

PATHWAYS

March 2018

*You show me the path of life. In your presence there is
fullness of joy...Psalm 16:11*



First Christian Church of Stow, 3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224
www.firstchristianstow.org

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## **Sketti 'n Skits**

March 4, at 5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall  
\$6.00 for adults      \$3.00 for children  
3 years old and under are free  
Proceeds benefit Youth Activity Fund

## **Congregational Conclave Part 2**

March 10, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Discussion Topics:

Responsibilities, Leadership, and Action  
All invited

## **Join us for these Special Holiday Events and Services**

- **All-Day Prayer Vigil**, Saturday, March 24 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Palm Sunday**, March 25, Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. **Easter Egg Hunt** following late service
- **Maundy Thursday**, March 29, Agape Service at 6:30 in Disciple Hall
- **Community Good Friday Service**, March 30 at noon in the sanctuary
- **Easter**, April 1, Sunrise Service at 7:00 a.m., Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m., breakfast at 7:30 a.m.



From the  
Pastor's  
Desk

*"Our children deserve better."*

This has been a refrain I have heard echoed for decades. I have heard it in the home I grew up in, and I have said it in my home where Julie and I are working hard to raise our two children. I have heard it in the

churches I have served and in church settings of countless kinds, most especially at Camp Christian. I have heard it said in all of the educational institutions I have been associated with.

*"Our children deserve better..."*

Is there anything more agreeable than the desire to give our children better than we ourselves had? Is that not the hope, prayer, and goal of every parent, every person? It is fundamental thinking. It is baseline thinking. It is part of the moralist high ground we as humanity can take.

*"Our children deserve better."*

Jesus himself modeled this understanding and belief when he said, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."* In antiquity children were not seen as they are today, and instead were treated as second class citizens. So when his Disciples tried to turn children away so as to not bother him, Jesus commanded this and changed their thinking and views of children and taught them that children are a blessing, and we are blessed to be a blessing to them.

*"Our children deserve better."*

There is no argument here. We all can get behind this core value.

It's when we begin to move to make this happen, however, that things quickly go off the rails and the other core values we possess begin to compete with the differing core values of others, and soon we get so far off point that we have forgotten where we began in the first place.

*"Our children deserve better."*

So how will we turn this universally shared core value into a reality? It has to begin with asking questions based in curiosity; followed immediately by listening—focused, intentional listening.

We want our children to grow and learn and get a good education, but do we ask and listen to what today's teachers are saying will help them make that happen? Do we ask and listen to their frustrations, their needs, their ideas, their dreams to make that happen, or do we just say that's their job?

We want our children to be safe and feel safe, but do we ask and listen to today's politicians, sheriffs, and judges about their plans to make that happen, or do we simply look for the "D" or the "R" and then mark the box?

We want our children to be fed—we expect them to be fed—but do we ask and listen to those who are food insecure how such has happened, or do we just assume it's because they haven't worked hard enough?

We want our children to excel, thrive, achieve, and be the best—but have we asked them what they think that looks like based on their interests and likes, or do we just sign them up for soccer and t-ball and tell ourselves they'll thank us later when they get the scholarship?

In this season of Lent, in this season of yet another school shooting, in this season of continued polarization and finger pointing and inaction, I am challenging all of us to take a hard look at how we, as individuals, approach the belief and core value we hold... *"Our children deserve better."* We believe this, I know we do. So how are we working to make it a reality? Is it a constructive way, or a destructive way? Is there a way we haven't yet attempted that might begin to break the ruthless cycle we find ourselves within, and can we find a way and a place to begin to model such...like Jesus did?

So may we begin to ask questions—curious questions! And then let us listen—intently and focused. And then let us pray. Let us pray, asking God to help us and empower us unlike ever before to help make things better for our children, our children's children, all children. Together we can make this core value of all humanity a reality.

Your Pastor and Friend,  
Jonathan



**News from**  
**the Music Department**

Spring is just around the corner (hopefully), and Easter is just a month away! The choirs at FCC Stow are busy preparing music for anthems, preludes and special music.

On Palm Sunday the Chancel Choir, Joy Bells, Acorn and Crusaders Choirs will sing Craig Courtney's wonderful anthem "Procession and Hymn for Palm Sunday". This piece is based on the hymn "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna".

On Maundy Thursday the Chancel Choir and Spiritus will be singing "I Watched My Savior" by Craig Courtney, "He Became a Lamb" by Mary Kay Beall, and "When Jesus Wept" by Doug Wagner. These three songs embody the passion and angst of the final days leading to Christ's redemptive work on the cross.

On Easter Sunday the Joy Bells will be back to begin our Resurrection celebration with an arrangement of "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" by Cathy Mocklebust. Spiritus will sing "He Is Not Here" and the Chancel Choir sings a stunning arrangement of the old American folk hymn "I Know That My Redeemer Lives". In addition, the "Resurrection Brass" will be playing along on the congregational hymns for that morning. If you play trumpet, trombone, French Horn, baritone horn/euphonium or tuba and would like to join us that morning, please fill out a Connection Card and let me know. I can get you the parts ahead of time. We are going to rehearse Sunday, April 1, at 9:45a.m.

See you in Church!!  
Chuck

**It's Time!**  
**Attention all Leaders ~**

It's time to turn in your annual reports for any group(s) you lead. Please turn in to the office or email to [fccstow@firstchristianstow.org](mailto:fccstow@firstchristianstow.org)

**Youth Group In March**

There's a lot of Youth Group that will happen in March. It will be fun, faithful, and maybe even a little adventuresome! Check it out...

Sunday, March 4, we will participate in Sketti N Skits with skits and helping serve up the sketti.

Sunday March 11th, right after church, with lunch and work on our Easter Sunrise service.

Sunday, March 25, right after church, with helping the Easter Egg Hunt, followed by lunch and work on our Easter Sunrise service.

Sunday, April 1, 7 a.m. will be our Easter Sunrise Service, followed by a robust breakfast hosted by our Christian Education Team. Please arrive at 6:27 a.m.

Look for the Youth Group flyer that will be mailed to your house for more information!

**Super Bowl Sub Sale Success!**

On February 4<sup>th</sup> the Youth Group was on hand to sell Super Bowl Subs on Super Bowl Sunday! These hearty sandwiches were available for purchase after both services just in time for the big game, and included a hearty sub, a bag of chips, and cookies. We want to express a huge THANK YOU to Mike and Debbie Kostensky and Mike's Place in Kent for their generous donation of all the sub fixings. They continue to support this fundraiser year after year. Around 100 subs were made and sold, and the proceeds will go toward Youth and Christian Education ministries. THANK YOU to EVERYONE who supported this fundraiser! We hope you enjoyed your subs, and we hope that next year we will be making subs for the Cleveland Browns Super Bowl Sunday!

### Electronic Giving Options

Did you know that you can make your financial contributions to our church electronically? We support the following options for electronic giving:

- Electronic File Transfer using your bank account, or Credit Card payments.
  - This can be set up by you through a secure link on our website (FirstChristianStow.org - find the Electronic Giving option on the home screen.
  - Or you can fill out an authorization form to allow Lisa Roseman (Financial Secretary) to set it up for you.
- Bill Pay, via your own bank's website
  - Similar to setting up for making any other payments, setting this up will result in your bank sending a computer generated check to the church based on the amount and schedule you define.

Any of these can be used for a one-time donation, or scheduled for recurring donations.

More details are available outside the church office, or from Lisa Roseman (330.338.1327, [LisaRoseman@hotmail.com](mailto:LisaRoseman@hotmail.com))

### Financial Giving Update

As show by this table, our financial giving so far this year is below our budgeted amount by \$5,801. It is typical for the giving to increase as we get into better weather!

| Budget Amount<br>Jan & Feb | Actual Amount<br>Jan & Feb | Shortage for<br>Jan & Feb |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| \$41,555                   | \$35,754                   | \$5,801                   |

### SMF Community Showcase 2018

Saturday April 7, 10am-5pm  
Sunday April 8, 11am-3pm

We will again have an FCC Stow booth at the 2018 Stow-Munroe Falls Community Showcase! This is a biannual event held at Stow-Munroe Falls High School. There are over 200 exhibitor booths (with plenty of freebies!), a Kids Fun Zone, Entertainment, and Food. Of course, volunteers are needed to staff our booth in 2-3 hour shifts Saturday and Sunday - All you need to do is promote FCC Stow to any visitor who stops at our booth! Please make a note on your connection card if you are interested!

### Week of Compassion Update

This year's WOC theme, "*More Than We Can Imagine*," has sought to help us to see and know that when we support WOC, God is working in us and through us to do more than we can ever imagine—and we can imagine quite a bit, can't we?! Our church set as a goal for our offering the amount of \$2,000. And it is with great joy and excitement we share with you that as of the week of this printing we have taken in \$1,320 for Week of Compassion. Approximately \$500 of that was from the bake sale.

If you would still like to contribute to this total know there is still time! Simply place it in an offering plate on a Sunday morning with clear notation that is it for Week of Compassion, or drop your donation off at the church office.

Thank you for your generous support of this incredible and important ministry that has life-giving impacts here in the United States, and around the globe.

**Congregational Conclave Part II!**  
**Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Always leave them wanting more! And that's what folks wanted—more Congregational Conclave on February 10<sup>th</sup>. So that's what we're going to give folks on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>—Congregational Conclave part two!!

During the first conclave we discussed why we are here as a church by considering questions that led us in some thought-provoking and introspective discernment. We heard a brief clip from a sermon about taking the church beyond the church. We reviewed and shared the great and moving parts of our church, and the mundane parts and that which threatens our church. Then we began to dream dreams about what God might be calling us to do, today, and in the months and years to come, as First Christian Church of Stow, which seems to be, among them, broadening our social media presence. All in all, there was much discussion and excitement generated.

And now the conversation and the dreaming dreams continues on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. We will start at 9 a.m. (coffee and snacks at 8:45) and we will conclude this conclave at 11 a.m.

Please plan to attend—even if you did not attend the first meeting. All are welcome as this is an important and critical event in our faithful response to be the church God is calling us to be!

**Church Movie Night**  
**Friday, March 16**

The Membership Committee of First Christian Church is planning a *Movie Night* for the evening of Friday, March 16. The fun will start at 6:30 with cartoons, and then a feature. Popcorn and water will be available in the Narthex. The feature film we'll show is yet to be finalized, but we will try to select something in theme with the Lenten, Easter, and Passover season. And of course everyone, including guests, are invited!



**Slides, Projectors, Computers,**  
**and the Fate of Jonathan**  
**in Your Hands!**

Did any of those things in the above title intrigue you? If so then you might be interested in joining the Worship Tech Team. This team creates all the worship slides that are projected during worship through the use of a very cool Mac Computer that has more bells and whistles than our Joyful Noise bell choir! And not only that, you'd be in control of everything everyone sees behind Jonathan! The fate, or maybe the length, of his sermon could be in your hands!

If you are interested in helping out with this ministry team please indicate your interest on the back of your Sunday Connection Card or speak to Jonathan.

**Maundy Thursday**

Maundy Thursday is the day that the Jewish Passover was. Jesus had his last meal with his friends and followers before he was killed. This meal is now known as 'The Last Supper'. At the meal, Jesus and his friends would have followed the Jewish Passover custom of eating roast lamb and bread and drinking red wine. However, Jesus gave the bread and wine a special meaning. When they got to the part of meal when the Bread was eaten and the wine drunk, Jesus said that these would be a symbol of his body and blood to his followers to help them remember that through his death, our sins are forgiven.

Maundy comes from Latin and is the word for 'Command', this is because Jesus commanded his followers to think of him when they ate bread and drank wine. This is very important to Christians and is now remembered in the Christian service known as Communion.

Join us for our Agape Service  
as we remember this Last Supper.

### **All-Day Prayer Vigil**

**Saturday, March 24th 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM**

Help to prepare for Holy Week by participating in our annual All-Day Prayer Vigil. The vigil will be held on Saturday, March 24th from 7:00 AM until 7:00 PM. Several opportunities to engage in prayerful meditation will be available to accommodate different tastes, from traditional reflection and prayer in the Chapel to a time of more sensory and creative expression using coloring and drawing—perfect for families with children--in the adjacent classroom off the Chapel.

A sign-up sheet listing available half-hour shifts will be available in the gathering area. For more information contact Jonathan or a member of the Worship Ministry Team. Let us plan to be a community of prayer as we prepare ourselves for Holy Week.

### **Maundy Thursday Agape Service**

**Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday at FCC Stow is an evening unlike any other throughout the rest of the year. We gather in our Disciples Hall which has been transformed from rec hall to Upper Room. There we join with our Savior on that night before he was crucified to share with him a meal—a simple meal of light foods indicative of this first century setting. It is a meal intended to fill us up spiritually more so than physically because this meal, like the one Jesus shared with his Disciples, leads to a profound and moving time of worship where the dim setting, impactful music, moving and touching prayers, holy scripture, and living words of institution take on a deeper and more powerful meaning than any other time of the year.

Please inform the church office of your attendance, and how many in your party, so that seating and food arrangements are sufficiently made.

### **Community Good Friday**

**Time of Worship**

**Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, Noon,  
First Christian Church**

The Stow Ministerial Association will hold an inter-denominational Good Friday time of worship on March 30<sup>th</sup>, beginning at noon, this year right here at our church. This time of scripture, meditation, and song will guide us through the passion narratives

found in the Gospels while guiding us in considering and remembering again the sacrifice Jesus made so that we would have eternal and everlasting life. Make this part of your Holy Week experience.

### **Easter Morning Sunrise Service and Breakfast**

**Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 7 a.m.**

The time honored tradition of our youth leading us in a time of worship as the sun begins to rise on another Easter morn continues this year. Students will read scripture, lead us in prayer, and lead us in singing hymns of resurrection in this simple yet faithful time of worship.

Additionally, the youth will share with us their “Spiritual Journey Collage”, a special art project the youth began working on last month—a word and picture depiction of their spiritual journey from where it began, to where it is, to where they hope and pray it will be.

Following this worship service you are invited to a special breakfast in the Fellowship Hall hosted by our Christian Education Team.

Please plan to make this special time of worship a part of your Easter celebration!

### **Easter Worship Services**

**Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**8:30 in the Chapel**

**10:45 in the Sanctuary**

*“Alleluia he is risen, risen indeed!”* Not only do we shout these words with joy and praise, we celebrate again the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. This time of worship illuminates the Good News that because of Jesus, never again does death get to have the last word.



## Conclave Reflections by Lynn Fauvie

I have always thought of Conclave as being the secret meetings of the Roman Catholic Church where Cardinals gather to elect a new Pope. It is. However! Conclave also has different meanings, i.e., a number of persons who have come or been gathered together, assembly, conference, etc.

Of course, the latter of these descriptions applies here at FCC Stow and our conclaves are open to all who want to and can attend. At our February conclave, Pastor Jonathan presented a video sermon excerpt, which was given by Rev. Adam Hamilton at the last General Assembly, and challenged our minds to begin thinking about the content he had prepared to generate ideas, creative thinking, questioning, dreaming, and most importantly, an inward look into our hearts as to why we (you and I) come to this church, as well as thoughts on how we can be an example of God's love to all - in a relevant way.

Growing up, I witnessed my parent's belief in the importance of God and church, especially to all who lived through the wars and conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The church was THE bond that held people together, both socially and in faith. The church was made through great sacrifice to establish the freedom and foundation we have today, and I often take that for granted because I didn't live it.

But, what about the generation of today and those of tomorrow? Where do they fit in? There are many distractions and replacements pulling them away from the church that I didn't have and I need to understand that. In the conclave, we talked about many of these distractions, including how Christianity has been negatively impacted by small interest groups that challenge the church's inclusivity; and how the Church's hypocrisy (whether perceived or real) is publicly paraded in the media and then is judged as out-of-touch and antiquated. In many ways, the church, as an institution, has become obsolete and irrelevant to today's generation.

Along with the positive ministry we are doing at FCC Stow and in the community, the above examples are some of the types of threats and issues we discussed in the conclave. As a congregation, we are truly concerned about how the church can be relevant to those who have never crossed the threshold of a church door (and would be lost if they did), and to those who haven't found that God's grace and love can overflow their cup in a world of pain and despair. How can God relate to this generation *through us*?

While we began the discussion of what actions we can, or ought to take to address the opportunities, we ran out of time to explore our resources and options. Therefore, we decided to have a follow-up meeting to continue the discussion. Our next conclave is set for Saturday, March 10, with coffee and fellowship at 8:45 AM, and the meeting to start at 9:00 AM sharp. Our goal is to conclude this session by 11:00 AM.

Please join us to explore and discern God's plan for First Christian Church, Stow!