



3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224  
330.688.4450  
[www.firstchristianstow.org](http://www.firstchristianstow.org)

## PATHWAYS MAY 2025

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

Find us on social  
media @FCCStow!

### **Kid & Parent Prom: A Night Under the Stars**

**May 9<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 p.m., Disciples Hall**

Dinner, Dancing with a DJ, and SO MUCH MORE! We have sponsors this year, so we're making this year's Kid & Parent Prom even more special! Kids K-6<sup>th</sup> Grade & their parents or grandparents are invited to attend! See more about registration & admission below.

### **Summit Bells Spring Concert Series**

**May 4<sup>th</sup> 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

Summit Bells is hosting one of their very special concerts here in the Sanctuary this Sunday afternoon! This program includes classical and pop music, and a piece written specially for Summit Bells! This concert is free and open to the public with a free-will offering to help cover expenses.

### **Chapel Reopening, Rededication and Celebration**

**Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 10:00 a.m.**

After two long years the Chapel Restoration Project is nearly complete! We're excitedly hosting a special time of worship that will start in the Sanctuary and will include an opportunity to visit the newly restored Chapel.

### **Week of Compassion Mission Trip**

**Return to Mayfield, KY, June 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**

We are returning to a community much-in-need this year for the Week of Compassion Mission trip. Please see below for information, and more will be along the way soon.

**Loaves & Fishes + Pantry, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 4-6 p.m.**

**Save the Dates for VBS! July 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.**

## **Pastor's Pen, May 2025**

***First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me. ~ Rev. Martin Niemöller***

My guess is that many of us have seen and heard this quote before, in some form or another. Above is the original, however today, the quote has been edited and rewritten to include a litany of other people, such as Protestants, Catholics, people of color and different races and cultures, those who are disabled and those of various sexual orientations. This quote, and others like it, are ubiquitous in public discourse and popular culture. One notable place Niemöller's original quote can be found is prominently emblazoned inside Washington D.C.'s Holocaust Museum.

The essence of this quote speaks to the heart of its author, but you might be surprised to know where his heart was long before he penned these powerful words. So, permit me to share a bit of the story of this prominent German pastor.

Martin Niemöller was born the son of a Lutheran pastor in the German Empire on January 14, 1892. At age 21 he started his career in the Imperial German Navy as an officer. During World War I (1914–1918), Niemöller served as an officer on a U-boat submarine where he successfully helped sink Allied ships, earning the high honor of *Iron Cross First Class*.

Niemöller was a fervent nationalist and anti-communist. He was devastated by Germany's defeat in World War I and the collapse of the German Empire. He also strongly opposed the new postwar German government called the Weimar Republic (1918–1933). Unwilling to serve the new government, Niemöller resigned from the Navy in 1919.

In 1920, Niemöller began seminary training at the University of Münster. Like his father, he was ordained as a Lutheran pastor in 1924. During the 1920s and early 1930s, he participated in right-wing and antisemitic political parties and organizations. And in keeping with his right-wing, antisemitic outlook, Niemöller enthusiastically welcomed the Nazi regime in 1933. He voted for the Nazi Party in March of that year.

Niemöller's enthusiasm for the new government, led by Adolf Hitler quickly waned, however, when the Nazi regime began to interfere in church policy. In 1933 Hitler threw his support behind a radical faction

within the Protestant churches known as the *Deutsche Christen* (the German Christians). The German Christians portrayed Jesus as an Aryan and denied he was Jewish. They rejected the authority of the Old Testament and sought to alter parts of the New Testament. Their goal was to remove what they called "*Jewish elements*" from Christianity. This included prohibiting pastors with Jewish ancestry from serving in the Protestant church. This resulted in Niemöller leading the opposition to the *Deutsche Christen* and Hitler's church policy.

Niemöller's attitude toward the Nazi regime further transformed in January 1934 after a meeting with Adolf Hitler. Niemöller, and other prominent Protestant church leaders, met Hitler to discuss the relationship between church and state. At this meeting, it became clear that the Gestapo had tapped Niemöller's phone. The *Pfarrernotbund* (Pastors Emergency League), which Niemöller had helped found in 1933, was also under close state surveillance. Hitler's hostility made it clear to Niemöller that the Protestant Church and the Nazi state could not be reconciled unless Protestants were willing to compromise their faith. Niemöller was not willing to do this.

After World War II, Niemöller openly spoke about his own early complicity in Nazism and his eventual change of heart. His powerful words about guilt and responsibility still resonate today. Niemöller is remembered as one of the more prominent Germans to publicly acknowledge his moral failures committed during the Nazi era, as well as the moral failures of his nation and church. And he continued to speak publicly about the relationship between inaction and Germans' responsibility for the persecution and murder of Jews in the Holocaust.

Niemöller's message declared that through silence, indifference, and inaction, Germans had been complicit in the Nazi imprisonment, persecution, and murder of millions of people. He felt it was particularly egregious that he and other German Protestant church leaders, whom he believed had positions of moral authority, chose to remain silent.

Martin Niemöller shows us that our hearts can be deeply rooted in core beliefs and values, and yet our hearts can be changed when we open our hearts, along with opening our ears, our eyes, and our minds, by challenging ourselves to consider if our core beliefs and values are in line with the teachings of Jesus.

May we all challenge ourselves, continuously, to consider if our core beliefs and values are in line with the teachings of Jesus. And when we believe they are, may we never, ever, choose to remain silent.

Your Pastor and Friend, Jonathan

**Summit Bells Spring Concert Series**  
**May 4<sup>th</sup> 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

Summit Bells, one of the Ohio's premier handbell ensembles, is presenting a concert at First Christian Church of Stow on May 4, at 4pm in the sanctuary. This program includes original works for handbells as well as transcriptions of classical and pop music. The group will also be performing a piece written for and dedicated to Summit Bells by world renowned handbell composer and conductor, Fred Gramann.

Summit Bells was founded in 1984 by its conductor, Charles Kobb, and has two CDs and several tours to its credit.

Please join us on May 4 for this Spring concert. It is free and open to the public. There will be a free-will offering to help cover expenses.

**Women's Mini-Retreat**  
**Disciples Hall, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 9a-12p**

Need just a morning to breathe in The Spirit? There's so many ways to pour out your soul in this world, but Anyone interested in going on the Women's Retreat is invited to this Half-Day mini-retreat! Come and Bloom where you're planted!

**PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE  
GATHERING AREA ON SUNDAY,  
MAY 4<sup>th</sup>!**

Held in Disciples Hall. Contact Barb Bell or Barb Eppley with any questions.

**Youth Sunday**  
**May 11<sup>th</sup>, Sanctuary Service, 10:30 a.m.**

All Parents of Youth! Please make sure your youth is available to join us this Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, and next week for Youth Sunday Service! Emily has a great plan put together

for a "Little Jesus" Sermon that's been months in the making! We will need ALL YOUTH HANDS ON DECK to serve this Sanctuary Worship Service, and there's room for everyone to contribute! Please keep an eye on texts from Emily, and reach out if you have any questions!

**ALL CHURCH PICNIC**  
**Sun, May 18<sup>th</sup>, After Sanctuary Service**  
**Water Works Park, Little Stone Pavillion**

Join us later this month with a little summer kickoff! We're headed to Little Stone Pavilion, Water Works Park, 2025 Munroe Falls Ave. Please bring your own place setting, and a side to share! Membership team is providing the entrée with hotdogs, watermelon, and much more! We need help filling it out the meal with desserts & side dishes are needed.

**Kid 'n' Parent Prom:**  
**A Night Under the Stars**  
**Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.**

First Christian Church of Stow is excited to host The Kid 'n' Parent Prom: A Night Under the Stars!

Join us for an evening of dinner, dancing, and memory-making! The admission cost of \$12 per person includes dinner, dancing with our DJ Bret from One-T Entertainment, a photo booth, and more! Children must be at least Kindergarten-age through 6th grade to attend. Our doors open at 5:45 for general seating.

**Pre-Registration is required!**

Pre-Registration includes the two following items:

1. Please fill out the linked Google Form: [Kid 'n' Parent Prom 2025 Registration Form](#)

2. Please submit your payment for your party in one of the following ways:

- [Our Vanco Payment System or Paypal and note your payment as “Kid ‘n’ Parent Prom 2025”](#)
- Send a check to 3493 Darrow Rd. Stow OH 44224 with “Kid ‘n’ Parent Prom 2023” in the memo, addressed to First Christian Church of Stow.
- Pay with Venmo or PayPal at the door (We will have QR Codes for those services available).

The dance will be hosted in our gym, on the lower level of the church, closer to our Kent Road Entrance. The address for the church is 3493 Darrow Rd. Stow, OH 44224, but for the event, you may want to enter from our Kent Rd. entrance, across the road from the Marhofer Chevrolet dealership.

For more information please call 330-688-4450. You may also email FCCStow@FirstChristianStow.Org with any questions or concerns you may have

***Volunteers will be needed!** Write on the back of your connection card or contact the office if you can help out!*

### **Chapel Reopening, Rededication and Celebration**

**Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 10:00 a.m.**

Friends, after nearly two full years, it is a blessing and joy to share with you that the “little white chapel” of First Christian Church of Stow, is complete and ready for reopening, rededication, and a celebration worthy of this long journey to being able to worship once again in this holy and sacred space!

And that reopening, rededication, and celebration will all happen on Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, during our 10 o’clock worship. This special and unique worship service will

begin just like any other summer Sunday of worship, in the Sanctuary. This time of worship will, however, end over in the Chapel.

This special and unique worship service, and yes, obtuse worship service, will likely draw more people that the Chapel can accommodate, which is why we are structuring the service in this manner. We will start in the sanctuary, and then during worship we will be guided to make our way over to the Chapel of the conclusion of worship, be either traversing through the church building, or by exiting the rarely used front, stairwell doors, or elevator door, walking along the front of the church, and entering the Chapel through its front doors.

Once the gathered community has assembled in the Chapel, giving priority seating to those who need it, while others cram and pack the aisle ways, we will conclude our worship service with a brief time of hymn singing, prayer of dedication, and benediction.

Then immediately following worship, we will continue the celebration of the Chapel’s reopening with a Coffee Fellowship that will give us all the opportunity to take in the beautiful new sights, sounds, looks, and functions of the Chapel while celebrating and fellowshiping together as a church family.

We hope you will mark Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 a.m. on your calendar and be part of this incredibly special, wonderfully unique, and longtime coming reopening, rededication, and celebration of our “little white chapel” here at FCC Stow.

**Week of Compassion Mission Trip**  
**Return to Mayfield, KY**  
**June 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**

We are returning during the end of June to Mayfield, Kentucky, to continue the work of restoring housing to the community. There's still much work to be done, despite the events inciting recovery missions starting in 2019. Flooding and tornados have continued to hit Mayfield through 2021, 2023, and 2024, stunting recovery efforts, as more and more need has been created in the community.

Charlie Redman will be our team leader again this year. The registration deadline for the mission is June 8<sup>th</sup>. We will be staying in the New Lease on Life Bunk House, and work for this year's mission trip will be closer to that location than last year.

There is schedule flexibility for those who can't stay the entire time, whether coming late or leaving early in the week. Additionally, there is work available for most, if not all levels of ability, skill, and energy. Whether sweeping and cleaning, or working a table saw, there's something for every hand on deck. Youth are also invited, as long as they're over the age of 16 or older with a parent or guardian.

As with last time, the nearest city center is Paducah, KY, with many historic and cultural landmarks to enjoy during the nights after work. The National Quilt Museum, Paducah's Historic Riverfront, and much more to see (Including the only "Metropolis" in America right across the river!).

Registration \*should be\* much easier this year! To register, please email the church

with a first and last name, and an email for each participant.

A meeting to discuss the mission trip will be forthcoming. Please check the bulletin for information regarding that and more about the trip.

Additionally, if you didn't go last year, or didn't see last year's testimonies from the mission team, please see the below-linked YouTube video to hear about the powerful stories coming from meeting the lives of Mayfield, Kentucky.

<https://youtu.be/xM1JvEYFOcU?si=xEkAYOsBb4s4MBjb&t=1523>

**Nursery Attendant Update**

Christian Education Team and Elders would like to share that our current Nursery Attendant, Megan Weiser, will need to step away from her role at the end of April. If you see Megan, please be sure to thank her for her service to our children at FCC Stow!

Work has started to find a new Nursery Attendant, please share this opening with anyone you know that may be interested. The Nursery Attendant is responsible for childcare for children ages 0 to 5 while their families attend church service. The role involves engaging in age-appropriate activities, ensuring the safety and well-being of the children, and maintaining a clean and organized environment.

Requirements for Nursery Attendant:

- Two hours on Sunday Mornings: 10am-12pm September-May & 9:30am-11:30am June-August
- Experience working with children ages 0-5
- Must be at least 18 years age



- Completion of CPR / First Aid Training
- Must complete and pass Background Check

Interested candidates can apply by emailing a resume

to [christianed@firstchristianstow.org](mailto:christianed@firstchristianstow.org)

### **Church Nursery Volunteers**

In the interim while we search for a new Nursery Attendant. The Christian Education Team is seeking volunteers to staff the Nursery on Sunday Mornings so that any family who wishes to utilize the nursery can do so. Youth Group helper(s) will be available to assist you as well. There is a sign-up sheet located near the Worship Activity Bags in the Sanctuary for anyone interested in assisting in providing Nursery Care for our children ages 0-5. Thank you!

### **Loaves & Fishes + Pantry** **May 18<sup>th</sup>, 4-6 p.m.**

May's meal will be May 18th 4-6 p.m. We will be serving sliders and sides. All volunteers are welcome, from within the church and without! Please consider inviting folks from outside our membership to help out as well, as food insecurity rises, and so does the demand on our food service programs.

### **Ann Halpin Plants and Seedlings Sale** **This Week! Limited Availability!**

Looking to liven up your garden this year? If you need a pop of color around the house, make sure you look up Ann Halpin on Facebook Marketplace for her "Plants and Seedlings" Garden Sale! She has all sorts of plants available for purchase at affordable

prices, but message her quick! Each year's inventory sells out fast!

You can email her at

[JnAHalpin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:JnAHalpin@sbcglobal.net) if you're looking for a specific plant!

### **Pancake Breakfast Committee** **Meets Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m.** **& Hosting Coffee Fellowship!**

Our next Pancake Breakfast meeting will be held on Tuesday May 6th at 6:00 pm  
On Sunday May 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, we are signed up for coffee hour after church.

Susan and Al will be in Virginia for their grandson's birthday on May 4<sup>th</sup>, so Steve Gross will be in charge of the coffee hour that day. The goal is to promote the Pancake Breakfast to build interest and volunteers, and remind folks that summer isn't so far away! Please let Steve know if you can donate some cookies or baked goods for the May 4th Coffee Fellowship. Steve's phone is 330 554-6851.

### **Save the Dates for VBS!** **July 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.**

More information coming soon! For those interested in helping out, contact the Christian Ed Team about joining the Christian Ed Committee!

### **Loaves & Fishes + Pantry April Recap**

In April we delayed Loaves & Fishes + Pantry by one week to avoid conflicting with Easter. Nevertheless, we served 42 families consisting of 110 people, which is consistent with a regular month.

We want to give special thanks to those people who donated items to our pantry.

Thanks to that generosity we were able to give each family toilet paper and papers towels and include shelf stable (canned) chicken with groceries.

As always, our volunteers were magnificent; treating each guest with dignity and making sure that they received personal attention. We look forward to continuing our service in the months ahead.

**Disciples Hall Yoga Class**  
**Wednesdays, 5:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

Correction: The starting time for Yoga is 5:45 p.m. on Wednesdays! Your donations for admission participate in and provide for various outreach programs throughout the church, including Bulldog bags, Week of Compassion, and our Loaves & Fishes + Pantry Outreach program.

Yoga is for Every Body and Everybody!

**Bodysculpting Classes**  
**Mondays, 5:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m.**

The next 8 week session of Bodysculpting starts Monday, April 28 in the multipurpose room off the preschool hallway.

The class meets Mondays from 5:30-6:30pm. Anyone is welcome to take a complimentary class to see what it's all about. Bring your own set of dumbbells, a mat for floor work and water bottle. For more information, contact Sandy Haskell at [sjhaskell63@gmail.com](mailto:sjhaskell63@gmail.com).

“Body Sculpting™ is a strength training workout to help tone the body without building muscular size or bulk. Using a set of 5-pound dumbbells (or whatever weight you're comfortable with), Body Sculpting™ is designed to help retain lean muscle tissue

while boosting metabolism. Body Sculpting™ also helps to increase bone density aiding in the prevention of the development of osteoporosis.”

**Stow/Munroe Falls**  
**Back to School Community Clothes**  
**Closet**

Stow Helping Hands are looking for volunteers to help out with the Stow/Munroe Falls Back to School Community Clothes Closet.

Stow/Munroe Falls Helping Hands is sponsoring the Closet Collection and Distribution of the clothing. The United Methodist Church in Stow is hosting the activities of this event, the clothes are being collected at this time at the schools and the big sorting day will be May 12<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-8:00pm at the United Methodist Fellowship Hall. There is a need for volunteers to do the sorting. Please see the link below to sign up to volunteer. A couple of hours mean a lot. Volunteers are all also needed from August 8<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-6:00pm for set up for distribution and August 9<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am-1:00pm for Back to School Distribution Day.

Sign up below or Text 330-322-3893 to volunteer –

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B45A9AE2EA3FEC07-56356341-community>

If you would like to get more involved with the Stow Helping Hands group, please join us for the next meeting on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm at the Stow City Hall in the Boards & Commissions Room

**Poodle Skirts & Promise**  
**A 1950s Benefit for Family Promise**  
**Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>, Save the Date!**

Make sure you mark your calendars for a RETRO GOOD TIME! This event will feature Music, an Auction, a Raffle, Great Food, and Fun Photo Ops with Vintage Automobiles! More details will be posted when received from Family Promise.

**Master Singers Chorale Concerts**  
**Requiem in C minor, Sat, May 17<sup>th</sup>**

Join Master Singers Chorale for performances of Luigi Cherubini's *Requiem in C Minor*! This piece was a favorite of Beethoven, so you know it's good! No bones about it, you won't want to miss this performance!

Two performances are available at different locations. See below and follow Master Singers Chorale online for more information.

Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 p.m.  
Bath Church, UCC  
3980 W. Bath Rd.  
Akron, OH

**Summer Camp Dates and Information!**

Camp Christian, Summer 2025  
From CCINOH.com!

We are so excited to share with you (below) the 2025 Summer Program Schedule. There are Summer Programs at Camp Christian for Children and Youth from Kindergarten through 12th grade, as well as Advance Conference for Young Adults. The two Disciples Fellowship Retreats are open to all ages. You will also note that the United Church of Christ will be hosting several

camps at Camp Christian in 2025. As always, all of these programs are open to anyone (in the correct age bracket) to register for. It does not matter where or if you have church membership.

You may also the full schedule at the following link:

<https://www.ccinoh.com/camp-christian/summer-programs.aspx>

Registration and more information for the Camps and Programs hosted by the Heartland Conference United Church of Christ are available

at <https://heartlanducc.org/storycontinues/>

Additionally, for most, if not all camps, there are scholarships available on their website. Please speak with Jonathan for more information about camps, registration, and what to expect.

[https://www.ccinoh.com/camp-christian/summer-programs/form-downloads-and-links.aspx?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR0541QapPKOBc64o\\_K65o8GByuaHP\\_L9OQP87vGqzvBMQgnBjR76\\_cWa2Mk\\_aem\\_wNEeThG-RPFaCl\\_ARTwAjg](https://www.ccinoh.com/camp-christian/summer-programs/form-downloads-and-links.aspx?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR0541QapPKOBc64o_K65o8GByuaHP_L9OQP87vGqzvBMQgnBjR76_cWa2Mk_aem_wNEeThG-RPFaCl_ARTwAjg)

**ALL CHURCH OUTING**  
**Rubber Ducks Baseball Game, Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Get your tickets early and get them fast! Check with Bill Dowey for more information. You won't want to miss a pitch this summer!

**Coffee Fellowship Opportunities**  
**After Second Service in the Library**

Just a reminder for those who aren't yet in the know-- Coffee Fellowship is held after



second service for all of us to chat, share a brief refreshment, and get connected! Now you're in the know!

Signups for helping with Coffee Fellowship are on a clipboard just outside the library doors. If you have any questions about how to host Coffee Fellowship, Lisa Roseman or Jacob Aukeman can fill you in on all the details. Help connect and fellowship with your church family!

**Ping Pong Club**  
**Thursdays, 6-8 p.m.**

Break out your paddles and get ready to serve! We have a new group meeting on Thursday nights, 6 p.m. in the Gym\* to play ping pong! We're currently playing singles, doubles, and some other "fun" game types. All skill levels are welcome!

We currently have two tables, but if the group continues to grow, anyone who has a table at home is invited to donate their table, and we will find a way to get it to the church.

\*We meet in the Gym typically, but every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday is Bulldog Boxes—Because of that, we will be meeting in one of the classrooms instead, as long as we are able to move tables and fit into a room, we will

continue to play! Check the church calendar if you're unsure of where we're at.

**Think – Pray – Connect**  
**Families from March**

**04/13/25**

**Howard Springston**

1325 Ohltown McDonald Rd,  
Mineral Ridge, OH 44440

*Howard's wife Lucinda (Cindi) Springston, daughter of Betty and George Klinesmith, and who grow up here at FCC Stow, died on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Her funeral was held yesterday. Please keep Howard, daughters Tina and Vanessa, and the entire family in your prayers.*

**04/27/25**

**Ron Neaffer**

7831 Stoneridge Rd.  
Macedonia OH 44056-2231

*Please send prayers and well-wishes to Ron, who's had to seek out medical attention and get some testing done earlier this week due to ongoing health concerns. He was able to return home while waiting to hear about next steps.*

**05/04/25**

**Richard Sellers & Family**

1925 Hawthorne, Stow OH 44224

*Please send condolences, encouragement, and support to the family of Richard Sellers. Sharon Sellers died into the arms of her Savior on Monday. Please keep them in your prayers as they grieve their loss of Sharon and make memorial arrangements. Details about services will be coming soon.*