

*Parish Visitor*

Web Edition

Volume LVIII Issue #3



*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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**March 8th**

Daylight Savings

**March 17th**

St. Patrick's Day

**March 20th**

Spring Equinox

**March 29th**

Palm Sunday

# March Events

**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

# Mission and Service



## First Congregational UCC Winter Coffeehouse Series

This is the second season that Mission and Service has sponsored a series of coffeehouses during the winter months. We have raised funds for a range of local and global causes but more importantly we have provided a gathering space for people in our community who might be seeking opportunities to connect in friendly third spaces where they can meet new people and share their love of music and the spoken word.

A third place is a familiar public spot where you regularly connect with others known and unknown, over a shared interest or activity. I had never heard the term “third place” until just recently/ A neighbor of ours asked if I had ever heard the term, so I did a little research (ie. I googled it). It is not a new thing.

The term was coined by Ray Oldenburg in the early 1990s, as increasing work hours and more heavily siloed communities (think: Suburbs) became the norm. Oldenburg detailed how and why such places have always been at the center of public life, and showed that bars, coffee shops, and general stores (as well as, according to one of his lists, lounges, taverns, doughnut shops, pool halls, bingo halls, lodges, and youth recreation centers) are central to local democracy and community vitality. He makes a case for the importance of informal public gathering places beyond the realms of home and work. In contrast to first places (home) and second places (work), a third place allows an individual to put aside their concerns and simply enjoy the company and conversation of folks around them.

As news looms larger and larger, we all feel a bit smaller every day. But third places can serve to shrink our world to places where we are recognized by others. These community spaces are fundamental supporters of our psychological wellbeing. If you have not had an opportunity to attend the December or February coffee house, mark your calendar for March 29, the last Sunday of the month, from 6:30-8:30 and stop by for a warm beverage, conversation and some good music.

# Christian Life

"We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

-Mother Teresa

# What's Happening

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Regular Worship Service	Sundays 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Social Time	Sundays Following the morning service	Social Hall
Adult Forum	Sundays 11:00 am	Chapel
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Thursdays 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm	Choir Room
Youth Group	Sundays 6:00 pm—7:00 pm	Youth Room
Youth Choir Rehearsal	Sundays 11:00 am to 11:20 am	Youth Choir Room
Baby Shower	Sunday March 15th After the Service	Social Hall
Council Meeting	Sunday March 22nd 11:50 am	Front Parlor



On **March 5th**, the Social Security Administration will lead the nation in a ***National Slam the Scam Day***. Visit [ssa.gov/scam](https://ssa.gov/scam) for more information about protecting yourself from scams.

Report Social Security-related suspicious activity to [oir.ssa.gov/report](https://oir.ssa.gov/report) .

# Wheelchair Use



Yes, we do have a wheelchair for our members and guests to use for themselves, a friend or loved one or visitor. It is stored in the south closet, under the spiral staircase next the marble baptismal, in the front narthex. There are directions for its operation attached to the back of the wheelchair, and while the operator can power it themselves, it is better if at least one person goes with the chair & user to assist with travel throughout the building. When finished, please return it to the south closet and cover it with the plastic sheet, to help keep it clean for the next user. Note: it is O.K. to take the wheelchair outside to pick-up someone, but please do not take it away from church property.

## Using a Wheelchair on Our Elevator

The directions for using the wheelchair on our elevator are attached to the back of the chair and explain how to load the chair properly into the elevator car, and how to make sure the doors of the elevator [both of them] are opened or shut for proper usage. Note: when a wheelchair is being transported in the elevator, there is no room for anyone else to ride along, If you have any questions about either the wheelchair or the use or operation of the elevator, please see or contact

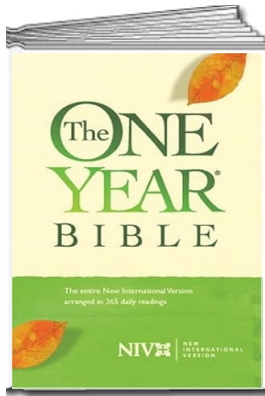
Brad K. - Building Committee.

## on the lighter side ...

**THEY SAID A MASK AND GLOVES  
WERE ENOUGH TO GO TO THE  
GROCERY STORE.**

**THEY LIED!  
EVERYBODY ELSE HAD CLOTHES  
ON!**

# Book Review



The One Year Bible: Arranged in 365 Daily Readings. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., New International Version. Carol Stream, Illinois. 2004.

There is a hole in our grasp of Holy Scriptures, whenever we wish we really did have a command of the central documents of our shared faith journey. It is not a permanent hole, as if we didn't have any way to fill it. *The One Year Bible* is one of the many similar guides to reading the entire Bible, and it happens to be the one I used to propel me through the early COVID pandemic. It offers all the orderly lists that modern Bibles have—alphabetical and canonical—plus suggestions how to use it if you prefer a two-year or three-year or four-year plan.

It is organized by dates of the year, each date offering a reading from the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Psalms, and Proverbs.

By reading the continuous account as our canonical Bibles print them, we gain a sense of the experience and history of the people of Israel and their relationships with God, with each other, and with their neighbors, allies, and enemies. Like all ethnic histories, we learn of the successions of kings, the accomplishments of warriors, and the riches and poverties of war, famine, and prosperity. We can connect the experiences written about in the Old Testament to the lives of Jesus and his followers in the New Testament. And we can savor the poetry and wisdom of the Psalms, the Proverbs, and other books we may not have ever read before.

One suggestion: Keep handy a study Bible, or a Bible reference book, or use the ones in the church library, to help you interpret your reading. Even the best translators cannot anticipate your own mastery of ancient geography, or help you develop the mental maps for navigating Jerusalem. A good reference Bible is an enormous asset for modern readers, as we read not just to say "I read the whole thing," but to figure out what its most important messages are for us in our time.

Another reason to use a reference guide is that the New International Version of the Bible is a contemporary, readable translation, but it was produced by a largely evangelical scholarly community. Its energy was directed toward Christian evangelism, or building new belief and faith communities, rather than toward a more universal understanding of the books of the Bible. This is one of the reasons most UCC churches use the New Revised Standard Version, which is less evangelical.

A third reason is to improve upon the understandings you had in Sunday School to bring them to adult levels. I found to my surprise that there are many characters in the Bible who interest me now more than when I was a kid, and they offer many lessons in spiritual living that I could not have learned as a child. For example, dramatic as the story of Ruth is, the story of Boaz, her kinsman, is also dramatic. We learn of his honor and law abiding ways, before he marries Ruth, and before Naomi, Ruth's mother, rejoices at becoming a grandmother.

Celebrate this rich resource!

Kris S.