need theme

**"Mental Health Justice for All:
Mental Health is a Universal Human Right"**

provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to build a more justice world for all, dismantling the shame and stigma of mental health challenges.

We invite you to be part of God's work of mental health justice, join the WISE movement for mental health in your congregation, and support the Neighbors in Need offering.



October 10th is World Mental Health Day.

For more information visit:

<https://wmhdoofficial.com/>

In a Just World, Mental Health is a Universal Human Right!

Please join us in supporting the

2024 Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering.

Thank You!

Two-thirds of your donations to NIN support advocacy, programming, and grants. One-third of your generous gifts directly support CAIM.

www.ucc.org/nin



on
the
lighter
side...

