



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Stow, OH

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PATHWAYS

APRIL 2022

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

Find us on social
media @FCCStow!

Stow Community Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 9th, 10am-1pm

Silver Springs Park, 5238 Young Rd., Stow

Look for more details and how you can help our church's involvement in this
community event!

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil, Easter Sunday

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on April 10th

Maundy Thursday time of worship on April 14th, at 7 p.m. in-person and on
Facebook Live.

Community Good Friday worship on April 15th, at Noon, in person at New Life
Church, 4415 Darrow Rd.

Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil, April 16th, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. More information inside.

Easter Sunrise Service, April 17th, 7 a.m. More information inside.

Easter Sunday worship, April 17th, 8:30 in the Chapel, 10:30 in the Sanctuary.
10:30 also on Facebook.

Governing Board, Monday, April 11th, 7 p.m.

The Governing Board will meet on Monday, April 11th, at 7 p.m.

Loaves and Fishes + Pantry April 24*, 4-6p.m.

Free monthly dinner! Drive-Thru/Carry Out, 4-6 p.m.

This will also time will also include the +pantry food distribution.

*Note this is a different Sunday due to the Easter holiday.

See inside this issue for more information.

Celebrating 100 Years of Life!

One from our church family will be celebrating her 100th birthday in the month of
April! See details inside about who this person is and how you and yours
can help celebrate this incredible milestone of 100 years of life!

April 2022 Pastor's Pen

What to write about? What to write about?

That's always the question going through my head when I set myself to write these monthly "pastor's pen" for the church newsletter. Back when I was at First Christian Wadsworth, Rev. Singleton and I alternated each month writing this same type of piece for "The Caller" newsletter. When he wrote his it was under that afore mentioned title, but when it was my month the title of the piece changed to "Rumburg's Ramblings." I don't remembering giving my blessing for this title, and I can't imagine I would have because to me it doesn't sound very flattering, not inviting to read. But, as I would come to learn, titles to everything church are best when done with alliteration, so who was I to argue?

Still, the irony lingers even today because there are times (not just in this piece) where I feel and/or wonder if I am just rambling on and on and on and on and on... You get the point. I suspect you might feel the same way at times. I do try really hard for that to not be the case though because I've always believed words are among the most powerful of tools available to us to make a truly lasting impact. Words can literally change the world after all. And so it is always my aim to make my words, at the very least, somewhat impacting; somewhat challenging; somewhat meaningful; and hopefully, when needed, comforting. Still, the wonder of the "Rumburg Ramblings" lingers large. (See, alliteration does resonate doesn't it?)

I mean take for instance this April "pastor's pen." It seems this piece would be a slam dunk for a preacher to crank out 500-700 words in no time because in just a couple of weeks we will be celebrating the great and glorious day of resurrection. I mean, how much more of a softball for making an *impact* and bringing *meaning* and *hope* can a preacher get tossed up to him or her? It practically writes itself! And if that's not enough to get your word count up, throw in Palm Sunday and all of Holy Week and any preacher worth his/her salt can knock out a "pastor's pen" of anything length without



blinking. "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." "One of you will betray me. Surely not I Lord." "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." And those are just a few of the treasure trove of repeatable highlights to drive the Church to the empty tomb. But still... it all seems so...wilderness wandering... so resurrection rambling.

Not to belittle the wilderness we have been invited and encouraged to wander through, and certainly not to disparage the resurrection in even the slightest of ways—but I can't help but think and believe if we don't take some intentional efforts in these last couple of weeks before that great and glorious day of resurrection that when get to Easter day, shout "He is risen! Risen indeed!" we will have simply just bided our time until it was all just over...and out.

Lent is meant to lead us not just to Easter, but through a time of brokenness and barrenness that shapes and reshapes our faith in the One who promises us again and again new life through grace and the forgiveness of sins. Lent is meant to move us not just through weeks on the calendar, but through a dimness and darkness we cannot move through on our own, so that by the time we finally get to that great and glorious day of Easter we will be different...we will be changed...we will have a newness about us that wasn't before. That is what this season is meant to do. It is meant to change us into new beings—beings who once again "get" what Christ has done and given; beings who then take that newness and, well... have an impact, challenge the ways of the world, bring meaning and hope to others, offer comfort where it's needed, and seek to change the world for the better.

So has that been happening? Is that what we have been preparing for? Come Easter morning is that what will be completed? For you? For us? For our church? For the Church? For those who know us? Will we be an outward sign of the inward grace that has once again been given to us? Or am I just rambling?

Here's hoping and praying each of you and your loved ones have a holy, blessed and very Happy Easter.

Your Pastor and Friend,
Jonathan

Pastor's Class!

*Sundays now through May 22nd, 9:30 a.m.
in the church library*

Attention all youth in fifth grade or older who have not been baptized or want to make a reaffirmation of their baptism, and their parents: You are invited to be part of this year's Pastor's Class. Classes meet each Sunday, now through Sunday, May 22nd which will also be Baptism Sunday.

Contact Jonathan for more information.

Betty Lappin Turns 100 Years Young!!

April 2021 will mark the 100th birthday of our dear friend and long, long, long, time First Christian Stow member Betty Lappin! Can you even begin to imagine life 100 years ago?!

So let us plan to show Betty how thrilled we are for her as she reaches this incredible milestone in life only a few get to boast about! And let us do so through an avalanche of **100 birthday cards!!**

Each and every person—wife, husband, mother, father, kids and grandkiddos, neighbors and friends—let's all take a moment and wish Betty a Happy 100th Birthday!

This Sunday, April 10th, we will have birthday cards on hand at the church for every individual to pick out one, write wishes for a happy 100th birthday, sign, and then leave there at the church where they will then be delivered on (or before if that works out better for Betty and her family) her birthday of April 15th.

Maundy Thursday Agape Service **Thursday, April 14th 7 p.m.**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Loaves & Fishes + Pantry

Loaves & Fishes + Pantry showed an increase in March over our totals for February. We served about 75 meatloaf dinners to various and sundry people ranging from people simply with a taste for meatloaf to those who really needed a meal and couldn't afford one.

For the pantry portion we served 24 households totaling 70 people. That total included 26 seniors and 16 children. Each household received 5 bags of assorted groceries. The bags included items like peanut butter & jelly, spaghetti with sauce, canned vegetables, canned fruit, cereal, coffee, donuts, bread, chips, applesauce, macaroni & cheese, and so on.

All this food would generate 420 meals or roughly 6 meals per person. April's Loaves & Fishes + Pantry will be on Sunday the 24th. We've delayed a week because the third Sunday is Easter. We will resume serving on the fourth Sunday in May.

Meals will be available April 24th, 4-6p.m. for pickup in the lower lot. Macaroni and cheese and chicken nuggets will be served. Happy Easter!

Bulldog Donations **'21-'22 School year**

Below is a list of our upcoming donation items for Bulldog Boxes/Bags. Be sure to follow along WITH the dates! Perishable goods may not keep forever in a donation bin!

Unscented Soap	Due April 11
Cup of Mac n Cheese	Due May 5

Maundy Thursday at FCC Stow is always a holy and sacred night, and is set to be again this year. Though we will not gather for our Agape Dinner, we will still have an opportunity to worship on this holy night together in our sanctuary and on Facebook Live. But no matter where we are, the space we gather in for this special time of worship is transformed into that sacred upper room where Jesus gathered with his Disciples on the night before his crucifixion. There we join with our Savior to share with him a meal intended to fill us up spiritually more 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 plan to make this time of worship part of your Holy Week remembrances and celebration.

**Community Good Friday Time of
Worship**
**Friday, April 15th, Noon, New Life
Church**

The Stow Ministerial Association will hold an inter-denominational Good Friday time of worship on April 15th, beginning at noon, at New Life Church, 4415 Darrow Rd in Stow. (Drive north from the church about two miles.) This time of scripture, meditation, and song will take 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. You are invited and

CHRISTIAN ED

Summer Camp Dates and Information!

Camp Christian, Summer 2022

Registration is open for Camp Christian! Below are ALL of the camp weeks available from Camp Christian. Forms can be found online at the following link or by asking Christian via email (FCCStow@FirstChristianStow.org) or in the office. <https://www.ccinoh.com/camp-christian/summer-programs/form-downloads-and-links.aspx>. Make sure you jump on registration early to get the Early Bird discount!

Grandparents Camp: June 9th – 11th
Chi Rho Camp #1: June 12th – 18th
CYF Conference #1: June 19th – 25th
Otter Camp: June 26th – July 2nd
Adult Conference: June 27th – July 1st
Ribbit Camp: July 6th – 9th
Chi Rho Camp #2: July 10th – 16th
CYF Conference #2: July 17th – 23rd
Advanced Conference: July 24th – 31st

Camp Christian Work Day **May 14th, 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

If you find yourself looking to help Camp Christian as they prepare for a big summer season of camp weeks after camp weeks, you can join them on May 14th to help them with their preparation! Tasks include painting, repairing the Dining Hall roof, setting up chairs around camp, and organizing the free store (Just to name a few!). Camp Christian is at 10335 Maple Dell Rd., Marysville, OH 43040.

encouraged to make this part of your Holy Week experience.

Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil
Saturday April 16, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

The Apostle Paul calls for us to “*pray without ceasing.*” He didn’t mean we have to be on our knees or kneeling before a chancel 24/7, but rather that we are open to God’s presence with us at all times, and that a prayerful life is what ought to lead us in our daily lives.

As we seek to focus on our Holy Week walk, from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, to the confusion and fear of Maundy Thursday, to the agony of Good Friday, may we aim to take a part of Holy Saturday to intentionally be in prayer for the new life that is made possible through the life, death, and soon resurrection of our Savior Jesus.

To do this we invite you to be part of this annual prayer vigil on Saturday, April 2nd. This prayer vigil will be held from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., in the Chapel at the church, or in any location of your choosing—your home, a park, a quiet spot, or maybe even the front steps of our Chapel where you can let the sounds of the busy road and the people passing by guide your prayers for our community and the world around us.

You can follow this link to our Sign-Up Genius and sign-up for a half hour time slot for the prayer vigil:

<https://forms.gle/5xeoq4udZ8daAwYu8>

(Although sign-up is not required to be part of this day of prayer).

Multiple people can sign-up for the same time-slot. We invite you to use the comment section of the sign-up to share a prayer you will be lifting up, a prayer request, where you plan to be praying from, or any other relevant information to the

YOUTH GROUP

Sunday, April 24th!

3:30pm-5pm

Loaves and Fishes!

We will be helping out with our monthly Loaves and Fishes/Food Pantry this month!

*Feel free to join us at the Stow Easter Egg Hunt Saturday April 9th from 10am-1pm as we pass out our easter candy!

This month in the youth group we will be helping out our Stow community in many ways! We will be making easter bags for the Stow Easter Egg Hunt at Silver Springs Park. We will also be assisting with our very own First Christian Church of Stow’s Loaves and Fishes dinner on April 24th. With Palm Sunday right around the corner we will be working on turning our palms into crosses for our congregation. The Easter season is a great time to “pay it forward” to those around us. As we continue through this lenten season we must set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ and his sacrifice, life, death, and resurrection.

-Katie Taylor, Director of Youth

prayer vigil. It won't be difficult to come up with matters to lift in prayer, but some themes and focuses to pray about could include: Essentials for our members and community; healing for those in need; peace for those feeling restless; hope for those feeling hopeless; comfort for those feeling alone; gratefulness for God's constant and abiding presence.

Let us join our hearts and minds and spirits together, no matter the distance between us, and go to God in prayer.

Week(s) of Compassion 2022!

“Love Remains”

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

~1 Corinthians 13:13

Each February our church seeks to support our denomination's relief and humanitarian aid ministry called Week of Compassion. Our goal for 2022 was to raise \$2,000. As of the end of March we have collected a total of... *(drum roll please...)* a whopping \$3,957.00!! Thank you to everyone who has given so generously to this year's Week(s) of Compassion campaign!

And please note if you haven't yet, there is still time to get a gift to the church to be included in this year's offering. Our individual offerings matter and can make a huge impact because gifts to Week of Compassion multiply over and over, enabling the Church as one body to achieve significant change in the world. We are one in Christ Jesus, and our love given changes the world. For more information check out the Week of Compassion website at www.weekofcompassion.org

Week(s) of Compassion 2022 Bake Sale!

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Week of Compassion Bake sale a smashing success once again! Thank you to all who donated to the bake sale, and thank you to all who so lovingly and graciously sacrificed their diet and made purchases for the bake sale! Your willingness to do such is greatly appreciated. We all hope you were somehow able to manage not letting your sweet treats go to waste. (Except maybe they did go to...waist!)

And a very special and immense thank you to Mary Ellen Neitz who once again went above and beyond to coordinate and organize and lead yet another successful Week of Compassion Bake Sale! Your work and service and ministry is a gift and we are all so grateful to you and all you do!

Clergy Renewal Update

As summer approaches we continue to plan for Jonathan's time of clergy renewal this summer. Jonathan is hard at work planning his sabbatical and finalizing the schedule for the interim pastors. There will be one lead interim with two others filling in on some Sundays. There are no weddings scheduled for the summer. In the event of a funeral service, we will have a pastor standing by. The Interims Pastors and the Elders will take care of visiting the sick and homebound while Jonathan is away. The Membership Team, in conjunction with the Elders, is busy planning the Going Away Celebrations. We'll release more details as those are finalized. There also will be a welcome home celebration to plan!

Grow Group: “The Chosen”
Wednesdays, 7 p.m. via Zoom
April 6, 13, 20, and 27th

Looking for some human interaction, good conversation, and the chance to further your faith formation? Then look no further than the Wednesday Night Grow Group! For this session we are watching the show “The Chosen”, a newly crafted and filmed, crowd sourced, production of the life and ministry of Jesus. It is described as, “*A charismatic fisherman struggling with debt. A troubled woman wrestling with demons. A gifted accountant ostracized from his family and people. In this ground-breaking first season of The Chosen see how Jesus reaches each of these and more as He works His first miracles and embarks on His ministry to change the world. See Him through the eyes of those who knew Him.*”

We are just a few episodes in, so if you haven’t tuned in yet, you are not far behind and we can get you caught up easily. We meet each Wednesday night and watch via Zoom, an episode of this critically acclaimed television drama, followed by a time of brief discussion. Zoom link will be shared via email, so keep an eye on your email inbox! Contact the church office or Jonathan to get yourself on the grow group email list.

Sketti N Skits Talent Show 2022
Was One For The Ages!!

It was a night for the ages that won’t soon be forgotten (and no one slapped anyone!) because Sketti n Skits 2022 was an absolute blast! Special thanks to everyone who contributed to, and turned out for our annual Sketti N Skits talent show! What a fabulous night of fun and frivolity! Thanks

to everyone who submitted an act and who participated both in-person and online. Thanks to everyone who participated in “*Name That Tuba-Tune!*” Thanks to all who tried to “*Stump the Pastor!*” and congrats to all those who were able to “*Stump the Pastor!*” (Although it doesn’t take much to stump him these days!) Thanks to everyone who even laughed at Chuck and Jonathan’s jokes! You are so kind. Thanks to Anna and Richelle for making all the behind the scenes magic happen so seamlessly! And thank you to all who supported our Week of Compassion Bake sale both in-person and during our online auction bidding.

If you missed the show do yourself a favor and check it out on our church’s Facebook page or on our YouTube channel.

Disciples Update on Ukraine Crisis

One in four Ukrainians- more than 11 million people – have left their homes as a result of the attack on their country. Nearly 4 million have left Ukraine and are now refugees. Another Six & one half million are still in Ukraine, internally displaced and increasingly desperate.

Our Mission Partners:

The Christian Church (DOC) and the United Church of Christ (UCC) are both members of the ACT Alliance a global humanitarian network (Action by Churches Together). The current ACT appeal which the DOC and UCC are helping to fund is the largest in its history, currently \$21.5 million. Funds are being used to support the procurement and when necessary shipment within European host countries and into Ukraine of all manner of goods, from food to medicine,

household items and more. Counseling support is being provided, as well as transportation assistance, and other needs. All of this is taking place in Ukraine itself, as well as Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Through our membership in the ACT Alliance and our partnership with the Reformed Church of Hungary, we are serving IDPs in 100 small shelters and activity centers located in the five counties in western Ukraine (Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsy, and Transcarpatia).

Refugees

In the opening weeks of the invasion the first wave of refugees typically had resources and a place to go. Those who are crossing the borders now are coming with fewer resources and nowhere to go. While their needs are being met, there is great concern for the next wave of refugees. As violence escalates, the largest wave of refugees may be those who are the most vulnerable and have the fewest resources. We are also working to strengthen measures protecting women and children who are vulnerable to trafficking, abuse, and fraud – for example, **abusers masquerading as aid workers.**

Refugee Resettlement

Multiple phases of care and response will take place in the coming months and years. The immediate response is critical of course. We hold it in balance with the equally critical work to come.

We've all seen the merciless devastation of Ukrainian agriculture, industry, housing, health care, and human services. And we know that hundreds of thousands will be forced to build new lives in new lands.

Disciples have a long history of walking alongside communities in times of turmoil and uncertainty. Now, as before, Disciples are called to provide the ministry of hospitality to those seeking refuge and a new beginning. Week of Compassion's Executive Director Rev. Vy Nguyen says, "My dad was one of the translators for the U.S. during the Vietnam War in the 1960s, and he had to flee after the fall of Saigon. As I have shared before, the church welcomed us back then, along with thousands of other refugees. At this moment, just as the church welcomed refugees then, we need to work with partners to make sure that those fleeing Afghanistan and other countries have a safe place to call home." [I know that he would add Ukraine]

100% of your gifts to the Week of Compassion, when designated "International Emergency Response" or more specifically "Ukraine" will go to Ukraine relief efforts. You may give on line at the Week of Compassion web-site: (<https://www.weekofcompassion.org/donate.html>) or through your congregation.

Financial Giving from the Congregation through March 2022

We won't close the financial books for March for a couple more days, but I wanted to provide a status of where we are currently with our congregational giving. The numbers below are not final but I believe they are a close estimate of the final numbers.

The Total Income **budget** amount is \$23,203 per month. This includes congregational giving and other income sources like building rental.

It also includes expected contribution amounts for our Outreach (Ingathering, Week of Compassion). These items have been moved to the budget to more accurately track & show our outreach (local & global) support from a financial standpoint. We are showing this by having both Income and Expense line items. But that also means as we accumulate the contributions, and before we have sent those funds to the national Week of Compassion office, our Income to Expense ration can look higher than it really is.

For the month of March, so far, our **actual** income is \$28,383. For the month this is above the budget amount by \$5,180.

I've modified the table below to split the YTD Income into Operating and Outreach. You can see that our Operating Income is positive, 6.4% above the Budget. The Outreach Income is also very positive, with \$3,709 having come in for our Week of Compassion contributions.

Here is the information in table format:

2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD Operating Income	YTD Outreach Income
Actual Income	\$23,897	\$23,615	\$28,383	\$72,186	\$3,709
Budget Income	\$23,203	\$23,203	\$23,203	\$67,859	\$1,750
Actual Income- Budget Income	\$694	\$412	\$5,180	\$4,327	\$1,959
% Actual Over Budget Income	3.0%	1.8%	22.3%	6.4%	111.9%

As we shared in December, the budget approved by the Governing Board and the congregation for 2022 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 2022 Leap of Faith amount is \$19,481 for the full year, which is 7% above our budget income.

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.