

Parish Visitor

Membership Edition
Volume LVIII Issue #5



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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May 2026

Contact Us



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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



“Time Moves Slowly But Passes Quickly.”

- Alice Walker

I don't know when a person officially becomes “old.” Is it when someone turns fifty years of age? sixty? Certainly seventy is considered old – isn't it?

But I do think this – only an old person knows what Alice Walker is saying when she says time moves slowly but passes quickly.

I was six years old when my dad told me I was old enough to play on a Little League baseball team. I could take you – I mean this literally – to the exact spot I was when he told me this. I was stunned. The news was so incredible to me that I could hardly believe it.

And yes – the moment feels like yesterday.

I was a nineteen year-old freshman when I hit my first home run over the fence playing baseball for Mount Union College. I didn't hit many in four years of playing but I hit a few.

And yes – the moment feels like yesterday.

I was twenty-eight years old when I was ordained into the Christian ministry by the Presbyterian Church (USA). That is forty years ago.

Yes – the moment feels like yesterday.

Forty years ago I would have written this on a typewriter. When I would inevitably and erroneously make a typo while typing I would use white-out correction fluid.

Forty years ago I had no access to the Internet, no laptop computer, no cell phone. When I would travel on church mission trips during the summer I would call home to say hello – collect – from a public phone booth.

Forty years ago I began every day with a cup of coffee and morning newspaper – first the comics, then the sports section, then the news.

Time moves slowly but passes quickly and the news today is that this is my final Parish Visitor piece.

Thank you for everything. I have loved being with you.

Peace - Pastor Jay

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 (Last for season May 10th)	Chapel
Youth Group	Sundays 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm	Youth Room
Youth Choir Rehearsal	Sundays 11:00 am to 11:20 am (Last for season May 10th)	Youth Choir Room
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Thursdays 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm (Last for season May 14th)	Choir Room
Recognition Sunday	Sunday May 17 Morning Service	Sanctuary
Council Meeting	Sunday May 31th (Following reception)	Front Parlor

Quotes for Christian Life

"Out of 100 people, one will read the Bible, the other 99 will read the Christian." - D.L. Moody

Christian Education

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.

Volunteer Opportunity

We are looking to expand our list of those who can help with our children and youth activities. To join that list, FCUCC needs a background check on file. Forms are available outside of the office in the Document Center.



You may either bring a receipt back to the church and put it in the CE mailbox for reimbursement or see Jennifer or Becky to get a check written to take with you. The process is quick and easy and at your convenience.

If you have a professional license that requires a background check, you may submit a copy of either that background check or a copy of that professional license.

Scrapbook

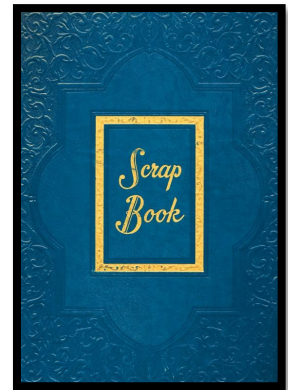
Create a Family Scrapbook Page for Our New Pastor

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

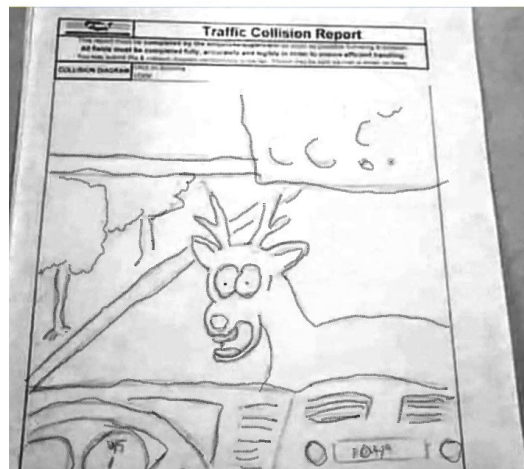


Once completed, all pages will be placed in protective sleeves and assembled into a scrapbook that will be presented to our new pastor as he begins his ministry with us.

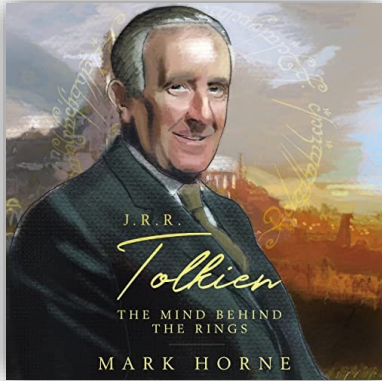
Please submit your finished page to Becky by May 31. If you have questions, please call her at 740-507-2220.

on the lighter side...

Got into a little car accident today. I'm OK. The insurance company wanted a diagram of the accident. Here you go State Farm!



Book Review



Mark Horne, *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Mind Behind the Rings*. Nelson Books, Copyright, Mark Horne: 2011. Nashville, TN.

Rev. Horne, writes sympathetically and evenly on the life of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. Born in South Africa, J.R.R. Tolkien was a linguistic genius who was passionately interested in languages, linguistics and pre-English literature. He was especially intrigued by Icelandic, also known as Old Norse, and learned to read it fluently along with Finnish, Middle English, German, Latin, and Greek. He was

so fascinated by the stories of the old north that he almost missed out on high school and college scholarships, failing the first rounds. On the second and final chances, he squeaked into scholarships and graduated from Oxford University in 1915, age 23. He had won prestigious literary prizes, an almost certain job after WWI, and the hand of his longtime love, Edith Bratt, who married him just before he reported for military duty. Edith's story is also represented sympathetically.

Imaginative writing began later, almost by accident, when Tolkien was grading endless exams from other schools--moonlighting--to support his growing family. Without the family wealth that many of his friends enjoyed, he could not make ends meet on his Oxford salary, and by another accident he met a publisher's agent who encouraged him. We know of his genius through the encouragement of the publisher and his close circle of friends, who recognized that his perfectionist tendencies made it difficult for him to release anything to the publisher. The results, however, are some of the very best reads in modern English. Horne discusses briefly Tolkien's love of the English rural countryside and dismay over the ugly, dirty industrial cities of modern times. Tolkien associated machinery and urban filth with the reduction of human beings to factory slaves, impoverished by greedy people attracted to power. That is a topic for another day.

One of Rev. Horne's observations is especially interesting to all of us who share the Christian journey. He summarizes the philosophy of Tolkien's faith and writing as refusing to preach to others. In Rev. Horne's words: "Tolkien's use of his own private experiences in creating his epic fantasy give us more evidence that the key to his success lies in his humility in refusing to moralize to his readers." His epic stories help to give us resources in resisting the temptation of power, to fight for what is right, to persevere in faithfulness, and to practice other qualities that keep hope alive in our own lives. Fantasy grounded in history and learning can teach wonderful lessons, no sermon needed.

Kris S.