



Message from the Pastor:

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Giving thanks is always a good place to begin. Thank you to Terri Bissell and Joel Pietrantozzi for their leadership as Moderator and Assistant Moderator these last two years. And thank you to Ken Prentice and Kathy Lessman for accepting this call. Thank you to Liz Murch for serving as Clerk and to Terri for accepting new position. Thank you Rick Sheehan for continuing as Treasurer and thank you Dick Sheller for continuing as Financial Secretary.

Every day is new in both the opportunities and challenges that come to us. Gratitude is our response to a loving God who is with us in daily loving. And God has given us to one another to respond with loving one another and God's creation.

February's calendar includes Valentine's Day. If you know the St. Valentine's story, you know that such love reveals the kind of love that God has for all of us. Ash Wednesday is February 22 and begins the season of Lent. Gratitude and love are at the heart of this season of the church year as we remember Christ's life and death, his journey to Jerusalem and his crucifixion even as we look to Christ's resurrection at Easter (April 8).

February 22 – ASH WEDNESDAY worship 7:00 p.m.

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

Lenten devotionals are available. Adults may find *Living In The Moment, Daily Devotions for Lent* in the narthex and families with children may use the booklet with stickers, *All Around Jerusalem*, also in the narthex.

February 26 - Lenten Book Discussion – 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Come enjoy the fellowship and stimulation of a good book group discussion. This is the first of 5 Lenten gatherings (Feb 26, March 4,11,18,25) which may include a light meal. The purpose of this first meeting is to organize ourselves, distribute the books, and decide on meeting place and food.

If you would like to help select the book, see me by February 12.

February 12, 19 and 26 LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH

If you or someone you know is considering church membership or you just want to know more about this congregation, come to the church library on February 12, 19 and 26. The Deacons will host a light lunch



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following the worship service (11:45 a.m.-12:45) and explore what we believe along with some church history. These are informational gatherings. Questions and discussion help all of us grow in faith. Some questions from the past include: What do we believe about the Bible? What does it mean to be forgiven and forgiving? Can we, as Christians, still believe in miracles? When life is tough, why does God seem so far away? Is eternal life for people who live caring and moral lives but have never heard of Christ? Why do good people suffer, either from age, infirmity and disease or violence? Do we always get an answer to our prayers? **If you choose to join the church at this time, members will be received March 11 during the worship service.**

February 19 – Installation of Church Officers and Committee Members

If you have been elected to an officer's position or a committee, we will celebrate and covenant with you on February 19 in worship.

PLAN AHEAD

April 1 Palm Sunday –Three-Church Spring concert –

The church choirs from Bainbridge, Solon and Twinsburg will combine voices again. Come to Bainbridge for the 5:00 p.m. concert

Blessings,

Kay Krejci

HAPPENINGS IN OUR AREA

Feb 10 – Learn About Jewish Worship –The congregation Beth Shalom invites the community to learn about Jewish worship during the Sabbath Service Friday, February 10 at 7:45 p.m. at the temple, 50 Division St. in Hudson. Rabbi Sheldon Ezring and Cantorial Soloist , Robin Selinger will explain Jewish worship and theology. Traditional Sabbath refreshments will be served following services. For more information and to register, call Laurie Frankino at 330-620-2020 or Temple Beth Shalom at 330-656-1800.

February 12 has been designated as Blanket Sunday at First Congregational. Leading up to that Sunday, the Church World Service \$5 blanket will be on display. Through this offering our church joins 8,000 congregations and churches across the U.S. by raising funds to provide blankets and tools to help people in need around the world, including the U.S. For over 60 years, Church World Service has worked in partnership with local communities to identify their needs and access the resources needed need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including:

- Blankets, tents, food, and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster.
- Tools and seeds for refugees returning home to replant their fields.
- Wells for families living in drought prone areas to provide clean, safe water to drink and to irrigate crops and gardens.
- Literacy training and microcredit for women struggling to realize their potential.



Sunday School classes will be encouraged to have a special collection to raise the \$5 needed to buy a blanket.

As has been the custom at our church, the donation of new or nearly new, clean blankets, sheets, towels, will also be collected and distributed locally.

PLEASE NOTE: *The Benevolence Committee is always grateful for financial gifts directed to the Benevolence Committee through the Sunday offerings. A reminder, that the gifts can be directed to a specific agency such as Red Cross, Emergency Assistance Center, Salvation Army, etc; when possible, the committee will try to match the gift with non-directed funds.*

Prayer Shawl Ministry



Seekers

Wanting to do something for an out-of-state friend recently diagnosed with breast cancer, a Twinsburg teacher asked another teacher what response was most comforting to her when she had cancer. The answer was the prayer shawl she received from our ministry. The ministry has been blessed to have given away 550 shawls since its founding and initial funding in 2004 by the late Marion Rockney (mother of Annetta Muir). A reminder that the shawls are available to anyone and can be requested through the church office or from any of the "Seekers." Also, an open invitation to anyone wanting to be part of this ministry that meets on the 2nd. and 4th Mondays from 7 to 8 p.m. Teachers are available for anyone wanting to learn to crochet or knit a shawl.

Pancake Breakfast

February 5, 2012



Serving will begin at 8:30 am until worship begins, then will resume again after worship until 1:00 pm
Sponsored by the Boy Scouts In appreciation of the church.
There is no charge for this breakfast, however, donations will be cheerfully accepted.

Sunday, February 5 is Scout Sunday

The scouts will be participating in the service. They will also be hosting a Pancake Breakfast starting at 8:30 a.m. and will resume after worship. The scouts are celebrating over 100 years of service. They hold their meetings at the church on Tuesday evenings. Please remember to thank the scouts for their outstanding service.



Trustworthy—A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is part of his code of conduct. People can depend on him

Loyal—A Scout is true to his family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation.

Helpful—A Scout is concerned about other people. He does things willingly for others without pay or reward.

Friendly—A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs other than his own.

Courteous—A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows good manners make it easier for people to get along together.

Kind—A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. He does not hurt or kill harmless things without reason.

Obedient—A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them.

Cheerful—A Scout looks for the bright side of things. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy.

Thrifty—A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for unforeseen needs. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property.

Brave—A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at or threaten him.

Clean—A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean.

Reverent—A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.

From the Church Library. . .



With limited funding, the church library has been fortunate to receive book donations. If you leave a book in the church library which you would like to donate, please be sure to indicate that (1) it is a donation, and (2) your name and whether you would like to donate the book in someone's name. The following three books are recent donations:

--*The Thinking Person's Guide to God* by Tom Harpur acts as a road map and common sense guide not only for believers, but doubters, skeptics, and wistful unbelievers showing the way to the certainty of God.

--*The Greatest Prayer* by John D. Crossan explores the prayer taught by Jesus line by line to give a fuller understanding of its meaning.

--*Chicken Soup for the College Soul* – Yes, another Chicken Soup Book but this one is filled with inspiring and humorous stories about college which will be enjoyed by current college students, pre-college students, and even graduates.

The three books will be featured on the library book cart during February.

As has been the custom at First Congregational, the Benevolence Committee is encouraging those who are able to consider fasting ONE meal each week during lent and donating the cost of that meal in groceries or cash to the Emergency Assistance Center. The Diaconate is making available a devotional booklet, which could provide meditations as you are fasting.

We are in need of volunteers to usher on the fourth Sunday of the month. If you are interested, please see a member of the Diaconate or leave a message at the office. Any questions, please leave a message with the office.

Women's Fellowship . . .

Women's Fellowship luncheon
and meeting

Thursday, February 2, 2012
12:00 Noon Pot Luck luncheon

Bring food to share and table service
We will hold a meeting after
the luncheon.

Evening Women's Fellowship
will meet on Monday,
February 6, 2012
At 7:00 p.m.

Karen Holzwarth will be leading
the group in a project.
Please plan to join us.



**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S DAY
FEBRUARY 14!**

Servers—February 2012

Aaron Mayer Gwen Richner
Judy Turk Mark Holzwarth
Ken Prentice
Scouts - Bread

**Communion will be
Sunday, February 5th this month
Communion will be served in the
Sanctuary and the library**

Acolyte Schedule - February 2012

February 5— **Dave Schilling**
& Will Sheehan
February 12—**Bryan Bencie**
& Brad Verbic
February 19—**Tori Holzwarth**
& Kyla Sokolowski
February 26—**Jason Powell**
& Seth Richner

Lay Reader's Schedule February 2012

February 5— Boy Scouts
February 12—Dottie Oliver
February 19—Mark Holzwarth
February 26—Melissa Schilling

The families of the names in **bold** have Acolyte Coordinator Duty and should light the sticks and assist the acolytes. Please see the instruction sheet posted on the wall next to the sticks.

Children's Sermon Schedule February 2012

February 5— Will Adams
February 12—Change Sunday
February 19—Rick Herrilko
February 26—Gayle Davet

***If you are unable to serve as
Lay Reader, Children's Sermon,
Usher, Welcomer, or Acolyte on
your assigned week,
please find a replacement and
notify the church office of the change.
Thank you!***

Coffee Hour Schedule February 2012

February 5—Scout Pancake Breakfast
February 12—Benevolence
February 19—
February 26—

Flower Schedule February 2012

February 5—
February 12— Carol Zenisek
February 19— Chloe Wentz
February 26—

Welcomers / Ushers Schedule - February 2012

February 5—Lisa Downor & Bonnie Williams (W)	Boy Scouts (U)
February 12—Dave & Diane Powell (W)	Russ & Peggy Davis Griffin (U)
February 19 - Rick & Denice Sheehan (W)	Bob Hewett & Judy Eisenberger
February 26 - Ken Prentice & Rich Bissell (W)	Aaron & Lisa Mayer (U)



Scrap Booking Friday
February 17, 2012

6:00 p.m.—midnight
in the Fellowship Hall

ATTENDANCE

Sunday School Worship Service		
Jan. 1 st	None	32
Jan. 8 th	24	85
Jan. 15 th	24	81
Jan. 22 nd	27	84
Jan. 29 th	23	77



Youth Group Lock-in
February 4, 2012
6:00 pm

Bring sleeping bag, pillow
and extra blankets.
(yes, bring tooth brushes and
deodorant)

Subs will be made, movies will be watched
and games will be played.
Sleep is optional. Subs will be distributed on
Sunday, February 5.

If you have not yet done so, please pay for
your subs when you pick them up.
Thanks for everyone's support!

If we missed your birthday, please call the church office so we can update our records.

Happy Birthday to:



Helen Greene	02/5/12
Doris Turnbull	02/6/12
Andrea Bissell	02/7/12
Vivian Weiss	02/7/12
Victoria Holzwarth	02/7/12
Steve Doe	02/7/12
Missy Mansfield	02/9/12
Jeanette Hoyt	02/10/12
Amber Leek	02/10/12
Beverly Hegedish	02/11/12
Paul Munn	02/12/12
Kimberly Lacy	02/12/12
Judy Richner	02/13/12
Dan Richner	02/16/12
Betty Tomko	02/20/12
Jim Peel	02/21/12
Todd Downor, Jr.	02/23/12
Walter Sterling	02/24/12
Mikki Pietrantozzi	02/24/12
Brooke Dolfi	02/25/12
Mary Schmidt	02/25/12
Kristen Williams	02/27/12
Gayle Davet	02/28/12

Officers / Committees Nominations 2012

MODERATOR	Ken Prentice	12
CO-MODERATOR	Kathy Lessman	12
TREASURER	Rick Sheehan	12
FINANCIAL SEC.	Dick Sheller	12
CLERK	Terri Bissell	12

DIACONATE

1. Russ Griffin	13
2. Rick Herrilko	13
3. Marge Heston	13
4. Diane Powell	13
5. David Schilling Jr.	14
6. Aaron Mayer	14
7. Lynn Schmidt	14
8. Judy Richner	14
9. Mark Holzwarth	15
10. Gwen Richner	15
11. Ken Prentice	15

TRUSTEES

1. Dan Richner	13
2. Tom Holzwarth	13
3. Lea Bissell	14
4.	14
5. Jim Peel	15
6. Dave Powell	15

BENEVOLENCE

1. Andrea Bennett	13
2. Annetta Muir	13
3. Mary Lou Sheller	14
4. Denice Sheehan	14
5. Shari Schultz	15
6. Caitlin Sheehan	15

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. Megan Barr	13
2. Lisa Mayer	13
3. Tara Schilling	14
4. Lisa Downor	14
5. Judy Turk	15
6.	15

MEMORIAL

1. Louise Jackson	13
2. Judy Eisenberger	13
3. Peggy Davis-Griffin	14
4. Jennifer Turk	14

MUSIC

1. Claudia Lillibridge	13
2. Sharon Baughman	13
3.	14
4. Bonnie Williams	15
5. Rich Bissell	15
6.	

STEWARDSHIP

1. Jim Mansfield	13
2. Larry Schmidt	13
3. Loretta Thomas	14
4. Dottie Oliver	14
5. Pat Kost	15
6.	

FELLOWSHIP

1. Gayle Davet	13
2. Vi Downer	13
3. Ruth Prentice	14
4. Lisa Davet	14
5. Roni Prentice	15
6. Mikki Pietrantozzi	15

COUNCIL-AT-LARGE

- 1. Marge Roberts
- 2. Carol Zenisek

I.F.M.C.

- 1. Dick Sheller
- 2. JoAnne Terry

ACOLYTES

Missy Mansfield

HEAD USHER

Ken Roddie

ALTAR GUILD

- 1. Chrissy Sterling
- 2. Marge Roberts
- 3. Gail Herrilko

PASTORAL RELATIONS

Tom Holzwarth
Will Adams
Megan Barr
Stacy Koller
Ken Prentice

COMMUNICATIONS

Debbie Dolfi

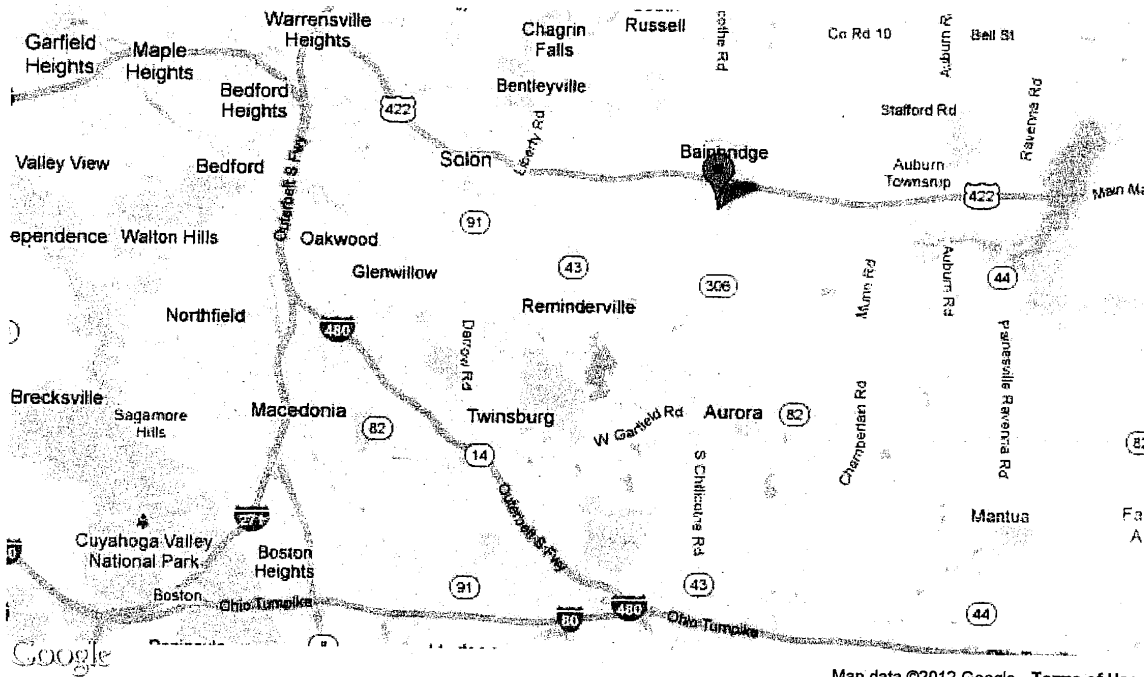
**Women's Ecumenical Mini-Retreat
Saturday, February 4th, 2012**

NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION!!!!

We are conveniently located on Route 306 (Chillicothe Road) in Bainbridge Township, just a half-mile south of the US 422 interchange.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

17989 Chillicothe Rd
Chagrin Falls OH 44023
440-543-5505



Women's Ecumenical Mini-Retreat **Saturday, February 4th, 2012**

NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION!!!!

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17989 Chillicothe Rd Chagrin Falls OH 44023
440-543-5505

(MAP FOR THE CHURCH IS ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM)

Continental Breakfast Starts at 8:00 AM
Chapel Starts Promptly at 9:00 AM with
The Praise Music Group-"Hearts Afire"!

Your delicious contribution for meals would be appreciated

In one of the following categories:

Hot Soup

Salads

Sandwiches

Fruit or Appetizers

Breakfast Items

Plan on bringing enough food to serve 6-8 people

PLEASE call **Jan Codney** at **330-334-6282** or email **Jan** at **janco7177@gmail.com** to let her know what food you will bring so that the meals will be coordinated. (Especially for the soup!)

I will NOT be attending the mini-retreat due to a school commitment.

So please contact Jan to coordinate the food!

A free will offering will be collected to defray expenses

SO bring your bible, a coffee cup, and a friend(s) for the day!!!

We should be done by 6:00 PM but please join us

For any or all of the day if you can

Fall Retreat will be September 21, 22 and 23 at Camp Asbury in Hiram.

In His Service,
Dana Flenner

Rejoice

Please see map to new location on page 8

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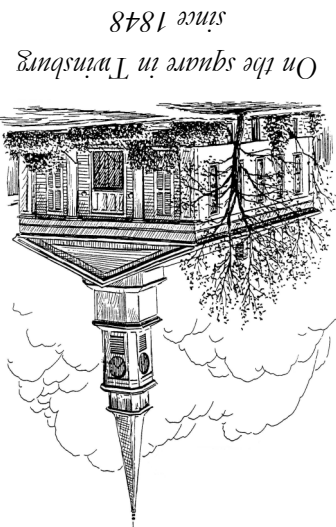
Come worship with us
and bring a friend!
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Tower Submissions

Articles for the *Tower* may sent via e-mail directly to the church at firstcongregational.church@windstream.net. Hard copies, CD's, or diskettes may be dropped off at the office.

Tower deadlines are posted on the monthly calendar and in the Sunday worship bulletin. For questions, or to be added to or taken off the mailing list, please send an e-mail or call the church office at 330-425-2181.

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THE TOWER



Dated Material—
Please Rush!



e-mail: firstcongregational.church@windstream.net

Church: 330-425-2181

9 a.m. to 1p.m.

Monday through Friday

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