

The Chronicle

February 2018 Number 2



The Lenten Rose



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Sunday Worship

9:30am - Learning Ctr.
11am - Meetinghouse

Sermon Schedule:

February 4

Communion Sunday

9:30am & 11am
Let Yourself Be Lifted
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

February 11

Transfiguration Sunday

11am only
Reflecting Light
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

February 14

Ash Wednesday Service of Remembrance & Recommital

7:30pm, Chapel
Receiving Freedom
Isaiah 58:1-12

February 18

First Sunday in Lent

9:30am & 11am
Walkabout
Sermon Series I
Mark 1:9-15

February 25

Second Sunday In Lent

9:30am & 11am
Ubuntu
Sermon Series II
Mark 8:31-38

Next Chronicle

Deadline: Fri., Feb. 9
Mailing: Wed., Feb. 21

Email Submissions:

deborah.anderson@akronfcc.org

Editor:

Deborah Anderson

A Letter From the Pastor

Dear friends,

This time of year with its transition from winter into spring and our inner yearnings toward renewal and Eastertime, offer us a wonderful opportunity for reflection and re-committal.

There is so very much in our lives and in our world that adds to our burden of stress and often the darker, winter months after the holidays seem to propel us toward depression. However, it is equally possible that the dark can be a place and a time of refuge and rest, a time when we can dream, when new ideas can begin to take root waiting for the dawn of a new season.

So this season, I invite you to embrace these darker months and get back to some basics with me on Sundays. Each week I will focus my message on a concept from another culture that can help us to reorient and renew our daily life wherever we may be. I hope you'll join me for a few or all of this sermon series:

Walkabout - on February 18, we'll explore the temporary migration rituals that the Aboriginal peoples of Australia use to take time away from society and mark times of transition in their lives.

Ubuntu - on February 25, I'll preach on this Sub-Saharan African thought about the inter-relatedness of all created beings. This popular concept was introduced to mainstream America by the Boston Celtics coach, Doc Rivers, and was credited for their 2008 Championship win.

Nothingness - March 4 will introduce the Asian concept of original nothing, the nothing that is equivalent to *being*. Often our Western culture demands something - anything and everything - from us making a philosophical enemy of emptiness whereas we can derive great value by considering how other cultures approach life and these concepts quite differently.

Hakuna matata - I plan to revisit, on March 11, a thought many of us will start singing automatically from the *Lion King* - the North African idea that invites us to consider our problems very differently, shifting our entire approach to life.

Hygge - on March 18 we'll delve into the Danish concept that encourages place-making on an intentional level in our everyday lives, making even the most mundane moments worthwhile.

As you take time this winter season to anticipate spring time and maybe consider doing a bit of soul-searching and inner spring cleaning, visit with us at 9:30 or 11am each Sunday for some helpful and uplifting thoughts to aid your journey.

Wishing you God's peace and every blessing,

Nanette

A Note from Mark Peterson Interim Choir Director & Organist

It is a joy to be amongst you all, and to be making music at First Church, particularly in working with the choir in preparing anthems and motets for Sunday morning. There is a term used to describe the effective joining of voices, or instruments for that matter, in a precise working relationship, and that word is **ensemble**. The true wonder of ensemble, and the benefit of reaching a solid ensemble in music is that the effect of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Put another way, the product of ensemble exceeds the contribution of its individual participants. In this regard ensemble is also a prime example of human cooperation, of true community.

The humorist and public radio personality, **Garrison Keillor**, once said:

"I once sang the bass line of the hymn "Children of the Heavenly Father" in a great hall with about three thousand Lutherans in it; and when we finished we all had tears in our eyes, partly from the promise that God will never forsake us, and partly from the proximity of all those wonderful voices. By our joining in this heavenly harmony, we somehow promised that we would not forsake each other. I do earnestly believe this: people who love to sing in four-part harmony are the sort of people you could call up when you're in deep distress. If you're sick, they'll comfort you. If you're lonely, they'll talk to you. If you're hungry, they'll bring you tuna salad!"

In understanding the place of music in our worship, we must remember that from the time of ancient Hebrew worship, the singing of Psalms and sacred songs has been considered a gift to be offered in worship to God. We refer to certain elements of music as offerings in our worship bulletin and we coordinate choral music with the act of collecting our material gifts each Sunday.

St. Benedict, the framer of much of Western Christianity's practice, wrote that the only offering in worship that is truly appropriate, is the best of our creative energy: the "cream" of our creative spirit. It is difficult for some to think of music as an offering in and of itself, but we are told that the praise of God should be our "duty and delight", that "praise is for the upright of heart". St. Luke explicitly tells us that we must learn how to give good gifts, and for the Benedictine ideal, that included the best writing, the best preaching, the best instruction, and the best music that we can muster.

Quoting the great writer, Fred Pratt Green, as set in the hymn from our own Chalice Hymnal (No. 7), "How often, making music, we have found a new dimension in the world of sound, as worship moved us to a more profound 'Alleluia!'"



Mardi Gras Sunday and Pancake Breakfast - February 11 One Combined Worship at 11am

Join us on Transfiguration Sunday, February 11, right before the beginning of the season of Lent for a Pancake Breakfast at 9:30am (freewill donations gratefully accepted) with music by the First Church Steelband and activities for children. Then join us for one celebratory Mardi Gras worship service in the Meetinghouse at 11am. Please let Deborah Anderson know if you are willing to be part of the volunteer breakfast crew: 330-253-5109, or email deborah.anderson@akronfcc.org.



Ash Wednesday Worship

Join us for Ash Wednesday Worship on February 14 at 7:30pm in the Chapel. We will have a service of scripture, music, and the Imposition of Ashes.

Please Note: All other regularly scheduled programming will be cancelled on Ash Wednesday.

From the Justice and Peace Team

Travels in Israel and Palestine Sunday, February 18, 12:15pm

Ever thought about traveling to Israel? The Justice and Peace (JNP) Team is hosting a conversation with Amanda Cole about her recent trip. Amanda traveled in both Israeli and Palestinian communities, explored restaurants and shops, visited religious sites in the Holy Land, and traveled in the West Bank. One of her unique experiences included viewing the Israeli West Bank Barrier Wall. She wants to share not just what she saw, but what she learned and how it made her feel. The conversation will take place in the church lounge after the 11am worship on Sunday, February 18. Stop in the Fellowship Hall to pick up a beverage and some snacks and then join the JNP Team in the lounge for an interesting and informative event. You too can visit Israel and Palestine, right here at church!

15 Broad Street - 2nd Chance Village

There are many good things happening at 15 Broad Street - 2nd Chance Village. Under the leadership of First Church member, Paul Hays, this outreach is having a very positive impact on our local homeless community. The community itself has its own governing council. Each resident has tasks and must contribute to sustain the community. The needs are still great and for anyone wishing to donate household goods, furniture, etc. please contact Crickett West, Justice and Peace Team at 330-802-8549. Thank you!

Wednesday Nights at First Church!

6:00-6:30pm **Dinner in the Fellowship Hall**

Dinner - pay at the door; cost \$8.00

Reservations a Must - Sign up in the Office
or Fellowship Hall by the prior Monday by noon.

6:45-8:00pm **Faith Enrichment**

Please see schedule below.

6:45-8:00 pm **Wednesday Night at the Movies!**

If you enjoy thought-provoking, insightful and entertaining cinema, your ticket is Wednesday Night at the Movies. Discussion follows the movie. Look for a brief description of the movies in News & Notes of the Sunday Bulletin each week. Questions, call Bernie Babb (330-687-0823). This is a fun evening and we hope you will join us in the Theater Room.

Faith Enrichment on Wednesdays

10:45am - noon and 6:45-8:00pm

My Song in the Night

On Wednesdays, February 7, 21, and 28, from either 10:45am-noon or 6:45-8pm, Pastor Nanette will lead participants in an enriching faith experience studying the Psalms of the Bible and then, leading you step by step through a devotional process, crafting our own personal Psalms in preparation for Lent. These might be personal Psalms of praise or lament based on your one word, a treasured memory, or a prayer for a loved one - the possibilities are endless. No aptitude for writing or prior experience is required only a heart seeking a connection with God. All are welcome and you may attend as you are able - one or all of the sessions.

First Church Soup & Chili Potluck and Family Game Night - February 9!



Beat the winter chill with an evening of food, fun and fellowship at the First Church Soup & Chili Potluck and Family Game Night, Friday, February 9, 6:30-9:30pm. Join the Chili Challenge with your favorite recipe or surprise us with your soup! Bring a game to share or

join in on an old (or new) favorite. Sign up in the church office.

Wednesday Night at the Movies 6:45-8:00pm in the Theater Room

February 7

The Father Effect - The filmmaker details his own struggle of growing up without a dad, how it influenced him, the life-changing power of forgiveness, and his overwhelming desire as a fatherless man to find his way as he raises three young daughters. The story is about one man, but it's also about the millions that have grown up or who are now growing up without a father.

February 14 - Ash Wednesday (no movie this night)

February 21 - a trilogy of short films:

Tara the Crusader - Frustrated with rude customers, a young woman goes undercover to seek vengeance against those who have wronged her and her fellow baristas.

Silver Lining - An actor takes a job entertaining an elderly woman who mistakes him for her dead son. Singing together brings a moment of clarity - to both of them.

All By Myselfie - Having just moved to Los Angeles, Lily tries to reconcile the oppressive requirements of social media with the need to connect with real people in a new city.

February 28

1 Mile to You - An uplifting romantic drama about the power of our happiest memories to sustain us even in the worst of times. After a teenager's best friends die in a tragic accident, he finds that running allows him to remember them perfectly. Running, however, also brings him a certain notoriety, and he soon finds himself caught between keeping the past alive and making new memories in the present.

Yoga for Everyone!

Yoga class meets on Wednesdays at 5:30pm in the Chapel with Larry Ott, instructor. Cost is \$5.00 per person. All are welcome!



BREAKFAST
with the **BUNNY**

Pancakes & Activities

Saturday, March 24, 9-11am
Free, Fun, Open to the Public

**Bring the children in your life to
a fun, safe place to see the
Easter Bunny!**

(Please sign up to volunteer in the church office, 330-253-5109.)

Stewardship & Finance Board

Stewardship/Finance Report (unaudited)

December 2017 - PRELIMINARY

| | December | YTD | YTD Budget | Percent to Budget |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Income | | | | |
| 2017 Loyalty Campaign | 16,919 | 260,457 | 275,000 | 94.71% |
| Non-pledge Income | 12,830 | 44,451 | 55,000 | 80.82% |
| Special Ministries-includes Special Offering | 6,319 | 51,430 | 37,260 | 138.03% |
| Endowment, Sprowls Trust, Pollock | 55,800 | 560,329 | 544,356 | 102.93% |
| Other Income | 12,300 | 60,705 | 34,096 | 178.04% |
| TOTAL | <u>104,168</u> | <u>977,372</u> | <u>945,712</u> | <u>103.35%</u> |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Total Admin. & Support | 5,859 | 71,860 | 108,410 | 66.29% |
| Total Mission | 17,440 | 88,733 | 79,450 | 111.68% |
| Food Service Expense | 3,042 | 43,013 | 17,750 | 242.33% |
| Personnel | 37,692 | 353,042 | 465,199 | 75.89% |
| Property Expenses | 20,143 | 234,382 | 279,069 | 83.99% |
| TOTAL | <u>84,176</u> | <u>791,030</u> | <u>949,878</u> | <u>83.28%</u> |

February Mission of the Month

The Board of Christian Outreach has selected South Street Ministries as the February Mission of the Month. South Street Ministries (SSM) is a ministry in the South Akron/Summit Lake area that is committed to the physical, socio-economic, and spiritual well-being of this neighborhood. Founded in 1997 by Duane and Lisa Crabbs, SSM has offered programming, ministry, and shared life with the people in this area. SSM reaches across racial, economic, cultural and religious barriers for the enrichment of the community.

Major programs include after-school assistance with homework and tutoring, summer youth camp, urban gardening, a bike shop, a jail ministry, open gym basketball, and youth sports scholarships. The Front Porch Cafe, located in the Front Porch Building at 798 Grant Street, functions as an employee training center.

To learn more about how SSM works to serve and renew the neighborhood, visit www.southstreetministries.org. If you wish to contribute to this mission, make your check payable to First Church and write SSM on the memo line.

Mission of the Month Update

The December Mission of the Month was the Mason Community Learning Center. A total amount of \$600 was given to this mission. Thank you!

Christmas Special Offering

This year's special Christmas Offering went to Mason Community Learning Center. A total amount of \$5,881 was collected for Mason. Thank you for your generous donations!

Food Cupboard Update

The Food Cupboard is in need of shampoo, body wash, body lotion, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, disposable razors, and magazines. Please leave donations in the basket outside the church office. Thank you!

The Love Truck

Beginning in February, the Love Truck will only serve a meal on the last Saturday of each month from 4:30-5:30pm. Please contact Nathan Walden for more information about volunteering to help serve our neighbors: the.lovetruck@yahoo.com.

Habitat House

Habitat for Humanity has almost completed the work on the family house at Magnolia Avenue in Cuyahoga Falls. They continue to need volunteers on Thursdays, February 1 and 8. Then on Saturdays - February 3 and 10. If you can help, please contact Elizabeth Fesler at 330-836-8089.

Canaan Fair Trade Products

Food products from the Holy Land will be available in the Fellowship Hall on **February 25** before and after the 11am service. For more information, please contact Carolyn Durway at 330-836-8564.

Homeless Outreach

Homeless Outreach, a federal program through Community Support Services, Inc., is collecting new and used blankets, coats, gloves, hiking boots and shoes for local homeless men and women. Please bring items to the church office. Thank you for your support.

In Our Prayers

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Karen Foley | Lee Pritchard |
| George Kostan | Larry Reed |
| Cecil Larabee | Rev. Bill Rodefer |
| Linda Marston | Agneta Solomon |
| Elsie Oldfield | Doug Weyrick |

In Sympathy

Our sympathy and prayers are with the family of Norman Schmidt. We just received word that Norman passed away on May 13, 2017.

Men's Lunch Bunch

The Men's Lunch Bunch meets on Mondays at 12pm for lunch and a program. Cost of the meal is \$7.00. All men of the church are invited. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Howard Tolley, 330-867-1469.

Women's Spiritual Journey

Women's Spiritual Journey meets on the first and third Monday of each month at 12pm for lunch, conversation, and study. For more information, please contact Linda Peshina, 330-628-9137.



Blood Pressure & Diabetes Checks February 18

Thanks to our February Ushers

Mike Brink, Bernie Babb, and Nick Speight. Alternate: Kathy Petsko.

Cookie Bakers for Memorial Services

If you would be willing to bake cookies for Memorial Service receptions, please contact Susanne Shoffner at 330-923-0591. Thank you!

Flower Vases

Do you have any spare flower vases from flower deliveries? If you have any vases that you would like to donate, please contact Susanne Shoffner at 330-923-0591 or drop them off in the church office.

Church Winter Weather iAlert

Church winter weather closing information can be heard on iAlert WKYC TV3, WEWS TV5 and WTAM 1100AM radio and will be posted to our church website and Facebook page.

To Contact Pastor Nanette...

To contact Pastor Nanette, you can call 330-253-5109 ext. 111 (church), 330-907-1050 (cell) or email her at nanette.pitt@akronfcc.org.

A Message from Christian Education

Beginning February 4, childcare will be available on Sunday mornings from 9-11am for children ages 4 through 6th grade in the Village Classroom located on the 2nd floor of the Education Wing.

Watch for the new Christian Education bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall where you will find all the most recent news and schedules!

Mark your calendar for the **Church School Work Day** on Saturday, February 24, 10am-12pm. We need help to re-organize the classrooms! Contact Rev. Karen Bruno at 330-329-9277 or email karen.bruno@akronfcc.org. Thanks!

Inquirers' Gatherings and Joining Sunday

Learn more about First Church on Sunday, March 11 and 18 from 12:15-1:30pm in the Learning Center. Light refreshments will be available. Those who wish to will then be welcomed into membership on Sunday, April 8. For more information, please contact Kari Ledger at kledger64@gmail.com or contact Logan Baez at loganstogsdill@gmail.com.

University of Akron Symphony Orchestra

First Church is pleased to host the The University of Akron Symphony Orchestra on February 6, March 22, and May 3. All concerts begin at 7:30pm and are free and open to the public.

FEBRUARY 6, 2018 • 7:30pm

Berlioz' Hungarian March

Mozart's Symphony No. 36

Griffes' Poem for Flute and Orchestra

Bizet's Carmen Suite No. 1

Dr. Guy Bordo, Conductor

with faculty flutist Daniel Velasco

Annual Reports Due March 9

The 184th First Congregational Church Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 6 following the 11am Worship Service. **The deadline to submit an Annual Report is Friday, March 9.** Please submit your report via email to deborah.anderson@akronfcc.org. Thank you!

Baby Congratulations!

Congratulations to Megan and Pat Terry on the birth of their baby, River Dennis Terry, born on January 8, 2018 and to the very proud grandparents Beth and Don Cooper!

February 2018

Sunday

Monday

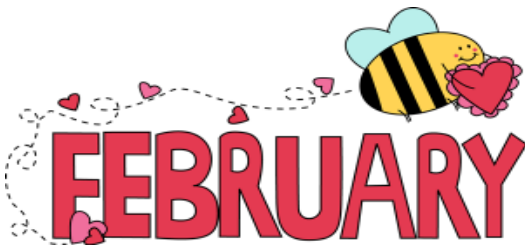
Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



Please Note: Any calendar information is subject to change after printing.

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | 12:00 Noon AA Meeting | 12:45-2:00pm Peanut Butter & Jelly Program | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Communion 9am-Noon Nursery 9am-11am Childcare (age 4-6th grade) 9:30am Worship <i>Children remain in worship with their families</i> 10:30am Children's Choir 11:00am Worship 11:00am Church School | 12:00 Noon Men's Lunch Bunch Women's Spiritual Journey AA Meeting 5:30-6:15pm Steelband | 9:30am-11:30am Food Cupboard 7:30pm U of A Concert | 10:45am Faith Enrichment 12:00 Noon AA Meeting 5:30pm Handbells 5:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Dinner <i>(reservations please!)</i> 6:45pm Faith Enrichment 6:45pm Movies | 12:00 Noon AA Meeting 6:30pm Justice & Peace Meeting | Chronicle Deadline 12:45-2:00pm Peanut Butter & Jelly Program 6:30pm Family Game Night | |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| Mardi Gras Sunday 9am-Noon Nursery 9:30am Pancake & Sausage Breakfast 10:30am Children's Choir 11am Pre-K Childcare 11:00am Worship No Church School | 12:00 Noon Men's Lunch Bunch AA Meeting | 9:30am-11:30am Food Cupboard 5:30pm Prayer Blankets | Ash Wednesday 12:00pm AA Meeting ✝ 7:30pm Ash Wednesday Service | 12:00 Noon AA Meeting 12:45-2:00pm Peanut Butter & Jelly Program | | |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 9am-Noon Nursery 9am-11am Childcare (age 4-6th grade) 9:30am Worship <i>Children remain in worship with their families</i> 10:30am Children's Choir 11:00am Worship 11:00am Church School BP & Diabetes Checks before and after worship | 12:00 Noon Men's Lunch Bunch Women's Spiritual Journey AA Meeting | 9:30am-11:30am Food Cupboard 5:30pm Prayer Blankets | Chronicle Mailing 10:45am Faith Enrichment 12:00 Noon AA Meeting 5:30pm Handbells 5:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Dinner <i>(reservations please!)</i> 6:45pm Faith Enrichment 6:45pm Movies | 12:00 Noon AA Meeting | 12:45-2:00pm Peanut Butter & Jelly Program | 10am-12pm Church School Work Day 4:30pm Love Truck Meal in Fellowship Hall |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | | | |
| 9am-Noon Nursery 9am-11am Childcare (age 4-6th grade) 9:30am Worship <i>Children remain in worship with their families</i> 10:30am Children's Choir 11:00am Worship 11:00am Church School | 12:00 Noon Men's Lunch Bunch AA Meeting 6:30pm Governing Board Meeting | 9:30am-11:30am Food Cupboard | 10:45am Faith Enrichment 12:00 Noon AA Meeting 5:30pm Handbells 5:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Dinner <i>(reservations please!)</i> 6:45pm Faith Enrichment 6:45pm Movies | | | |

The Chronicle

First Congregational Church
292 East Market Street
Akron, Ohio 44308

Please join us in wishing these FEBRUARY 2018 BIRTHDAYS a
"HAPPY BIRTHDAY"!!

If we have the wrong date or have omitted anyone, please let us know.

| | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Roy Hartz Sean Nixon | 7 Michael Long John Renner | 13 Paul Burford John Mosconi | 25 Tonya Akers Margaret Poole |
| 2 Margaret Maurer Donnell Shoffner | 9 Jim Hultz Larry Reed Gail Willmott | 18 Audrey Burtoft Nancy Jackson | 26 Casey Ahern Sandra DiMascio Charlotte Estafen |
| 3 Katherine Grove | 10 Ruth Ann Allison Connie Bair | 20 Mary Fazio | 28 Hannah Kraus |
| 4 Amanda-Joyce Abbott Brynn Ramirez | 11 Kara Ashley Nanette Pitt | 21 Harold Thomas | |
| 5 Ting Guo Renner Betty Stalnaker | 12 Bill Mitchell Hannah Petras | 23 Samuel Renner Adam Klein | |
| | | 24 Amy Fontaine Robert Renner | |