



Parish News

2024

First United Church of Christ

A Note from Your Pastor

In a small village, some children decided that they wanted to build a fort. Together they had built one the year before using branches and twigs to construct the walls of their fortress. Unfortunately, the weather whisked away their fort. This time they decided that they would construct their fort using stones and rocks.

The children scampered around the town collecting every stone and rock they could find. Once gathered, the children decided that they needed some large rocks to serve as the foundation of the walls they wished to build. They hunted high and low, but their search yielded few rocks that were suitable for their needs. A group of these children approached a small hill located at the edge of town where they found a plethora of smaller rocks at its base. As they climbed the hill, they noticed a grand oak tree standing at the top of the hill. It must have been at least fifty feet tall! To the left of the tree the spotted several large rocks that would be perfect to use as the foundation to the fort walls. They gathered the rest of the kids and began to try to move the rocks from their resting place, intending to roll them down the hill so that they could be gathered in wagons and wheel barrels to be moved where the fort was to be built. Some of the rocks moved easily, while others needed shovels and pry bars to break them free from their resting place. Eventually, after much hard work the children succeeded in removing the rocks from around the tree, leaving nothing but loose dirt where the rocks once rested.

As temperatures got warmer, a sprout came out of the loosened soil and a tiny voice could be heard saying “Oh that light feels so good!”. A booming voice answered, “Yes, my dear child that is from the sun and it will help you grow. But if you are exposed to too much of the sun you will wither and die. But do not worry my child, for I will use my branches and leaves to protect you and see that you only get the light and warmth you need.” The sprout looked up at the grand oak tree and said, “thank you for taking care of me!”, The grand oak replied, oh sweet child think nothing of it, for it is what a father does.”

A few days later it began to rain. The sprout exclaimed, Oh good water! I am so thirsty!” The grand oak tree replied, drink your fill little one, but be cautious, for too much rain can sweep you away as your roots have not yet matured enough to hold you in place. But do not worry, for I will use my leaves and branches to protect you from being exposed to too much water. The sprout exclaimed, “Thank you for protecting me from the rain!” The grand oak replied, “Think nothing of it my dear child, it is what a father does.”

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A Note from Your Pastor (continued)

And so it went, whatever the hazard may be to the little sprout the elder tree would protect it from. As the years went by the younger tree grew and grew and became quite strong. The elder tree also grew but began to lose branches with time.

One day a crew of men came to the hilltop and were armed with chainsaws and other tools. The younger tree was frightened, but the elder tree calmed it by saying “they are not here to harm you. They have come for my lumber which will be used for many things that will help others. It will be used to build homes, furniture, and other things, while some of my wood will be used to heat homes and bring comfort to people and animals.

The younger tree was quite dismayed. The elder tree which now stood almost seventy-five feet tall, said: “Do not worry little one, for I will always be with you. Though they will cut down my body and grind away my trunk, my roots run deep in the ground and are now intertwined with yours. I will always be a part of you, and you will draw strength from my roots even as they decay, for I will feed you.” The younger tree exclaimed, “Thank you for always taking care of me”. To which the elder tree responded, “Think nothing of it my child for it is what a father does.”

Sure enough they cut down the older oak and ground away its stump. But just as the elder tree had promised, the younger tree continued to flourish and could feel the presence of its father.

After some time had passed on a sunny warm day, just to the right of what now was a mighty oak tree a sprout popped up out of the soil and exclaimed “Oh that light feels so good!”. A booming voice answered, “Yes, my dear child that is from the sun and it will help you grow. But if you are exposed to too much of the sun you will wither and die. But do not worry my child, for I will use my branched and leave to protect you and see that you only get the light and warmth you need.” The sprout looked up at the grand oak tree and said, thank you for taking care of me!”, The grand oak replied, “oh sweet child think nothing of it, for it is what a father does.”

Fathers, I ask our heavenly Father to bless you all. May He bless you for the times you protected your children. May He bless you for the times you taught your children. May He bless you for having the strength to let your children grow and mature so that they someday can pass along the legacy of your roots. And may God Almighty bless you and keep you as you prepare to someday come home to Him. Amen.

Pastor Gerry

August Update

Greetings my friends. We're in the middle of a heat wave as I write this. It's been a very warm summer and I think it's affecting my brain. If you read my update for July you probably noted that it seemed very familiar and you were right! It was the same update that I wrote for June. I'm still not sure how it happened. That being said, I hope all of you had a very happy Independence Day. We are so fortunate to live in a country where we can have so many freedoms. For us Christians that means we can worship as we please, but along with that goes the responsibility to allow others that same benefit.

Here at our church we are sadly going through a very difficult time with the closing of our facility. This has been a very difficult decision to make, but a necessary one. Currently we are in the process of trying to find someone to take over our building and hopefully repurpose it for something we can be proud of. Ideally it would go to a growing church or even a group in our community who could maintain the structure to be used in a way that would benefit the community. We have had some publicity from the Tribune Chronicle and several Youngstown TV stations regarding this.

At the same time this part of the closure is going on, I have asked the Elders to shepherd our church family to a new situation. Most likely this would be to another church with a type of worship style and mission commitment similar to what we have now. Is this going to be something we all could agree on? Probably not, but hopefully we could come to some kind of consensus. As Reverend Houston told us when he preached on July 14, this church is more than just a building, it's all those who have been here all these years.

When we are finally ready to close our doors, there will be some important decisions to make regarding whatever resources we have left. It's not as simple as dividing up the money amongst ourselves. That would be unconscionable and also illegal. We intend to listen to our congregation as to their wished in this regard.

One more thing we need to address and that is what to do with our stuff. Currently we are in the process of forming a physical assets team. This group would be going through the church room by room and deciding the value of the building's contents. Not so much the

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August Update (continued)

monetary value, but what still has a useful purpose and where it can go. Also they will make the call on many things that just need to be thrown out. Much like many of us have with our own homes. There is a sign up sheet at the church for this committee. We can use some strong hands because there will be some physical activity involved with this group.

We also need to go through the historical parts of the church. This will involve going through old records and pictures and such. If you may be interested in this part of the process please see me.

The process of closing this church is a really big job. There are many issues, some physical, some legal and for all of us very spiritual and emotional. The United Church of Christ has provided us with a consultant to help us through this. His name is Reverend Gary Halstead who met with the Consistory in early July. He will be advising us through the process. In the meantime all I can ask of you is some of your time and of course your prayers.

Just an update on Reverend Gammon. He is making progress after his recent surgery and hopefully will be back with us soon. He has not been idle during his recovery, being very active in communicating with local media and also with me regarding the closing process. Continue to keep him in your prayers.

Till next month, remember our shut-ins

Ron Schoch



Benefits of Being Christian

B W I E Z X E B K Z
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 B J C P J P Z L O B O X Q P I Z C W M H
 B E N O L A R E V E N F W D Z R
 L D X K A R G H F K

WORD LIST

ADVOCATE
 AGAPE LOVE
 BENEVOLENCE
 COMMUNION
 DIRECTION
 ETERNAL LIFE WITH GOD
 FAITH
 FELLOWSHIP
 FORGIVENESS
 FRIENDSHIP WITH CHRIST

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT
 GOOD WORKS
 GRACE
 HEALING
 HOLY SPIRIT
 HOPE
 INHERITANCE
 JESUS CHRIST
 LEGACY
 LIGHT

LOVE
 NEVER ALONE
 ONE BODY
 RELATIONSHIPS
 REPENTANCE
 RESURRECTION
 SALVATION
 SPIRITUAL GROWTH
 UNITY
 WISDOM



Annual Church Picnic



When: Saturday August 24, 2024,

Where: Lake Park Pavilion

Howland Township Park.

Time: noon to 4:00 p.m.

Join us for food, fun, and fellowship! Please plan on bringing a covered dish, your own place settings, chairs, and games for all ages to play. Everyone is welcome! A sign-up sheet will be in the lobby at the beginning of August.

June Income	June Expenditures	June Net
\$4,365.00	\$11,816.47	-\$7,451.47

Toy Drive 2024

We are once again holding our Toy Drive, from now until the end of November, for the Warren Family Mission. If you wish to participate, there will be a bin in the lobby where you can drop off any new, unwrapped toys at any time.

In late November or early December, we will take these toys to the Mission for their yearly Christmas give away. Please keep in mind that while it's fun to shop for the little ones, there are teenagers who need love and support at Christmas also.

Thank you in advance for your kindness. If you have any questions, please see Karen Schoch.



Prayer List

Becky Callahan	Marilyn Leiby	Layes Wood	Shut-ins:
Jerry Currie	Diane Lemasters	Hailee	Donna Beavers
Rodger Davis	Jacob Lemasters		Ruth Gilbert
Steve Doracin	Dean Mahalick		Betty Howren
Phil Fletcher	Peggy Marshall		Dick Leiby
Erika Gammon	Larry Mattison	Those affected by	Marilyn Leiby
Gerry Gammon	Norma Patchin	the conflicts through	Glenn Mark
Donald Gammon	Carter Plot	out the world.	Norma Patchin
Wesley Gault	Mary Sabol		Barb Sponaugle
Ruth Gilbert	Joe Vugrincic		
Dick Leiby	Kathryn Vugrincic		

Floating Five Emergency Fund

In July 2009, the Floating Five Committee decided to start an emergency account to help those in the church having an unexpected need for money such as a car repair, medical bill, or legitimate need as recommended by church members or staff, etc. Please speak with Judy Fabian, Keith Burger, Karen Schoch, or Rev. Gammon should you have such a need.

This is a confidential service available to any church member, staff member, or anyone who attends regularly. This is not intended to be an ongoing source of income but rather for emergency situations which one might encounter.

Prayer Chain/List

The Prayer Chain has been slightly revised. As a reminder, names of people for the Prayer Chain with specific messages are prayed for regularly for that person for seven days. Be sure to begin your request by calling the church office or by filling out a prayer request card.

Names on the Prayer List in the weekly bulletin will be carried for that month unless requested it be continued on or removed prior to the end of the month.

**If you would like to be a caller and offer prayers for those on the prayer chain, please notify the church office (330) 394-4741 or fill out a prayer request card.



First United Church of Christ

280 E. Market Street
Warren, Ohio 44481
(330) 394-4741
Email: firstuccwarren@gmail.com



The church with the “golden dome”

website
www.firstuccwarren.org

Pastor:

Rev./Dr. Gerald Gammon

Pastor Emeritus:

Joe Doran
Everett Gould

Elder Emeritus:

Al Conklin
Nick Fabian
Ed Gilbert
Don Howren
Glenn Mark
Sylvia Moyes
Bill Paxson
George Schneider
Bill Schoch
Charles Weller
Ken Wright

Deacon Emeritus:

Dick Leiby



Consistory

President:	Ron Schoch	Elders:	Keith Burger	12/31/26
			Jr. Fumerola	12/31/24
Vice President:	Bill Paxson		Linda Paxson	12/31/24
			Bill Paxson	12/31/24
Secretary:	Nancy Hamrick		Karen Schoch	12/31/26
Treasurer:	Rev. Gammon	Deacons:	Melanie Burger	12/31/24
			Sheryl Cozad	12/31/25
Financial Officer:	Sheryl Cozad		Judy Fabian	12/31/24
			Marian Gammon	12/31/25
Bookkeeper:	Sheryl Cozad		Candy Lemasters	12/31/25
			Sharon Longworth	12/31/25
			Debbie Wimer	12/31/24

