

Parish Visitor

Web Edition

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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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*Happy
Easter*



Christ the Lord
is risen today!

*Please join us for our Easter Morning
Service, April 20 at 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



Easter Symbols

Carl Jung used symbol analysis as one of the foundational blocks of Jungian analysis. He wrote extensively on the subject, including how the representation of symbols in dreams has a powerful role in developing an understanding of the message of the unconscious mind.

Jung saw symbols as representatives of archetypes, and archetypes for Jung were collective images of behavior, that are developed from the evolution of the human species. More simply, Jung said – A term or an image is symbolic if it means more than it describes or expresses.

Easter is nigh again this year. After, lo, all these years of ordained ministry, I still love Easter. Easter morn for me still brings a sense of new life, new beginnings, fresh air. I love the smell of Easter lilies in the morning.

There is one particular Easter symbol that carries great meaning for me: lamb. Specifically, the sight, sound and smell of lamb cooking on my outdoor grill.

My family has been grilling lamb for Easter dinner for more than thirty years. I love the sound of it grilling, the smell of it, and especially the taste of it when it is served – we use our own special marinade. And a lot happens in one's life in thirty years. A lot.

But my Jungian take on this symbol is more than the sum of its parts. This is not just Easter lamb – this image means more than it expresses.

When I grill Easter lamb I remember the first Passover in Exodus – the Hebrew people were told to smear the blood of a lamb with no blemish over their doorways so the angel of death would pass over.

I remember what John the Baptist said the first time he saw Jesus in John's gospel (1:29) – Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. I remember the most widely-known Bible passage in the world – the 23rd Psalm – The Lord is my shepherd... I remember the Parable of the Lost Sheep.....

And I remember the archetypes of family, friends and church in the living of the decades I have been grilling lamb on Easter. One of my favorite comedians, Steven Wright, said – “I plan to live forever – so far, so good.”

This is funny – and it is funny because it subtly laughs in the face of death. And if Easter is about anything at all – it is about saying yes to life and no to fear of death.

Easter is nigh. The symbols – sunrise, lilies, birth coming from an egg – beckon to us.

May the power of the rolled-away stone be with you.—Pastor Jay

From Christian Ed.

Recognition Sunday, May 4

Make plans to join us for the May 4 service where we will honor the children and youth in the congregation. If you have a child entering kindergarten, sixth, or ninth grade in the fall or graduating high school this spring, please contact Jennifer (jlnlebold@yahoo.com) by May 20 so they may be included in recognizing these milestones. There will be a small reception following the service to honor the graduates. Card baskets will be available for you to give your congratulations and best wishes. A list of graduates will be published in the May PV.

Sunday School Teacher Search

We continue to search for teachers to lead children's Sunday School. Several congregants have approached the committee with various potential set ups. Christian Education is open to implementing any structure that works. Our main priorities are consistency, safety, and commitment.

One scenario has a children's class taking place during service between the Children's Time and the end of service. This would require two background checked volunteers per Sunday. Ideally, we would have 2-4 volunteers who would make the commitment to being available most Sundays to lead as substitutes are very limited. The nursery would still be staffed during service for children too young for a class. This setup leaves the potential need for child care during Adult Forum for children in elementary school and younger. If you are interested in leading a class with this setup or volunteering to help with child care during Adult Forum, please reach out to the Christian Education Committee.

The other scenario is to have Children's Sunday School at the same time as Adult Forum. This again requires two background checked volunteers per Sunday. This can be a team effort, but consistency is very important and substitutes are quite limited, so a committed core of 2-4 people is ideal. Once again, reach out to a member of the Christian Education Committee if interested.

Christian Education will meet again in April and May to determine if we have the volunteers to offer either setup of classes in the fall.

Background checks are done at your convenience. Forms are available on the rack outside of the office with the instructions on how to complete. You set up an appointment at the sheriff's office at a time that works for you and the church will receive the bill and results. If you work in a profession that requires a background check, you can provide a copy of that check or a copy of the license that requires a background check to the office to keep on file. We are currently in need of more people on the list who can serve as substitutes for nursery workers.

Egg Hunt

Due to the courtyard being closed, the Egg Hunt will take place indoors this year. Following the service, children elementary-age and younger should go to Fellowship Time with their families. Children in sixth grade and older are invited to stay in the sanctuary to gather together to hide eggs. An announcement will be made at Social Time when the hunt is ready to begin.

Graduation Awards

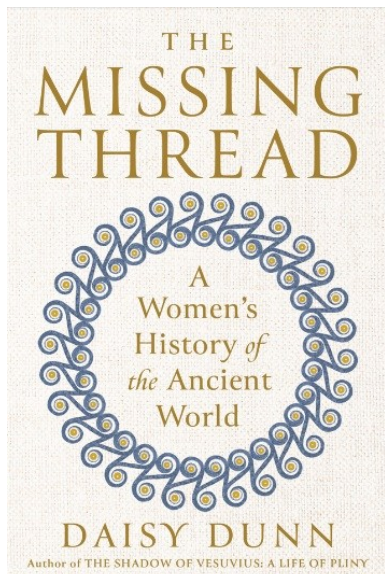
Applications for Graduation Awards are available on the rack outside of the office. Applications are due in the Christian Education mailbox by the end of Social Time on Sunday, April 27. Awards will be given during service on May 4.

Church Camps

Heartland Conference will host camps on campgrounds throughout Ohio and beyond. Camps for Grandparents and Grandchildren, Adult and Women's Retreats, and others are available. More information can be found at heartlanducc.org/storycontinues.

There are camperships offered through the conference and partial registration reimbursement is available to those within our congregation.

Book Review



Daisy Dunn, *The Missing Thread: A Women's History of the Ancient World*. Viking: Random House, copyright 2024 by Daisy Dunn. 2024.

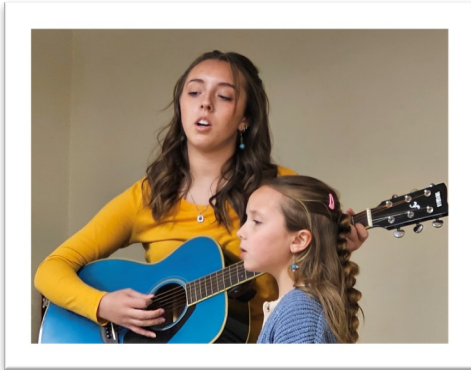
Few readers of history seek out a particular viewpoint, but most written histories were recorded by men, about men. Dunn seeks to challenge this trend by recounting with careful citation, the roles of many women in the conquests, negotiations, successions, and achievements of the “ancient world”—the 3,000 years before about 100 CE (or AD).

She draws on her own knowledge of ancient Greece, Rome, and Persia, and warns us that she writes of the exceptional women who survived childbearing, and who generally had access to education, powerful connections, and family support from maternal or paternal agents. We never doubted that women were present in ancient life, but Dunn’s details change our mental view. Persians took their women to battle with them, armed. Succession wars were fought inside palaces and outside, pitting wives, concubines, mothers, and daughters-in-law against each other. Powerful men were attracted to women from all walks of life, and found places for them in their large households in more than the obvious capacities.

Women were frequently claimed as war booty, often raped, and almost always enslaved when their sides lost in conflict. Although not exactly a tribute to survivors, Dunn’s account does not flinch from the stories of what happened as a result of most armed conflict. For students of particular eras or dynasties this would be an interesting complement, or if you want to catch up on the court gossip of ancient Macedonia. Even as students of the Bible read for good news, we should also read for history. Early Christians lived in these ancient times, and Dunn has illuminated some of my own questions about women in ancient times.

Kris S.

From Mission and Service



The Mission and Service team would like to thank you all for supporting the Mission and Service Committee's use of the Social Hall for the coffeehouse March 26. As you may recall, funds were raised to benefit the Haitian Support Center in Springfield.

The Mission and Service decided that they would add \$400 to whatever was collected at the event. And our community showed up! I've said before that community is a verb, and we definitely 'communitied' last night.

We had about 65 people come to the event (right around 20 are members). A whopping \$1485 was donated! We will be making a total contribution of **\$1885** to the Haitian Support center.



Here's What's Happening

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Regular Worship Service	Sundays 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Palm Sunday Worship Service	Sunday April 13 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Maundy Thursday Service	Thursday April 17 7:00 pm	Sanctuary
Easter Service	Sunday April 20 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Easter Egg Hunt	Sunday April 20 11:00 am	Sanctuary
Social Time	Sundays 10:30 am	Social Hall
Adult Forum	Sundays 11:00 am	Chapel
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Thursdays 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm	Choir Room
Council Meeting	Sunday April 27, 11:50 am	Front Parlor

Other Happenings

April 15
Income Tax Filing Deadline

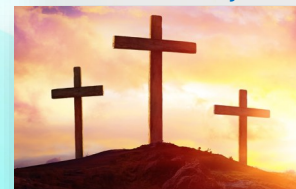


April 16
Emancipation Day



Commemorating the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1862.

April 18
Good Friday





SEARCH COMMITTEE

The saying that no news is good news doesn't apply in this case. I haven't given an update for a few months, because, honestly, how many ways can you say that we're still looking and it's been slim pickings?

In February our contact at the Association office let us know that the supply of new ministerial profiles was slowing down. In our case, that meant going from a slow trickle to a slow drip. She did advise that we consider taking down our posting for a while, then reposting with a new date, because pastors who are looking for churches tend to look at newer postings. We agreed, and used the time to review and revise our Church Profile and to obtain an additional letter of recommendation. By the time you read this, our information will have been reposted.

In our last meeting we also reinforced the idea that we would not settle for a pastor who was just OK. It is a commitment we have made to all of you and need to remind ourselves of frequently. This is a dynamic congregation that deserves a dynamic new pastor. We ask that you continue to pray for that still-nameless pastor that will come to us when the time is right.

I don't always remember to list the other committee members. They are Marilyn C., Tom D., Brad K., Karen K., Darlene K., Kathy S., and Elaine S. Each one brings special insights and abilities to the process. Please thank them for their work.

Ann L.

Search Committee Chair