



3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224
330.688.4450
www.firstchristianstow.org

PATHWAYS

JULY 2021

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

Find us on Social
Media @FCCStow!



➤ **Knights of the North Castle
Vacation Bible School,
July 11th – July 15th**

➤ **Summer Camps, Conferences at Camp
Christian
July 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th**

➤ **Loaves and Fishes + Pantry
July 18th**

➤ **Night at Canal Park with the Akron
RubberDucks,
August 21st**

July 2021 Pastor's Pen

It was a day that was delayed again and again.

It was a day that had its challenges to make happen.

It was a day that had a lot of moving parts, and not to mention busy and full calendars to coordinate.

It was a day that needed a lot of people to work together and make happen all the moving parts.

It was a day that had roadblock after roadblock spring up in its way.

But it was an amazing day that was never, ever, **cancelled**.

This truth, that it was an amazing day that could never be cancelled, was a message I shared with the community who gathered at Silver Lake Beach for the baptisms of the ten students who had completed our church's Pastor's Class. This day amazing day of confessions of faith, of baptisms, of first communions, of celebration, of love, of becoming a new creation in the body of Christ was never cancelled because God's grace and forgiveness, God's hope, peace, joy, and love can never, ever, be cancelled.

And though it was delayed, and postponed, and filled with challenges, what an incredible, amazing, and faithful day it was. Baptisms at 9 a.m. at Silver Lake—thanks to church members and Silver Lake Trustees who were incredibly helpful, gracious, considerate, generous, and kind. Worship at 10 a.m. that celebrated the gift and blessings of baptism through scripture, word, song, prayer, reminders of our baptisms and our responsibility to the newly baptized, and even video footage of each baptism that was quickly yet professionally cut, edited, and inserted into the service for all to see. And then a serene and sacred service of first communion for the newly baptized, and communion for all who gathered, at a make-shift outdoor chapel upon our church grounds—complete with music, more than sufficient sound and song, prayer, table, bread, and cup. All concluded with a wonderful time of food and fellowship bathed in the beauty and gentle breeze of an absolutely gorgeous June summer day.



It was an amazing day that was delayed, again and again, but it was never cancelled.

Baptism Sunday 2021 for the ten students who were baptized, for their families, for our church family, and for the body of Christ was a physically manifestation of the Apostle Paul's who said, "***For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***"

And not only was Baptism Sunday 2021 an embodiment of Romans 8:38-39, but now, because of all that had to happen for it to happen, we can faithfully add to the Apostle Paul's list: ***nor pandemic, nor social distancing, nor quarantining, nor having to gather online, nor having to keep to our pods, nor having to delay events, nor having to work out logistics and busy schedules, nor any amount of roadblocks—real or metaphorical—will ever be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

It was a day that was long in coming. But it came nevertheless because God's love cannot be stopped—by anything or anyone. And what an amazing day it was. It has been a long time since my heart was as filled as it was on Baptism Sunday 2021.

So may we remember our baptisms, and the love and grace and forgiveness we have been given over and over again since that day. May we remember the ten students and what they did on their baptism Sunday, and hold them in our prayers as they begin the next stage of their faith journey. May we remember our responsibility to them, and to all of God's children, to be those who live as those who are part of the body of Christ by sharing the Good news of Jesus with all people. And may we give thanks for, and embrace the truth, that no matter what, nothing can ever cancel God's grace and forgiveness, God's hope, peace, joy, and love.

What an amazing day it was because of God's love. And what amazing days are to come, because of God's love.

Your Pastor and Friend,
Jonathan

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Loaves & Fishes + Pantry Update

June 20 (Father's Day) was the occasion of our most recent Loaves & Fishes + Pantry. Visitors had three options for their meal, hot dogs, coney dogs, or sloppy joes. We served 51 meals. As usual not everyone who came for a meal needed groceries.

We distributed groceries to 18 different households, which included 23 seniors. We served 8 new households. The groceries distributed were the equivalent of 222 meals.

July 18th is the next drive thru meal. Saturday the 17th we will meet to assemble subs and sides at 10:30 a.m. Sunday is distribution from 4-6 p.m. We hope you "drive through", and not by the church!

Pizza Party @ Glendora House

Friday, July 8th, First Christian Church is hosting a pizza party for Family Promise at Glendora House at supper time. Want to help? Call Mary Ellen Neitz 330-815-4223!

Like a Good Neighbor, First Christian is There

First Christian Church will be collecting school supplies for Cuyahoga Falls Good Neighbors. The need is great this year as children make their return to school full time!

Donated items must be at the Church by July 11th to be delivered to Good Neighbors that week. A bin will be by the upper door. Checks for donation can be sent to the Church and notated for Good Neighbors. Below is a list of supplies we are looking to contribute:

Backpacks	Pencils	1' Notebooks
Colored Pencils	Pencil Sharpeners	Pencil Boxes or Pouches
Pens (Black or Blue)	Two Pocket Folders	Loose Leaf Paper
Markers	Crayons	Highlighters
Erasers	Scissors	Rulers
Glue	Glue Sticks	Kleenex
Scientific Calculators		

Stow Strong Celebration

On June 26th – July 5th, the city of Stow is celebrating the community spirit! Picnics, Bicycle parades, firecracker runs, and the annual 4th of July Together STOW STRONG! parades are coming



soon. Some events require registration. Information for this spectacular summer show of our shining city can be found online at

<https://stowohio.org/stow-strong-celebration-2/>.

More information will be available at StowOhio.org under their special events tab as the event draws near. Parade approximate times and route are also posted. Make sure you don't get caught on the road when they shut down the streets for the parade!

Vacation Bible School Knights of the North Castle is Almost Here!

HUZZAH! There is still time to join us on our adventure! Gather your arms and armor, knights, for we need you on our journey with the Knights of the North Castle! **Our VBS quest begins Sunday, July 11th through Thursday, July 15th from 6 to 8 p.m.** There will be no shortage of adventure and surprise on the quest for the King's Armor!

Speak with your quartermasters, **Anna and Richelle** at ChristianEd@FirstChristianStow.org and sign up to serve, lead, and most of all on this adventure, HAVE FUN with The Knights of the North Castle!



Veteran's Event with Valor Home

While details are still being confirmed, there's plans in the works to provide a meal in partnership with Valor Home for Veterans around Independence Day. Keep an eye on your emails and listen for more updates as we approach the 4th of July.

Though their service can never be thanked enough, to give back in this small way to our veterans, contact Diane Waite at waitedia@yahoo.com and let her know you want to serve!

Snail Mail Our Camp Christian Campers!

Camper Name
c/o Camp Christian
10335 Maple Dell Rd.
Marysville, OH 43040

Six students and two counselors will be heading to Camp Christian this month! And it is always an exciting and thrilling feeling to hear your name ring out during mail call! Please consider sending a note to our campers and counselors while they are at camp, and let them know you are thinking about them and praying they are having a wonderful week at Camp Christian.

Chi Rho Camp is Sunday, July 4 to Saturday July 10, and Zoey Waite and Lillie Carmony will be attending.

Jr. Camp is Sunday, July 18 to Wednesday, July 21, and Ava Lazor, Arianna Fraley, Violet Rumburg, A.J. Rumburg, Julie Rumburg, and Jonathan Rumburg will be attending.

May we call keep in our prayers the summer camp programs at Camp Christian, giving thanks they are happening, while praying God's blessings continue to be poured out upon those who are working so hard to make them happen in a safe and healthy way.

FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT:

Music Notes
July 2021

Is it over, yet? The pandemic, I mean. It certainly seems like it is abating. Fewer and fewer people wearing masks, schools started back to in person learning, and more and more of us are looking to have a "normal" summer again. I can't tell you how happy I will be to get back to leading the choirs, and interacting with more and more of you.

Which brings me to the topic of today's article: Are we really going to be back to normal? The short answer is...I hope so. If all continues as it is right now, I would like to see the choirs meeting again for weekly rehearsal beginning Thursday, September 9. Welcome Sunday will be September 12, and I would hope the choir could be up and running by then. Obviously, there are a lot of considerations: Will the virus have diminished enough? Will members be comfortable enough to gather in close quarters, with or without masks, to rehearse and perform? Will we remember how to sing? Will we be allowed to sing by then?

To help me answer these questions, I would love to hear from choir members (Chancel Choir, Joy Bells, Crusader Ringers, et al) and get your impressions, thoughts, concerns, ideas, and goals. Feel free to text or call (330-760-5177), or email (ckobb@att.net). If I don't hear from you, I'll assume you are comfortable with whatever is decided.

Of course, please pray for God's guidance and grace as well as good health for all. I wish you all a great summer.

God bless,
Chuck

Sponsor-A-Camper Matching Grants

Thanks to our friends at First Christian Church of Athens, there is now a matching \$10,000 grant to help fund the Sponsor-A-Camper fund at Camp

Christian! Just think, if you skip buying that venti at Starbucks, and instead give the money to Camp Christian... That's like getting TWO different campers a caramel macchiato! What could be better?

If you are inclined to give, this is a great opportunity to work with both Camp Christian and FCC Athens to make a difference in the lives of possibly dozens of campers. Just follow this link to learn more: <https://www.ccinoh.com/other-pages/donation.aspx>

Loaves and Fishes Stories

Everyone who received a meal (or a meal and groceries) was very thankful for our outreach. Some spoke at length about how much our generosity lifts their spirits; some showed their gratitude simply through smiles of relief; some were thankful that for that night and following days they would not have to worry about where their next meal would come from.

There were some individual stories: one inquired what he had to do to join our church (believe in Jesus and show up on Sunday at 10:00!); one was trying to save money to buy a ticket to visit ill relatives in Haiti; one family was on their third house in three months and scrambling just to survive.

Helping these people would not happen without the support of everyone in our church. Many people have donated time, food items, and money behind the scenes to make this work. We especially thank the volunteers who showed up on Father's Day to help others.

-Tom Safford, Chair of the Elders

Welcome Katie Taylor—Our New Director of Youth Ministries!

You will recall last fall the Stewardship Team, Elders, and Governing Board proposed creating and implementing a new staff position—Director of Youth Ministries—that would begin in the fall of 2021. The decision was made to fund this position through restricted Christian Education funds in 2021, and then it would be included in the 2022 general budget.

And now the Elders, Christian Education Team, and Governing Board are thrilled to share the

news that this new staff position has been offered to, and accepted by, our very own Katie Taylor!

Katie will begin her ministry officially on September 1, 2021. She brings to this position not only her lifelong experience of growing up in First Christian Stow, but she also brings with her an enthusiasm and passion for working with young students and being in a role of support for those who are working to figure out what it means to be a young person of faith in today's world. Throw in that she is just a heck of a lot of fun and a professionally trained baker, and our church has all the makings of an amazing and delicious youth ministry program!

Let us all hold Katie in our prayers as she prepares to respond to God's call of "*Whom shall I send?*" with an emphatic "*Here I am Lord, is it I Lord. I have heard you calling...*"

Well-loved TVs and Monitors Free to A Good Home

The church has several old televisions that aren't in use anymore. They're absolutely free! These old-style CRTs are really good for playing retro video-games or old VHS tapes for the nostalgia factor, if you're into that sort of thing. I'm sure there's also some scraping Below is the list of available screens.

- 52' LG television, widescreen, old style flatscreen (Working Condition)
- 24' Toshiba CRT TV DVD and VHS Player (Working Condition for screen. DVD/VHS is unknown)
- 16' ViewSonic CRT computer monitor (Not in working condition)
- 20' RCA TV w/ a on-board VHS player (Working condition for screen. VHS player is unknown.)
- 20' Trutech TV (Working Condition)

If you're interested in picking up some screens for whatever the reason, contact the church office and tell Christian! You may need to bring a strong helping hand if you'd like to get the 52-inch LG. It's a little bit much for one guy to carry! Anything

that is not taken by membership will be taken to an E-recycle or donated. You can contact Christian at FCCStow@FirstChristianStow.org or 330-668-4450.

Blood Drive at Holy Family Parish **July 6th, 2021**

Just down the road, The Stow-Munroe Falls Lions is sponsoring a blood drive with the Red Cross at Holy Family Parish Church Hall on Tuesday, July 6th, from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Just make sure you bring your Red Cross Donor card or another form of Picture I.D. (Such as your Ohio Driver's License, perhaps. They might not be able to use your latest and greatest birthday photo).

If you're able to help, please call 1-800-733-2767 (1-800-RED-CROSS) and set up an appointment. Someone out there will be thankful! Just don't dial 1-800-DRA-CULA. Christian tried that last time, and it didn't turn out so well.

Taking Care of God's House

As in your own house sometimes God's house needs some TLC. Below is a partial list of items that need attention.

If you are able to take on one of these projects, either alone or with a friend, contact John McCreight Jr. or Rick Lloyd. They will help secure needed materials and check it off the list.

Thanks,
The Church Trustees

- * Scrape, primer, and paint 4 exterior doors.
- * Paint the outside bench by the elevator entrance
- * Clean windows inside and out - lower entrance and front entrance
- * Seal coat the benches by fire circle
- * Paint the block and brick around the emergency porch south of Chapel
- * Repair and paint the trim above office windows
- * Secure wires below office windows and clean window well

(This is a great way to work *with* your kids or a niece/nephew and help them develop a heart of service and volunteering! Perhaps they could use some handy skill development as well? -Christian)

Bulldog Bags Update **May – June 2021**

Though the pandemic changed how Bulldog Bags had to operate through 2020, an incredible service to the Stow-Munroe Falls community has been accomplished. Below are just a few of the details from their charity.

- 11,112 Bulldog Bags packed and distributed
- \$44,486.19 was spent on the 18 packings (\$2,471.46 average per packing)
- Due to the safety guidelines, food was set-up and bags were packed by about 12 dedicated volunteers.
- Other dedicated volunteers delivered an average of 51 bins to the schools for each packing (924 bins total for the 18 packings)!

As we celebrate the good works in the year prior, we prepare for the service ahead (and believe it or not, there's more to do than ever before!). The summer *Bulldog Boxes* program has more registered families than ever before! With 107 families to serve, First Christian Church of Stow has a chance to serve our community through Bulldog Boxes and it's associated events. Upcoming is their Stow Picnic on July 26th. To sign up as a volunteer, go to www.bulldogbags.org/events.

A full list of Bulldog Bags events will be posted in the July issue of the Pathways Newsletter. If you or someone you know is struggling with food insecurity, qualifying families can register at www.bulldogbags.org/summer-program

Rubber Ducks Game, Fireworks, and Tailgate Party, Saturday, August 21st

Registration is still open to attend the Akron Rubber Ducks game on Saturday, August 21st. We are thrilled this summertime tradition for our church and friends is returning to Canal Park as it is a joy to spend an evening with church family watching the Rubber Ducks "*hit 'em where they ain't,*" and then take in a spectacular firework show after the game.

Don't forget, this night will feature the man the myth, the legend, Uncle Ricco (Jon Gries) from the hit cult classic film, *Napoleon Dynamite!* Don't miss your chance to have Uncle Ricco tell you, "*Back in '82, I used to be able to toss a pigskin a*

quarter mile.” If that means anything to you then you know you have to be at this game. If nothing about this makes any sense to you, that’s ok because it is useless knowledge and there won’t be a quiz.

As stated before: Make plans to come and tailgate at the church from 4-6 that afternoon! Hot dogs, beverages, and fellowship will all be on hand for a socially distanced tailgate extravaganza!

Tickets are just \$10! What a bargain! Not as much of a bargain in past years, but hey, getting out to a night at the ballpark and tailgating for a couple extra bucks is worth it right!? See Bill Dowey or contact the church office to reserve yours tickets today!

John Lewis Bridge Dedication **Saturday, July 17, 9 a.m.**

In September 2020, Stow City Council passed a resolution to rename the Steels Corners Bridge after Congressman John Lewis. The bridge naming resolution follows the unanimously passed resolution to Promote Racial Equality in Stow, co-sponsored by Councilwomen Sindi Harrison and Christina Shaw in June 2020.

On July 17, 2021, The City of Stow will commemorate the naming of The John Lewis Memorial Bridge with a march across the bridge and dedication ceremony. The march will begin at 9:00 a.m. from the T.G.I.Friday’s parking lot, move across the bridge and end at the Stow Municipal Court for the dedication. The dedication program will begin at Stow Municipal Court at 9:45 AM.

“John Lewis was a tremendous man, and this dedication of The John Lewis Memorial Bridge is one way we can honor his legacy as a staunch supporter of equality and The City of Stow’s commitment to support diversity.” said City of Stow Mayor John Pribonic.

The bridge dedication is one of three events currently being promoted by the City of Stow Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiative. The City of Stow has also renamed what was once The Silver Springs Lodge, *The Leona Farris Lodge* in honor of former Stow resident Leona Farris which will be dedicated September 16, 2021. The new Summa Health Stow-Kent Medical Center opened June 26, 2021 and also pays homage to the first Black residents of Stow, including Leona Farris, whose homes once stood on the site.

Complete information about The March to Commemorate The John Lewis Memorial Bridge can be found at the City of Stow Diversity, Equity and Inclusion website: <https://stowohio.org/dei-initiative/>

The City of Stow has also set up two Diversity, Equity and Inclusion scholarships through the Stow Schools Foundation, and sponsorship opportunities for the John Lewis Memorial Bridge naming event directly support those scholarships. Inquiries about sponsorship and all other inquiries can be directed to: stowdei@stow.oh.us

STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

Happy Summertime, everyone! I feel like we are collectively awakening to more activities and opportunities in our community, and in our church. The church calendar and our own family calendar have more events captured on them than I have seen in many months, and we still have several weeks of Summer ahead of us!

For each celebratory event at our church, such as the recent baptisms of ten young people at the end of June, Vacation Bible School that will be open to the public in July, or our plans in process to honor military veterans during the month of July; there will likely be some financial expense incurred to the church. We are a frugal and conscientious church, however, so we are very good at keeping these costs to a minimum. However, there is also the expense of time and intention to take these plans from an idea to an actual event, the labor to make the event happen, the unique connections made to special talents and trades, and non-financial supports for these events to occur.

The spirit of Stewardship to me is the return of gifts that have already been abundantly bestowed on us from our Heavenly Father. As we find ourselves busy with our own Summertime activities, please consider how our gifts, talents, tithes, and offerings can continue to support First Christian Church of Stow and our efforts to BE the church to others. We pray that every gift given in your name is used where it is needed most, by those who are most in need of your Fatherly love. Thank you.

- Diane Waite, June Elder Lay Leader

Update from the
Finance/Stewardship Team
Financial Giving from the Congregation
for January – June 2021

We won't close the financial books for June for a couple more days, but I wanted to provide a status of where we are currently with our congregational giving.

The Total Income budget amount is \$21,181 per month. This includes congregational giving and other income sources like building rental.

For the month of June, so far, our income is \$21,080. For the month this is below the budget amount by \$101.

Year to date our income has been \$131,059. This is above the budget for Year to date by \$3,972.

You can see that our income dropped in June, compared to May. If our giving can return to a level exceeding the budget that will help us successfully meet our 'Leap of Faith', where our budgeted expenses are higher than our budgeted income!

Here is the information in table format:

2021	Jan-Mar	Apr	May	June	YTD
Actual Income	\$65,146	\$20,588	\$24,245	\$21,080	\$131,059
Budget Income	\$63,544	\$21,181	\$21,181	\$21,181	\$127,087
Actual Income- Budget Income	\$1,602	(\$593)	\$3,064	(\$101)	\$3,972

As we shared in December, the budget approved by the Governing Board and the congregation for 2021 has the total expenses higher than the total income. We refer to that gap as our Leap of Faith, with the hopeful expectation that throughout the year we will be able to both increase our income and control our expenses appropriately.

The 2021 Leap of Faith amount is \$20,046 for the full year. If you personally are feeling financially stable and would like to make an additional gift to the church above your normal giving, those are always appreciated. Any increases will help position us to be able to increase the outreach assistance we can provide to our community, both local and globally.

Please let any member of the Finance/Stewardship team know if you would like to see our full reports, we are happy to share them.