

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



INTERIM PASTOR Rev. Dr. Jay Marshall Groat

OFFICE-740-393-1736

www.mvucc.org

Easter Sunday Service
April 5th, 2026

Please Join Us!



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



A Movable Feast

The First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE established that Easter must be celebrated on the same Sunday worldwide. The directive said Easter should fall on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox.

The Council determined Easter to be a “movable feast” to ensure unity of celebration. (In contrast, in the same century the church fixed the date of Christmas as December 25, the date of the winter solstice in Rome. So Christmas is not a movable feast.)

I was not consulted by the First Council of Nicaea regarding the setting of any church holiday dates. But if I had been there – I would have enthusiastically supported the notion of “movable feasts.”

People like astronomers tell us that everything in the universe is in constant motion. Nothing is truly at rest – subatomic particles are always vibrating and galaxies are always spinning.

All matter constantly rotates, orbits, or drifts. The earth rotates at 1,000 mph and orbits the Sun at 70,000 mph. Inside of you and inside of me, at the smallest scale, electrons, protons, and quarks possess intrinsic spin. The quantum world in our bodies and brains is never still.

And Jesus was a peripatetic teacher. He moved from city to village to sea to seashore to desert. His life was a movable feast. He ate fast food on the run.

And so do we. And that is good – as long as we remember. We remember that God is God and we are God’s people. We remember that God is love and those who live in love, live in God, and God lives in them.

We especially remember these things at Easter. We remember that Easter brings food for the movable feast of life. Orbiting at 70,000 mph we don’t hold on tightly in fear – we let go and daily make the movable leap of faith.

We remember these things on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox – and every other blessed day of our peripatetic lives.

Blessings — Pastor Jay

What's Happening

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Maundy Thursday Service	Thursday April 2nd 7:00 pm	Sanctuary
Easter Sunday Service	Sunday April 5th 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Easter Egg Hunt	Sunday April 5th Following the Easter Service	Courtyard
Regular Worship Service	Sundays 9:30 am	Sanctuary
Social Time	Sundays Following the morning service	Social Hall
Adult Forum	Sundays 11:00 am	Chapel
Youth Group	Sundays 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm	Youth Room
Youth Choir Rehearsal	Sundays 11:00 am to 11:20 am	Youth Choir Room
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Thursdays 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm	Choir Room
Council Meeting	Sunday April 26th 11:50 am	Front Parlor

Income Tax!



From Christian Education

Easter Egg Hunt

Following Easter service, the middle and high school youth will hide eggs for children in elementary school and younger in the courtyard. All children are invited; please wait in Fellowship Hall until the eggs are hidden.



Recognition Sunday

Join us in recognizing our children and youth for their growth inside and outside of the church during the service on May 17th. All are welcome to a reception following the service to honor our graduating seniors.

Graduating Seniors

Any graduating senior interested in a congregational graduation award may pick up the information outside of the church office. Applications are due to the office by April 26th.



Summer Camping

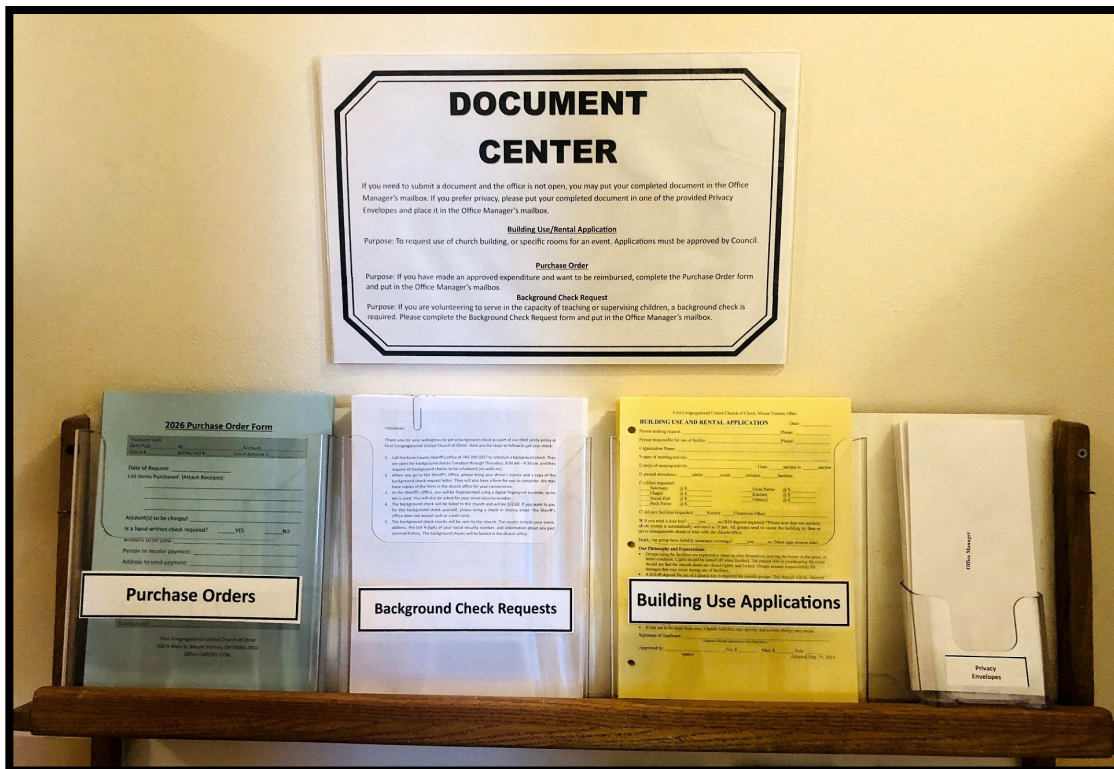
Camping opportunities through the Heartland Conference are now available at heartlanducc.org/storycontinues/.



Camps ranging from Grands and Family designed for families to spend time together to children and youth Sportsamps to adult camping options and more themes in between.

Document Center

We now have a Document Center, located across from the Church Office door and Church Mailboxes, to make it convenient to get copies of required documents when the office is not open. OK, maybe “*Document Center*” is a bit grandiose for a shelf with only four documents on it, but it sounds more impressive than “*Get Forms Here*”. (Of course if the office is open, we’ll be glad to provide these or any other documents you may require.)



Currently available documents are:

Building Use/Rental Application — For those requesting to use the Church or specific rooms for events.

Background Check Request — Mandatory for working with youth and children in any capacity.

Purchase Order — Submit if you are requesting reimbursement for an authorized Church purchase.

Graduating Student Awards Application — Due in office by April 26th.

Additional forms will be provided as the need arises.

Scrapbook

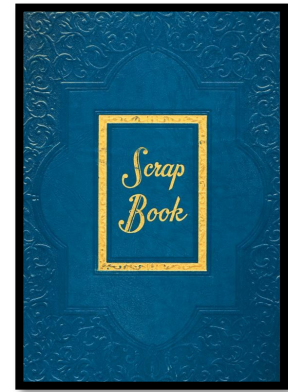
Create a Family Scrapbook Page for Our New Pastor

As we prepare to welcome our new pastor into our church family, we are putting together a special scrapbook to help him get to know each of us. All families are invited to create one scrapbook page about your family to be included in this keepsake.

Each page should be created on 8½ x 11 paper. You may use your own paper or pick some up from Becky Chamberlin, who will also be collecting the finished pages.

Feel free to include anything that represents your family! Some ideas include:

- A family photo
- Your names
- How long you've been part of our church
- How long you've lived in Knox County
- Your interests—in the church or in the wider community
- A short welcome note to our new pastor



Once completed, all pages will be placed in protective sleeves and assembled into a scrapbook that will be presented to our new pastor as he begins his ministry with us.

Please submit your finished page to Becky by May 31. If you have questions, please call her at 740-507-2220.

Quotes for Christian Life

"Your true character is most accurately measured by how you treat those who can do 'nothing' for you. "- Mother Teresa



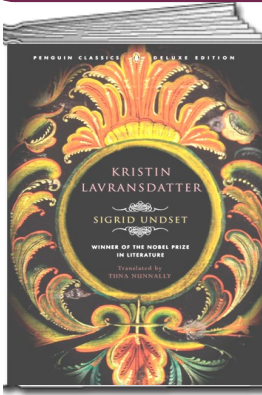
on the lighter side...

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



FOR SALE - Single owner tomb.
Only used three days, and still
has that new tomb smell. Reason
for sale ... resident resurrected.

Book Review



Sigrid Undset, *Kristin Lavransdatter*, translated with notes by Tiina Nunnally. Introduction by Brad Leithauer. (Trilogy: *The Wreath*; *The Wife*; *The Cross*.) Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition. Penguin Books: New York. 2005. Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition.

What a difference a new translation makes! *Kristin Lavransdatter* is a long story about a medieval Norse girl who marries a man of whom her father disapproved, discovers in her married life why her father disapproved, and seeks to be a faithful Christian woman in the last chapter of her life. Twelfth century Norway had deep roots in pagan practices, and new but strong roots in Christian practices, and the

lives of farming, fishing, religious, and fighting communities were integrated. There were the beginnings of a European style aristocracy, but most of that was far away from the farm valley of Kristin's childhood.

One of the attractions of this vivid story is the landscape. The mountains and the sea and the well managed farms are the settings for many chapters, but poorly managed farms are also part of the story. The reader comes to appreciate how many of the necessary jobs on a prosperous farm were done by men and women working together. Spinning, weaving, beer making, food preservation, animal care, planting, weeding, harvesting, building repairs and hides tanning were performed in a constant rhythm of work. Social life inside the main farm houses had many customary features well explained in ample footnotes, from seating for the owner to serving food to poor wanderers.

The trilogy is also a psychological study of a young headstrong woman who has to live with her poor choices. Kristin is counseled by several saintly monks at her family church, and later after she is widowed, but she is tormented by some Christian teachings about her own sins. For modern readers, it seems to be a sad obsession over matters she cannot undo; but it offers insights into the many ways Christians have always understood our teachings. Kristin tries to be of service to victims of the black plague in her last year, but she falls victim to it herself, and we are left with a vivid story that makes medieval people just as real as we are.

Sigrid Undset was the daughter of medieval scholars, and grew up learning more than most people about Norse history. She writes with vivid insight and knowledge, and may surprise readers who expect descriptions of a simple society. It was not simple, and the accommodation of a challenging climate made it necessary for people to work harder than they might in a more forgiving place. Women's options were more varied than we might have thought, too, outside of family hopes for marriages, facilitated by churches. Women could join convents as beginner nuns, boarders, laborers, or supported residents. In this arrangement the convent women cared for residents in return for a substantial payment, or the resident could work for her board and enjoy convent housing and protection. It was in this latter capacity that Kristin lived the last part of her life, working as a healer and applying her knowledge of herbal medicine and practical care.