Parish Visitor
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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
OFFICE 740-393-1736 www.mvucc.org

November 2026



Contact Us

Phone 740-393-1736
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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

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	Will Resume in January	Chapel
Cantata Rehearsal	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Choir Room
Hanging of the Greens	Friday November 27th 10:00 am	Sanctuary
Youth Group	Wednesdays 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Youth Room
Youth Choir	Sundays 11:00 am – 11:20 am	Youth Choir Room
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Thursdays 7:00 pm	Choir Room
Council Meeting	November 22nd 11:50	Front Parlor

Pulpit Schedule

November

8th	Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace
15th	Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace
22nd	Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace
29th	Rev. Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace



December

6th	Rev. John Cramton
13th	Rev. John Cramton
20th	Rev. John Cramton
24th	Christmas Cantata
27th	Rev. John Cramton

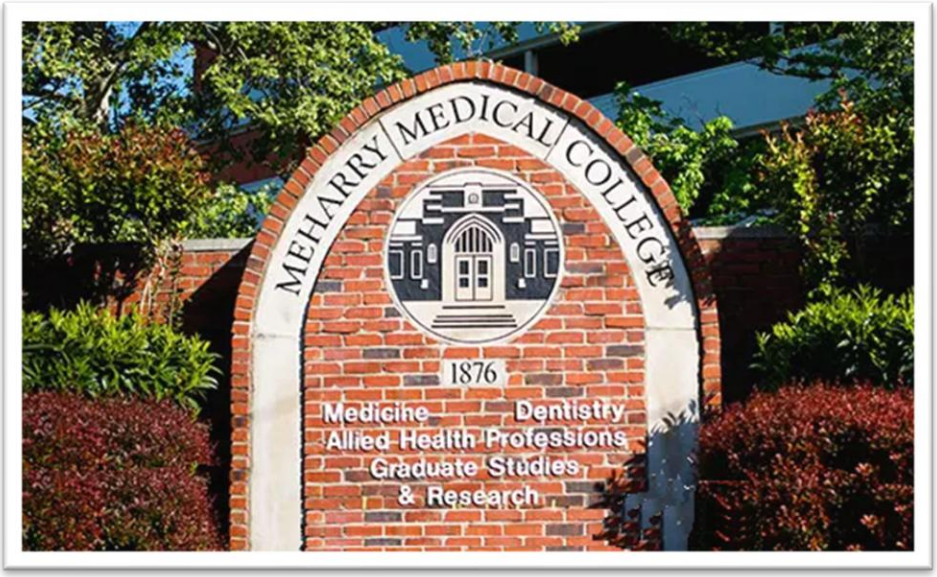
Meharry Medical College

I recently visited *Meharry Medical College* for their 150th Anniversary and 151st Convocation. I was gifted 2 books by the author, Librarian and Archivist, Mrs. Sandra Martin Parham. I've gifted those books to the *Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County.* The books chronicle the college's first 150 years, the main founders and the presidents from its beginning to present.

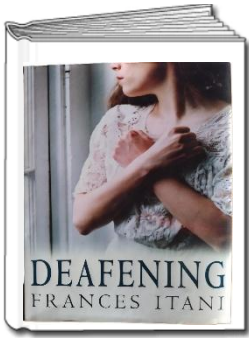
They also include a history of campus life for students and faculty.

I visited for two and a half days. The copy of my itinerary is on the bulletin board in the Social Hall. If interested in hearing more, please contact me.

- Ron M.



Book Review



Frances Itani, ***Deafening***. Grove Press: New York. Copyright Frances Itani, 2003; copyright Itani Writers, Inc., 2004.

Itani has written a powerful story of a girl who loses her hearing at the age of two, as a result of scarlet fever. Her beloved grandmother helps her learn to speak, she invents a language with her sister, and her family sends her to the Ontario School for the Deaf. Through the efforts of her teachers and with her classmates, Grania O'Neill learns alphabet signing and speaking. The reader these days is braced for horror stories of institutions, but this one has only the "usual" pain of leaving family and adjusting to life in a larger community. There is joy in meeting others who share her deafness, and the inventive teachers who lead and challenge.

Set in rural Canada, we share with Grania the visual world of Deseronto, a small port town, her father's hotel, and the exclusion she experiences from the hearing children in the local school. When the effort to communicate with other people is too difficult, she retreats into the quiet of hearing nothing. It is a peaceful place, from which Grania can admire the beauty of the changing seasons, read the emotions of her family's faces, and keep counsel with her intelligent self. Just before World War I and after a long courtship, she falls in love with a young hearing man, and they are married two weeks before he is shipped to France as a stretcher bearer.

Jim's love for Grania informs his letters to her; they have developed yet another language and succeed in sharing a world view. He experiences dreadful trench warfare in Belgium and France, composing letters the censors cannot pass, and she waits for him while working at her father's hotel. The strenuous work of stretcher bearers is not easy to describe to civilians. Jim experiences debilitating fatigue, and observes death and grave injuries, to a degree unknown in the rural farmland of his home. He borrows Grania's world view to help him process his military losses and to rescue other soldiers as best he can.

This is beautiful and moving writing, full of details of modern warfare and civilian life, of the frictions of life at home and the sorrow of the news of the dead and missing. The injured survivors are also present, challenging their families to adjust and learn new ways to think about particular losses, and about the future.

This book includes discussion questions for those who might wish to share observations. I come away appreciating a powerful dimension of life.

Disclosure: My husband is functionally deaf when he doesn't wear hearing aids, so my interest in deafness is personal. But we know so many who would benefit from hearing aids. I know it is a common issue. Hearing loss can be inherited, or as a result of some illnesses, loud noise exposure such as rock concerts and heavy military explosions, or injuries that disrupt the delicate mechanisms of the human ear. Hearing gives us a world of connection that must be entered by the deaf with enormous effort and patience. Deafness heightens the importance of vision; how leaves blow, or waves of water, can be clues but seldom answers. We take hearing for granted at our peril! - Kris S.

A Sister's Passing



Carolyn Virginia (Nyhart) Metcalf, 97, of Gambier, Ohio, passed away on October 18, 2026, at Danbury Senior Living in Millersburg, Ohio. She had been a member here for over 74 years.

You can see her full obituary at:

https://www.snyderfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/Carolyn-N-Metcalf?obId=49902721

Building Committee

The Building Committee would like to announce the upcoming remolding of the four Education Wing restrooms -- two downstairs and two upstairs. At this time, we do not have a set timeline, but this is our current plan.

You should know:

* First, we will replace all of the entry doors with lockable doors and remove the metal privacy dividers. This will make all of the restrooms usable as all-gender units.

* We will only close 1 restroom per floor during construction. This will provide one usable restroom at all times.

* A completion date is uncertain at this time because that will depend on the contractor's work schedules.

We thank you for your patience.

Respectfully,
Building Committee

Ministry in Action

Do You Participate in the Work of Any of Our Local Community Agencies?

Each year in our members of our church continue to give, not only of their time in the local church, but also participate in the work of our local community agencies. We do our best to report these good works in our church's annual report. In preparation for our upcoming 2026 Annual Report, we need your help. We would love to list your name if you have recently or are currently serving in any of these local agencies.

Habitat for Humanity

Hope Now Furniture Bank

Hot Meals

Interchurch Social Services

Knox Community Hospital

New Directions

Pride Alliance

The Freedom Center

The Winter Sanctuary

YMCA

If you would like us to include your name in our report, please contact Charlotte or email the church office with your name, the agency and capacity in which you serve. (board member, officer, cashier, mail courier, help desk, etc.)

Thank you for your service!

Hanging of the Greens



Will happen on Friday November 27th at 10:00 am in the Sanctuary.

Tree of Sharing



2026

Help Children and Families in Need Through

Interchurch Tree of Sharing

We will be continuing our annual Mission and Service project through Interchurch Social Services to provide food, clothing and toys to children in need in our community at Christmastime. Please consider donating gifts or money to help our church in this year's mission effort.

Starting November 22nd, names will be posted on the bulletin board in the social hall. The names will have the child's wishes for toys, clothes, etc. You may bring gifts or money to the church office or put them under the tree in the sanctuary on December 6th or 13th.

Instead of wrapping gifts this year, we are asking if you could bring gifts in gift bags.

Gift bags should be labeled with the child's name and the family number.
For example: Jimmy
Family # 85 A

If you would rather donate money for blankets and food gift cards, please put your donation in the offering or send to the church office marked "Tree of Sharing."

The deadline to bring in gifts and monetary donations is December 13th. **Distribution day is Wednesday, December 16th.**

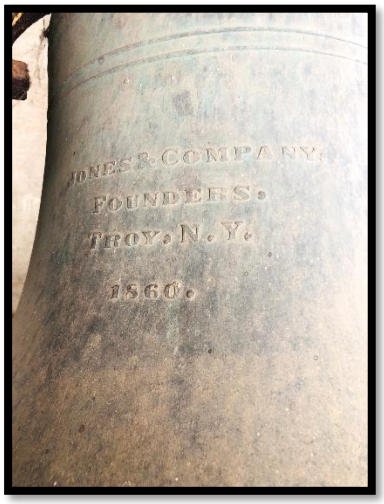
– Charlotte W., Coordinator

Our Bell Is Back

After almost three months with no bell for Sunday services, our bell is ringing again and announcing to our community that we are worshiping the Lord and inviting them in. Charlotte W., Brad K. and Bill W. worked to procure, and install the new bell ringer unit.

Most of you have probably never climbed up to the bell tower to see the bell. Here are some photos for you. It was cast in 1860 by Jones & Company Founders in Troy, New York.





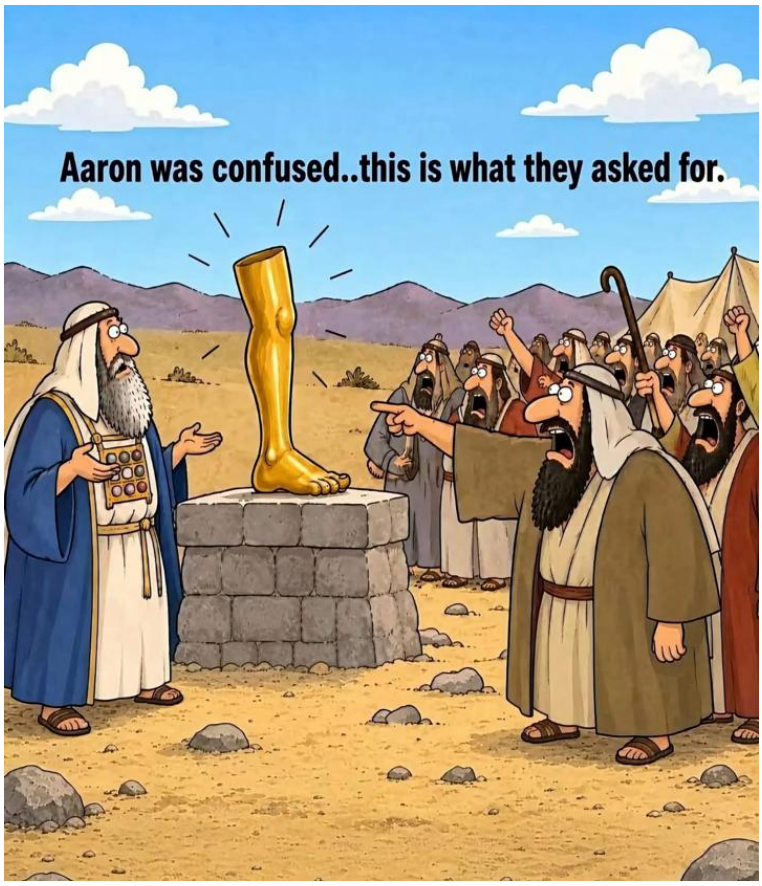


As it stands today, the bell does not swing. It is kept stationary by a wooden frame. This helps protect a 166-year-old cast iron bell from cracking. It rings by means of an electromechanical arm that pulls the bell's clapper back to make it ring.



Now you've seen what makes that beautiful sound every Sunday morning.

on the lighter side





"...and chief of the Manasseh tribe was Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, brother of Ammishadai..."