Mission Statement:

We, the members of the United Church of Christ Congregational, Vermilion, strive to love, serve, and grow as we live God’s message in our families, our church, our community and our world, now and forever more.

Our nation is amazingly diverse, representing different cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Yet most of us live in communities marked by sameness, among people who think, act, and look like us. The vision of Pentecost is to experience unity among a diverse crowd. Yet how do we realize this vision?

Through the funds provided by the Strengthen the Church Offering, The Penn West Conference provides a wonderful example. To support youth programming, this year, the Conference awarded grants to First Church in Irwin and First Church in Greensburg to send young people to the National Youth Event (NYE). Conference Minister David Ackerman explains why it matters, saying, “At National Youth Event, our youth get a sense of the width and breadth of the UCC. Most of our youth come from smaller rural churches. At NYE, they meet other youth from different backgrounds and come away with a sense of being united.”

Every UCC conference uses your generous gifts to Strengthen the Church. The grants provided by the Penn West Conference will help young people, at a national gathering, experience God’s dream of a truly united and uniting Church, amid differences in cultures and backgrounds. Every Conference faithfully uses your gift to invest in God’s vision for the Church.

Please give generously to the Strengthen the Church Offering on May 31st. Together, we can invest in God’s vision of Church.

Facebook link to Worship Videos:
https://www.facebook.com/207535775991402/videos

Find us on YouTube!
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6ilxQOMqB-OEJ2SorcbQHA
## June 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Birthdays
- 2 John Howell
- 3 Krista Peters
- 5 Claudia Wilson
- 6 Colt Johnson
- 8 Natalie Wilson
- 11 Robb Jones
- 12 Linda Estle
- 14 Charles Latto
- 15 Dale Reising
- 16 Jessica Tucker
- 17 Trevor DeMartinis
- 19 David Schwensen
- 20 Elsie Delamatre
- 23 Matt Greiner
- 25 Martha Dean
- 27 Leslie Ennis
- 28 Sjahn Zimmerman
- 29 Sarah Spears

### Anniversaries
- 11 Leslie & Bud Ennis ’60
- 20 Elsie Delamatre & Jolie & Rudy Reising ’83
- 16 Shelly & Jim Innes ’90
- 17 Melanie & Mike Haynes ’78
- 18 Cecily & Thomas Musser 2005
- 19 Janet & Charles Latto 2004
- 24 Kathie & Clark Fitzgibbons ’72
- 25 Ginger & Ian Cutcher 2005
- 27 Betsy & Ted Williams ’74

If your birthday or anniversary is missing, please let the office know!
From the pastor...

My dear church family,

There is an old song that goes....

“I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes, we’re the church together!

The church is not a building; the church is not a steeple;
the church is not a resting place; the church is a people.”

This song speaks to me as we continue to BE the church in this time of pandemic and COVID-19, we are learning new ways to BE and grow. I know that ministry is happening, we are the church together. It is challenging to know whom to listen to, and what to do. It is hard to know when we can be back together in one space, and how long we need to be in separate places. Heartland Conference, Living Water Association, and the United Church of Christ, have all shared information with the pastors and churches as we continue to discern when we can gather in the building. Knowing that, we also will need to continue to offer a streaming option as well.

When I was pastoring a congregation in Lancaster, Ohio, a church had a potluck. At the potluck, there was some potato salad that had some issues, but nobody knew it. By the Sunday afternoon after their potluck, many people were very, very ill, and in the hospital. The next day people were dying. It was horrible. My congregation offered what pastoral care we could. We prayed, we offered whatever help we could. It didn’t take away that the pastor was devastated, the congregation was broken.

There was a congregation in Canada that did all the right things at a gathering. They wore masks, they social distanced, they had hand sanitizer, they washed their hands, the people put finger foods out wore gloves. They were extremely careful, they did everything right. Of the 41 people at the event, 28 got sick and 2 died. Their pastor was devastated, the congregation was broken.

I believe that we are called to experience, seek and share the church, God, in our very lives. I believe we are called to experience, seek, and share the church in our very actions. I believe we are called to experience, seek, and share the church every minute of every day. We do this by living out our baptismal promises, we do this by living out Christ’s resurrection, we do this by asking questions, and growing in our faith. We do this by hearing the stories and studying the stories. We do this by listening and sharing together. We do this by music and silence and worship and prayer. We do this by stretching ourselves and challenging ourselves. We do this by coming out of our comfort zones and growing in faith, separately and together. We do this by inviting others to worship, to include all in what we do and say. We do this by taking our faith to the streets, by living out our mission in the world today.

I invite you to BE the Church in this time and space!
COVID-19
Responding to the need in our community.

DRIVE-THRU FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Tuesday, June 2   3:30 - 5:30pm
Vermilion Elementary School
1285 Douglas Street, Vermilion

Second Harvest will be distributing FREE boxes of assorted shelf-stable food and more.

- Please remain in your vehicle
- Food will only be placed in the trunk of your vehicle
- Food cannot be placed in the front or back seat area
- Please ensure trunk space is clean and clear of other items
- If the trunk is not clean, you will be asked to pull off and can only return to the line once the trunk is empty

Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio
5510 Baumhart Rd. | Lorain, OH 44053 | (440) 960-2265
www.secondharvestfoodbank.org
Try It! We hope you like it!

As we now gather together on Sunday to worship in a new and different way, the Finance committee would like to offer you a new and different way of giving!

![Tithe.ly logo](image)

We’re excited to share that we have launched online giving at our church through Tithe.ly, a safe and secure giving platform. Tithe.ly currently serves over 20,000 churches and ministries including other UCC churches, churches in Akron and Cincinnati, and another Vermilion church!

After launching the program this week, several members have tried it and liked it! “Our new online giving program is probably one of the best and most forward thinking programs in recent history. It is very user friendly, allows donations to be directed and is very secure. As someone that struggles to get to a pew every Sunday, I highly recommend trying it” said Tim Fenton.

A few of the features of our online giving program are:
* recurring donation capability
* email confirmation
* paying from your computer or from your phone
* giving reminders

All sensitive financial information is encrypted and stored with the highest bank level security.

To view, go to the church website, vermilioncongregational.org and click on the “donate” button. By clicking the arrow, you can choose between various funds – for example, this week you can make a Strengthen the Church donation here! To give, complete the giving form with amount, giving by card or through your bank, enter the appropriate account/card number(s) name and email (for your confirmation). If you want to make your donation recurring, complete the frequency (use the drop own menu for your selection choices). Easy as 1, 2, 3!

Please note:
You do NOT have to open an account with Tithe.ly to donate! Just follow the steps outlined above.

Tithe.ly offers many additional programs that we may explore in the future. For now, we wanted to give members and friends an additional way to fulfill their Faith Promise and support the church. The church continues to provide worship service, Sunday school lessons and outreach programs during this time of uncertainty. Thank you for your generosity! We are continuing to make a difference in the community and in the spiritual health of our church.

Finance Committee
CONGRATS, GRADS!!
High School
Nicole Bertoni, PJ Ward, Claudia Wilson
College
Eric McGuinn, Annie Rossi
Masters
Emily Innes

Let’s celebrate our graduates with a card shower! If you need addresses, please contact the office. Thank you!

The Missions Committee invites you to a vigil to Stand Up for Racial Justice this Sunday, May 31st, at 7pm. We will be gathering on the front lawn of our church to present a united stand against the senseless deaths of our brothers and sisters. Please bring a poster with you. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING CDC GUIDELINES FOR GATHERINGS. PLEASE WEAR A MASK. PHYSICAL DISTANCING WILL BE ENFORCED.

BOOK STUDY
Pastor Mindy’s book study on Henri J.M. Nouwen’s “With Burning Hearts: A Meditation of the Eucharistic Life” will be done via Zoom on June 9, 16 & 23 at 7pm. If you will be participating, please email her at revmql@gmail.com so she can invite you to join in the study on those days. The book is available on AbeBooks.com as well as Amazon.

INTRODUCING YOUR REOPENING TEAM!!
Pastor Mindy has put together a team (Judy Brizzolara, Jeff Davis, Jane Dean, Jim Estle, Shelly Innes & Tom Orphan) to research protocols for all aspects of reopening the church for meetings, groups, worship, children, music, cleaning... and so on. The team will be meeting on June 1 for the first brainstorming session.

DNS NEWS
DNS has continued our learning distantly for the last two months of our school year. Teachers sent out weekly lessons through text and email, had virtual lessons and story times through their classroom Facebook pages, and delivered materials to families. In early May, DNS staff decorated their cars and invited families to drive thru the church parking lot and wave at our teachers and connect at a safe distance. Teachers put together bags of artwork that belonged to the students, materials to use at home, a do it yourself Mother’s Day project, and a few surprises for the kids as well. All but two of our students came! DNS also held a virtual graduation celebration through Facebook live on the date of our actual graduation. We sang songs, recognized each child individually, and presented a slideshow with pictures and memories from our year.

GREETINGS FROM YOUR STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE!
Many of you must be wondering what we are doing while not coming up with ways to ask for your pledges. Well, we are busy looking at ways to be good stewards - to protect and preserve our planet Earth – the only home we have. While our endeavors are temporarily on hold due to COVID-19, we will be resuming these activities in the not too distant future. You can look for fun facts in the bulletin and weekly eNews. We will explore ways to not only recycle but to also reduce such as copying on both sides of the paper, buying items in bulk and stopping unnecessary mail. So stay tuned for more to come!
The pain is too much, the injustices too stark, the heartaches too deep. What are we to do?

The word pain from the Old French peine, Latin poena and Greek poine shares the same root as the word punishment, penalty, penance. Is that why since ancient times pain has been connected with punishment, that you did something to deserve it?

If you ever thought that pain is deserved COVID 19, Job’s story, not to mention Jesus’, will challenge you. In our world where the understanding of deserving, reward and punishment, run our lives, where binary and dualistic thought polarizes not only people but the way we see the world, it is difficult to hold on to a faith perspective that calls us to see the world through the eyes of grace, love and wholeness.

Our biblical ancestors thought that God was responsible for everything, good, bad and in-between. They believed that God ran the world, held it in Gods hands, and nothing happened outside of God’s will.

I believe we can learn from them. They were able to accept pain and not see it as a threat to God’s love and goodness. They believed that God was always and forever in charge, and they were not. And, that God transcended pain. They did not see pain negating God’s love and goodness. They accepted that no one promised them a life free of pain. This perspective helped them adapt, adjust to things they could not change, and trust that since it is all in God’s hands, all will be well.

Many of us who experience God as LOVE know that God does not inflict pain and that in this LOVE we experience mercy instead of deserving, gift instead of merit, blessing instead of score-keeping, grace instead of reward or punishment. God does not cause pain. God hurts when we hurt. Such is LOVE.

Pain is not a rational reality. Pain cannot be explained or made into something logical or sensible. Attempts to explain it fall short. Pain just is. It can only be experienced, lived and eventually healed. The way to healing is only through it.

So what do we do with pain? We share it because shared pain is easier to bear and to heal. We lament and weep because weeping can bring about healing. We receive it, walk through it, live with it, lean from it, and emerge from it more loving and more compassionate. Show me a compassionate person and I know that they have walked through the valley of pain, sorrow and heartbeat.

Or, we can pretend pain does not exist, ignore and neglect it, or fight it, and remaining stuck in it we become bitter and cruel, causing the same pain to all in our path.

Pain is a tough way to grow in compassion. But I have not experienced any other, more “effective” way of learning compassion, co-passionating and co-paining. It seems we have to hurt in order to understand another’s hurt - how to stand in another’s shoes, how to grow in understanding and kindness, and how to practice grace and generosity of spirit. I do wish there was another way, but alas I have not found it.

Pain is tough but we can salvage it, give it meaning by learning and growing through it to be a more compassionate people, just like Jesus. Be compassionate. Wear your facemasks.
No matter who you are  
Or where we are on life’s journey  
You are always welcome here.  
As we journey together we discover...  
Love is the key!  
Love of neighbor, children, and creation.

United Church of Christ Congregational

990 State Street  
Vermilion, OH 44089