



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Stow, OH

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

PATHWAYS

MAY 2023

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

Find us on social
media @FCCStow!

Baptism Sunday, May 7th, 10:30 a.m. Service

While we will still have our nurturing of the faithful during the Chapel service, we encourage everyone to join us during the baptisms in the Sanctuary!

Kid 'n' Parent Prom

May 20th, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

For parents and K-6th grade kids, we're hosting a night of memory-making! \$12 admission includes dinner, DJ-led dancing, and more! Share this with parents who!

All Church Sunday, May 21st, Noon,

Water Works Park, Kelsey Creek Pavilion

Join us to celebrate our year and kick off the summer in the park with a potluck picnic! See below for more info and please bring a side-dish or dessert to share!

Summer Hours Begin on Memorial Day Sunday, May 28th

We will be moving to the following schedule:

8:30 a.m. in the Chapel, and 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

4th of July Pancake Breakfast - Call for Volunteers!

Be on the lookout for signups! Soon, we'll have positions listed and available to serve this important community-serving outreach!

Youth Sunday, May 14th

8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. services

Look forward to joining us for this day of celebrating our youth!

The Youth Group will meet for a Service Rehearsal on **Saturday the 13th 10:30 a.m.!**

Upcoming Loaves & Fishes - May 21st, 4-6 p.m.

May's Drive Thru Meal will be Sunday May 21st 4-6p.m. We will have picnic items which we will make a picnic to-go. Hot dogs, beans, chips and watermelon. Thanks to Membership Committee for providing the food!

Rubber Ducks Game + Fireworks—Save the Date!

Saturday, August 19th

May 2023

Pastor's Pen

Long time pastor, Rev. James Harnish, of the incredibly successful Hyde Park United Methodist Church in Tampa, Florida, wrote a book that spoke powerfully to me when I first read it, and has crept back into the frontal cortex of my mind on many occasions since. The book is entitled, "You Only Have To Die." It's a rather ominous book title, isn't it? Would it help if I told you it's a book about the church, and how a congregation is to conduct itself? Probably not, huh? But that's how the truth works sometimes, doesn't it? We don't want to hear it, but it's exactly what we need to hear. After all, it was Jesus who said, "*Unless a gain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*"

The past few months (ok, years) have been... *arduous*, haven't they? I love that word. Even though it often comes off as negative, the word *arduous* really doesn't have to be as it simply means, "*involving or requiring strenuous effort; difficult and tiring.*" And working from that perspective and meaning we can all think of times when something we were doing required strenuous effort and was difficult and caused us to be asleep before our heads hit the pillow. But a lot of time those "somethings" were worth it! Getting through college and seminary to earn my degrees was "arduous", but worth it. Getting Julie to first go out with me and then marry me was "arduous", but worth it as we just celebrated our fourteenth anniversary.

This has been the case with the last few "arduous" months where a lot has been happening in the life of First Christian Stow. From the season of Lent to Holy Week and Easter, to new visitors and guests, to preparing for Youth Sunday, to creating and organizing a brand new Diaconate, to planning and preparing for our first ever Kid-Parent Prom, to teaching Pastor's Class in preparation for Baptism Sunday. And as we look toward the summer, we know we will need to prepare for our 4th of July Pancake Breakfast and Vacation Bible School.

And while these are great happenings in the life of our church, we have not been without some difficult ones. We have had numerous folks from

our church family in the hospital and struggling with health issues—all of whom need our ongoing prayers for strength, patience, and healing. Add it, there is the ever-present reminder of our church's budget leap of faith we must keep mindful about. It has been some time since I recall so many "somethings" reaching a climax at the same time.

So how do we continue to press on and move forward when so much requires "*strenuous effort;*" and is "*difficult and tiring*"? Harnish said in his book, "*Hope is born when we are willing to die for the right things.*" He speaks of dying to our old ways of doing church and ministry, of dying to our stifling ways of thinking, but remaining faithful to our God given call of following Jesus. He believes, as I do, there is a massive population of spiritually searching people who still find within the center flow of our faith tradition an understanding of the Christian faith that is the most appropriate framework for a life of hope, peace, joy, and love; no matter how "*arduous*" the work can seem at times.

What is key for us all to remember, and then act upon, is that when we work together, when we step up to new roles and opportunities, we are making the work and ministry we are called to do easier, more manageable, and better. Yes, in order to achieve such, we may have to "die." We may have to die to our old ways of thinking: "*Oh, someone else will do that.*" "*I'm too old.*" "*They wouldn't want me.*" "*We've never done it that way before.*" and so on. These lines of thinking are dangerous, and lead to a different kind of death.

In these upcoming summer months there are a vast number of ministries that will require *strenuous effort*, they will be *difficult* and *tiring*. They will require parts of us to have to "die" for them to grow to fullness of life. But they are the "*right things*" for our church now, and we can be certain if we do the hard, "arduous" work for these right things, then our work will bear new fruit—it will bear new life.

So may we remember, because of Easter, we only have to die to find new life.

Your Pastor and Friend,
Jonathan

Baptism Sunday
Sunday, May 7th, 10:30 a.m.

To say it is “special” to complete Pastor’s Class and arrive at their day of baptism for a young person and their family doesn’t seem like a big enough endorsement of what the day truly is. Yes, it is special, but it truly is much, much more.

Baptism Sunday is a special, rare and profound day of *becoming* for a young person, and their family, and for their church family. It is the day when a young person consciously makes the decision of their own accord to step into the body of Christ and become a Christian who has accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Is the day when parents and family witness their child, grandchild, sibling, niece, nephew begin a new chapter in their life. It is the day when a church family celebrates the hope, peace, joy, and love of God being poured out in this holy sacrament.

This year we celebrate and honor two students who have completed Pastor’s Class and are making the step to make their confession of faith and be baptized into the body of Christ. Please hold in your prayers Ava Lazor and Violet Rumburg as they make this next step in their faith journey. Let us pray they remember their day of baptism for the rest of their lives as a reminder of God’s grace and love having been poured out upon them in a new way, and that through their baptism they come to know deeply of God’s constant and abiding presence surrounding them in each and every day.

4th of July Pancake Breakfast Returns!
July 4th, 7 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Mark your calendars! The 4th of July Pancake Breakfast is back! That’s right! We’re partnering with the Boy Scouts to restart this popular event from 7:00 to 10:00 am on the 4th. Please help spread the word to friends and family that have missed this event the past few years. Of course, many hands make light work, and we are looking for volunteers for set-up, cooking, serving and clean up! There’s several roles to be filled after the Boy Scouts take on their responsibilities, so please look forward to the volunteer opportunities! Sign up forms will be available in the Gathering Area, and Online. If you have any questions, contact the office at FccStow@FirstChristianStow.org or talk to Al Naylor, Steve Gross or Tim Nietz if you see them in church.

YOUTH

Youth Group Pizza Party and Putt-Putt
Outing
Sunday, June 4th, 11:23 a.m.

On Sunday, June 4th, the Youth Group will celebrate the conclusion of the school year with a pizza party lunch followed by a special outing to Downview Sports Center in Cuyahoga Falls for an afternoon of batting cages, putt-putt golf, driving range, and general frivolity. Do you think you have what it takes to beat Jonathan, the self-proclaimed *Putt-Putt Champion of First Christian Church of Stow*?! Then plan on coming out and proving it!

You are welcome, and encouraged, to bring friends. There is just a nominal cost of \$5 per student. We will meet right after worship and head to Downview where we will have pizza and Klondikes and then get into our ~~putt-putt tournament of those who will lose to Jonathan~~ *“Putt-Putt Tournament of Champions!”*

Calling All Women!
From Barb Bell

It has been a few years since we have had a Women’s Retreat. It is high time we returned to the Disciples House in Chautauqua, New York. There will be a sign-up sheet in The Gathering Area for women interested in going, and those interested in finding out more about this adventure. Putting your name on the list does not constitute a commitment, just your interest.

Our previous trips were in September, but I am open to suggestions for other time frames. I have absolutely no authority to start this movement, but I have a deep desire for a spiritually rewarding and fun fellowship with other women within our church family and beyond. Please contact me, Barb Bell, at 330-807-5498 with any questions or comments or suggestions. There will be a sign up sheet in the gathering area on Sunday as well-- Please sign up on the sheet because I may forget our conversation!!

Barb Bell

Kid 'n' Parent Prom
May 20th, 2023, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. in
Disciples Hall

First Christian Church of Stow is excited to host our The Kid 'n' Parent Prom: An Encanto Evening! (K-6th Grade). Please share this information with anyone you know in the area with kids who are looking to

Join us for an evening of dinner, dancing, and memory-making! The admission cost of \$12 per person includes dinner, DJ-led dancing, a photo booth, and more! Children must be at least Kindergarten through 6th grade aged to attend. Pre-registration is required! Don't hesitate! Make your prom reservations today!

Our doors open at 5:45 p.m. for general seating. Pre-Registration includes two items:

- Please fill out the linked Google Form: <https://forms.gle/CLQMTSWP5nV5AFQW8>
- Please submit your payment for your party to:
- [Our Vanco Payment System or Paypal and note your payment as "Kid 'n' Parent Prom 2023" OR](#)
- Send a check to 3493 Darrow Rd. Stow OH 44224 with "Kid 'n' Parent Prom 2023" in the memo.

Summer Worship Hours
Start May 28th!
First Service 8:30—
Coffee Fellowship 9:30—
Second Service 10:00

On Sunday, May 28th we will begin our summer worship hours. First service will remain unchanged at 8:30. Second service will begin at 10 a.m.

In between services will be a special time of coffee fellowship for those who just came from first service and those coming to second service. This coffee fellowship will be held in our Library and Gathering Area and will offer a special opportunity for folks from the two services to see and greet one another. So mark your calendar for the start of our summer worship times on Sunday, May 28th.

STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

I had an earlier Offertory Statement as a Lay Leader that became somewhat of a legend. Not to toot my own horn, but I am still hearing about the love of Dad jokes and how it has carried down from my father-in-law, to my husband, and then to my own children. I understand that many people enjoyed the Dad jokes story, but a few folks might have felt that they were singled out in some way. So, I want to offer another angle. Now, stay with me, I am going somewhere that loosely relates to the idea of giving tithes to the church. Chris and I are enjoying the return on the investment of years of being hilarious in front of our children now coming back to us from our teenagers. First of all, I want to say that this age (so far) is exponentially funnier to me than the younger years with kids. They were cute and goofy and very kissable, but could we have a belly laugh together as a family? I couldn't come up with a way to share any appropriate jokes from my children, unfortunately. The jokes got very dark and not church appropriate pretty quickly. There would also be a very high cringe factor for the kids, so I am going to wrap this up with a couple Dad Jokes for old times' sake:

Why can't you hear a pterodactyl going to the bathroom?
Because the "P" is silent

Why do cows wear bells?
Because their horns don't work.

What lights up a soccer stadium?
A soccer match.

Why do seagulls fly over the sea?
If they flew over the bay, they would be bagels.

Why didn't the melons get married?
Because they cantaloupe.

What did one plate whisper to the other plate?
Dinner is on me.

You can make your offering of gifts (not jokes) to the church electronically, by mail to the church office, and here in the church in offering baskets as you leave church today.

From Diane Waite

Pentecost Sunday

May 28th, the Birthday of the Church!

On Pentecost we celebrate the birthday of the Church, remembering the awesome power that descended on the people of God through the Holy Spirit, resting on them as if it was tongues of fire. This day is among our most holy days in the life of the church, so let us ignite our spirits and show our excitement for this grand day through our worship. Wear red as a symbol of the Holy Spirit!

“Spiritual Gifts Show & Tell” **Youth Sunday, May 14, 2023**

On Sunday, May 14th the First Christian Church Youth Group will host and lead a Youth Sunday time of worship during both the 8:30 and 10:30 services. The theme and focus for Youth Sunday will be “*Spiritual Gifts Show and Tell*” and will be rooted in God’s word as it comes from I Corinthians 12:1-13.

Our youth will lead our liturgy, offer prayers, read scripture, bring our children’s message, and help deliver the sermon as it pertains to the Apostle Paul’s text about spiritual gifts and how everyone has gifts that can become a blessing in some way or another when we are open to the Holy Spirit using them through us. Some of our youth will “*show and tell*” about something they know well and/or enjoy doing and literally showing and telling the message that we all have been blessed by what we know, are able to do, and the experiences we have had. And just as these blessings have become gifts to us, when we open ourselves to “*showing and telling*” others about them, and sharing them as God leads us, we are opening ourselves to being a blessing to others.

Make plans to be part of this special time of worship for Youth Sunday—during BOTH services—on Sunday, May 14th!

VBS – Save the Date! **July 9th – 13th, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

Mark your calendars and get ready for a week of fun for the kids! Share this date with families you know and let them know there’s a place for their kids to enjoy a Vacation Bible School here in Stow! More information will be coming soon—Get the word out now!

All Church Picnic **Sunday May 21st at 12:00 p.m., Noon**

There’s no better way to kick off the summer than with a good old fashioned summer kick off picnic luncheon right after church! Mark your calendars now for Sunday, May 21st right after second service.

This all-church-potluck-picnic will be held at *Water Works Park at the Kelsey Creek Pavilion*, which is located behind the Water Works Park pool, near the large playground, at the northeast end of the park. The church will be providing hot dogs, baked beans, watermelon, drinks, desserts, and snow cones! Please plan to bring with you a side dish and/or dessert to share, and your table settings! Hope to see you at the park on Sunday, May 21st!

Summer Camp Dates / Information! **Camp Christian, Summer 2023**

Summertime will be here before you know it! If your student or another youth you know is interested in going to camp, make note of the options listed below! The early bird deadline for every camp is May 1st to save a few dollars before you get to camp! Additionally, if you’re interested, you can sponsor a camper! Donors may contribute full or partial week payments, and they are tax deductible. If you’re interested in going to camp, or looking to sponsor, contact the church office for a registration form for camping or the contact information for sponsoring.

Grandparents camp

For children completing kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grade and their Grandparent
June 8 – 10, 2023

Ribbit – Junior Camp

For children completing 2nd grade and/or 3rd and 4th graders whose parents want a shorter camp experience

July 5th – 8th, 2023

Otter – Junior camp

For children completing 5th grade & those in 3rd & 4th grades ready for a full week of camp

June 11th – 17th, 2023

Music Camp

For youth completing 6th – 12th grades

June 25th – June 29th, 2023

Chi Rho Camps

For Youth completing 6th, 7th, or 8th grades this spring.

Camp #1

June 18th – 24th, 2023

Camp #2

July 9th – 15th

CYF Conferences

For youth completing grades 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th this spring.

CYF Week #1

June 18th – 24th, 2023

Chi Rho Combo week

CYF Week #2

July 16th – 22nd, 2023

Advance – Full Week

For anyone ages 19 – 29 (At least one year out of High School)

July 30th – August 6th, 2023

Being Air-Aware

*Information from
CleanAirResources.com*

Have you ever heard of “*particulate pollution*.” You might think this has something to do with the length of a Sunday sermon, but it’s actually a serious matter for a large number of people and their health.

Particulate Pollution refers to a person’s risk for developing health issues resulting from air that has become “polluted” by a wide variety of “particulates” which can come from even common elements and chemicals in our everyday lives, including, but not limited to: perfume, cologne, laundry detergent, and household cleaners. Even healthy individuals can experience problems that result from polluted air. Yet scientists agree certain groups are particularly sensitive to the effects of *particulate pollution*, and the most susceptible to severe health problems as a result of this type of air pollution include: older adults and the elderly; people who work outdoors; expectant mothers; infants and children under twelve, those who suffer from lung conditions; and more.

What all this means then is that there is a need to broaden our perspective and awareness of what we consider to be *particulate pollution*, knowing it may not even be what we traditionally think of as air pollution. Below is a letter from Laurie Scott, concerning this topic:

Hi All. Have you been wondering where I have been – not in my usual seat outside the sanctuary for the past several months? I WANTED TO BE THERE but I have not been able to attend because I am HIGHLY allergic to chemical fumes – which includes perfume and cologne. When I am exposed to the fumes (even one breath will cause me to start reacting), my throat, tongue, ears and sinuses start to swell. (I know it’s not the USUAL allergic reaction, but it’s what happens to me). I can take one pill a day to reduce the swelling but I try to stay away from fumes so that I can take it at night before bed – otherwise it will disrupt my sleep. Another thing this reaction does is it causes me to choke on food if I am not careful. When the tongue swells it will not push food down the throat, which then gets caught behind the tongue

but in front of the throat, blocking off the windpipe.

Would you be willing to refrain from wearing perfume or cologne so I can attend church? It is not a demand; I cannot do that and I wouldn't. But I am asking as a friend if you would please consider this request. (I realize a guest may occasionally come wearing one of the a for mentioned – I will deal with that at the time. (I will not confront anyone; I will probably just leave...) I would still sit outside the sanctuary, as scented lotions will also cause me to react. With those items, the scent doesn't linger in the air after you walk by, so they are not as big a concern to me.

Thank you for your consideration,
Laurie Scott

“*Air pollution*” certainly includes combustion engine exhaust and factory smoke we have all heard is harmful to the environment. But “*particulate pollution*” can be even as little perfume yet just as harmful. And while we are all ready to do what we can to help our environment, let us see one opportunity to help our environment by being considerate of what we are putting into the air of

our church building. Let us consider how we as a church family can be “*Air Aware*” and help create an accessible, welcoming, and healthy environment for all of God's children every time they come to First Christian Church of Stow.

Sincerely,
First Christian Church Elders

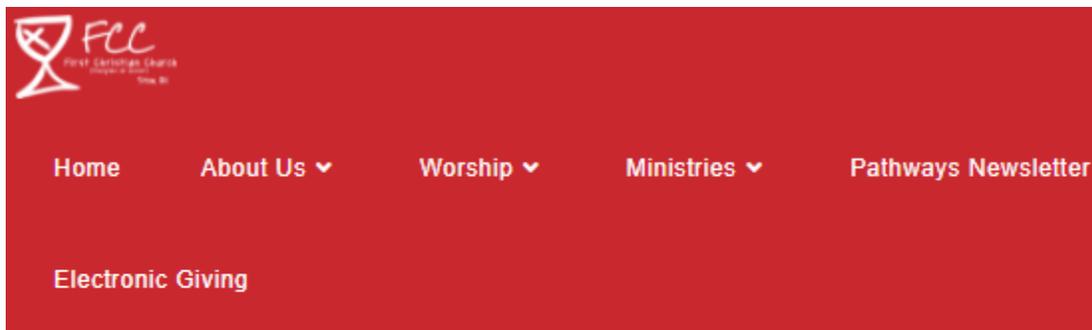
Camp Christian Work Day **May 20th**

We will once again be hosting volunteers for a day of cleaning, repairing, and general preparation of Camp Christian in anticipation of the Summer Camp and Conference programs!

There are tasks suited for a wide range of ages and abilities. We hope you will join us!

More details, including specific tasks*, how to sign up, how to donate, and more can be found at <https://www.ccinoh.com/regional-calendar.aspx?events=10980&action=details>

Electronic Giving for Your Convenience **In Just 12 Minutes**



Vanco ePayment Services

PayPal.com

“No person was ever honored for what he received. He was honored for what he gave.”

– Calvin Coolidge

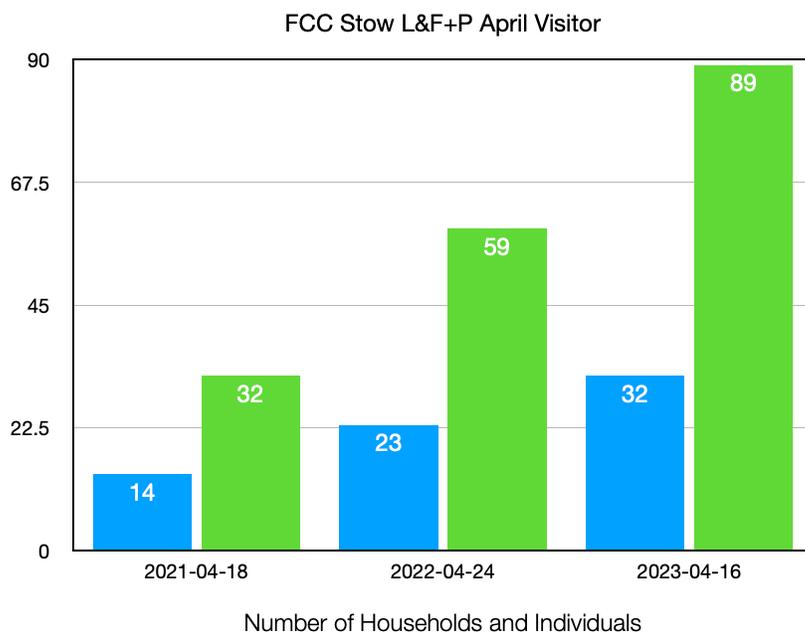
Have you ever missed church on a Sunday and thought to yourself, “I'll make up my weekly donation next week!” Only to forget to do so, forget the extra cash to make the donation, or miss another week entirely? Let me tell you, I know I have, and I am thankful I have switched to the Electronic Giving feature on the church website!

(Continued on the following page)

Hmm... Sounds kinda sales pitchy and cliché doesn't it? I re-wrote this many times and kept coming back to it because it was the truth for me, so I'm assuming it is the truth for someone else reading this. As Calvin Coolidge is quoted above, we are honored for what we gave, the recurring electronic giving allows us to not forget to help contribute to the needs of our church. It's cliché as, "set it and forget it" and really that simple. If you can take the 12 minutes (And, yes, I timed myself doing this because I am a science nerd and do stuff like that) to set up your new account and establish the weekly recurring contribution, then you never have to worry about trying to remember week to week or missing a week in church knowing your offertory is helping contribute to our larger mission of serving in Jesus' footsteps. So, please consider taking the 12 minutes (that included me walking to find my credit card) to establish a recurring tithe that is directed towards maintaining and growing our Love for Jesus Christ.

David Helmick
Elders Chairperson
First Christian Church of Stow

Loaves & Fishes + Pantry April Report



Here you can see the growth of our Loaves & Fishes + Pantry over the past three Aprils.

Historically, we have seen a drop off from March to April. We can speculate why that is; regardless, it's happened three years in a row which makes it expected.

It began raining shortly after we opened and stopped raining at 6:00pm right when we closed. Nevertheless our intrepid volunteers cheerfully delivered meals and groceries through the rain drops. Every visitor went home with a hot meal of pasta with tomato sauce and salad and desert. The groceries included a variety of food items that could be used for breakfast, lunch or dinner. This program delivers a real service to our community and we can only do it with the continued support, financial and spiritual, of everyone in our church. Thank you.

Our next Loaves & Fishes + Pantry is scheduled for Sunday May 21.