

## January 2023

Rev. Andy Wagner

937-372-7601 [office@fcum.org](mailto:office@fcum.org) [www.fcum.org](http://www.fcum.org)

Sunday Worship

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Contemporary Worship

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

### Attendance

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Sunday School</u>
December 4	115	37
December 11	106	40
December 18	99	33

### From the Pastor

Dear Faith Community,

Happy New Year!

With New Year's Day falling on a Sunday this year, we have a special opportunity that we don't get every year – starting off the year by worshipping together and receiving Holy Communion together as our church family!

I've mentioned before, one of the most common New Year's Resolutions – one you don't hear much about but one that gets made every year nonetheless – is to get back to church. For those who haven't been attending church much (or any) there couldn't be a better time to come back than the first day of a brand new year.

January 1<sup>st</sup> we will be celebrating Epiphany Sunday. The Feast of the Epiphany commemorates the arrival of the Wisemen who came from the East to pay homage to the newborn King. The word *Epiphany* means manifestation or revelation. The Incarnation of God to the world around us and to the community in which we live. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. Let us reveal the light of Christ.

Blessings, Pastor Andy

## A Voice for Environmental Stewardship

### Third Act

Last month I wrote about Our Carbon Footprint. It was an effort to encourage us to make a personal effort to reduce the amount of excess carbon that we as individuals and families are pumping into our atmosphere. It may seem like it is a useless effort to do anything as individuals that can meaningfully affect the global climate crisis that is threatening our BEAUTIFUL PLANET EARTH, but it is not useless. Last week as I was watching the PBS, I was delighted to see Mr. Bill McKibben appear in a segment called A Brief But Spectacular Take, on December 7<sup>th</sup>. He talked about an organization that he has recently founded called Third Act. (Bill McKibben is a United Methodist who was/is a Trustee of United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.)

Third Act is a national effort to organize older Americans, 60 and older, helping to protect our climate and safeguard our democracy. The website is [thirdact.org](http://thirdact.org). It includes Working Principles: How We

**Work, Be Kind, Be Inclusive, Boost Others, Be Humble, Take Care, Back Up the Youth (who are also working on the same causes). Be Generous but Not to a Fault, Be Accountable, Be Creative, We Are in This Together, Building Communities Through Working Groups, Take Action, Find a Working Group, and Attend an Event. The website encourages us to join their email list, through the website: [thirdact.org](http://thirdact.org).**

**Bill McKibben has been writing books about the environment for 25 years, the most recent of which is The Flag, the Cross and the Station Wagon. He is Harvard educated and the Schumann Distinguished Scholar at Middlebury College in VT, and an active environmentalist. More than a decade ago he also helped to found, with some college students, the organization 350.org.f It is now a worldwide educational force that teaches citizens about the reality of climate change and global warming, and environment injustice and mobilizes people to take action. There are clearly opportunities to make a positive impact on the health of our BEAUTIFUL MOTHER EARTH. LET'S DO IT TOGETHER!**

**Rev. Alan Barone,BA. in science education,M.Div.,  
O.C.V.N.**

### **Stephen Ministry**

**What it means to “hold space” for people, plus eight tips on how to do it well.**

**Several years ago I read an entry in Heather Plett’s blog with this title. Then I reread it recently. While she never mentions Stephen Ministry, what she**

describes in many ways fits the rule of a Stephen Minister. There are, however, two big differences. A Stephen Minister does not offer advice. Instead they listen and ask reflective questions. The other big difference is that Christ is the caregiver and the Stephen Minister is the caregiver. Plett makes no mention of the role of faith in this equation. She writes about gathering with her siblings to be with their mother in her dying days. While they supported their mother, they, in turn, were supported by a gifted palliative care nurse, Ann. In the years following Plett's mother's death, she often thought about Ann and the important role she played. Not only was she a palliative care nurse; she was also a facilitator, coach and guide. By offering gentle, nonjudgemental support and guidance, she helped this family walk one of the most difficult journeys of their lives. The work that Ann did can be defined as "holding space."

What does it mean to hold space for someone else? It means that we are willing to walk alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome. When we hold space for other people, we open our hearts, offer unconditional support, and let go of judgment and control.

Sometimes we find ourselves holding space for people while they hold space for others as Ann held space for Plett and her family. She speculates that there are probably others who hold space for Ann as she pursues her challenging and meaningful work. It's almost impossible to be a strong space holder un-

less we have others who hold space for us. Even the strongest of us need to know that there is someone with whom we can be vulnerable without fear of being judged.

Holding space as Ann modeled is not always easy because most of us have the human tendency to want to fix people, give them advice, or judge them for not being further along than they are. However, we keep trying to hold space for those we care about. At the same time, hopefully there are others in our lives that we trust to hold space for us.

To truly support others in their own growth, transformation, grief, etc., we can't do it by taking away their power (trying to fix their problems), shaming them (implying that they should know more than they do), or overwhelming them (giving them more information than they are ready for.) We have to be prepared to step to the side so they can make their own choices, offer them unconditional love and support, give gentle guidance when it's needed, and make them feel safe even when they make mistakes.

Holding space is not exclusive to coaches, palliative care nurses, or Stephen Ministers. It is something that ALL of us can do. To get started, Plett shares the lessons she learned from Ann and others who have held space for her.

- \*Give people permission to trust their own intuition and wisdom.

- \*Give people only as much information as they can stand.

- \*Don't take away their power.

- \*Keep your ego out of it.**
- \*Make others feel safe enough to fail.**
- \*Offer guidance and help with humility and thoughtfulness.**
- \*Create a container for complex emotions, fear, trauma, etc.**
- \*Allow others to make different decisions and to have different experiences than you would.**
- \*Holding space is not something that we can master overnight. It is a complex practice that evolves as we practice it, and it is unique to each person and each situation. May we be life-long learners in what it means to hold space for another. – Becky Cultice**

### **United Methodist Women**

**Dorcas Circle will not meet in January, February and March.**

**The Men of Faith will meet on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in Room 16A & B (Community Center). All men are invited to join us. Each person may bring their own meal and beverage. We will have a social time during the meal. A short business meeting will be conducted at 6:30 PM followed by a planning meeting for 2023 goals, projects, and activities. Everyone who may be participating in upcoming projects are urged to attend.**

### **Passings**

**Prayers and Sympathy to Michael and Sharon Boothe on the death of their son, Matthew Boothe, and to family and friends of Barbara Johnston on her death.**

### **Sign Up for 2023 Altar Flowers**

**The flower calendar for 2023 is on the table in the narthex. Your gift of altar flowers enhances the worship service and reflects the beauty of God's World. If you sign up for flowers we can order them or you can order them from your favorite florist. You will receive a reminder call prior to the date. If you have any questions please call the office, Joyce Smith (937)372-6576 or Betsy Murray 937)372-8376.**

### **Greeters**

**Would you like to be a greeter on Sunday mornings? We have a signup sheet on the table in the narthex and you can choose the days you would like to greet. Thank you for your service to the Lord.**

### **Benevolence Team**

**We're looking for a few people to help the benevolence team distribute money to those less fortunate. For more information, please contact Bob Whipp at (372) 306-8281 or Robert. Whipp@yahoo.com.**

**FCUM**  
**November 2022 Financials**

Monthly Income	\$ 37,797		YTD Income	\$ 359,906	
Monthly Expenses	\$ 27,212		YTD Expenses	\$ 317,733	
Difference	\$ 10,585	28.01%	Difference	\$ 42,173	11.72%

**Please Note:** Former minister, Rev. Robert McDowell's final sermon as an active minister in the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church will be June 11, 2023 at 10:30 A.M. at Athens First United Methodist Church at 2 South College St., Athens, Ohio. All are welcome to attend and/or send a note of celebration. (THIS IS A SURPRISE TO PASTOR ROBERT.)

**Deadline for February Faith Links: January 16**

**Manley Proverbs**

*You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.*

(Submitted by Charles Manley)

***HAVE A HAPPY AND  
PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR***



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> <b>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b> 9:15-10:15- Sunday School-15C, Parlor 10:30-11:30-Worship	<b>2 OFFICE CLOSED</b> 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B 7-8pm-G.C. Special Olympics Basketball Practice-FCC 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-9pm-Stephen Min.-Library	<b>3</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC 5:30-7 pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC 6-8:15pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C; 16A-B 6:30-8:30-Trustees#8 7-8:30pm-SPRC-Library	<b>4</b> 6:15-7:15pm-Handbells Practice-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir practice	<b>5</b> 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 1:30-4pm-Women's Club of Xenia-Parlor	<b>6</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 9:15-10:15- Sunday School-15C, Parlor 10:30-11:30-Worship	<b>9</b> 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-G.C. Special Olympics Basketball Practice-FCC	<b>10</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC 5:30-7 pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC 6-8:45pm-GS Leaders Meeting-15A	<b>11</b> 6:15-7:15-pm-Handbells-Musi Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice-Sanctuary	<b>12</b> 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 12:30-1:30pm-Membership Care Mtg.-Parlor 2-4pm-Grief Support-Par.	<b>13</b> 10-11:30am-Book Club of Greene Co. Library-Parlor 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:15-10:15- Sunday School-15C, Parlor 10:30-11:30-Worship	<b>16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith-16A-B 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-G.C. Special Olympics Basketball Practice-FCC	<b>17</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC 5:30-7pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC 6-8:15pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C; 16A-B No Dorcas Circle until April	<b>18</b> 6:15-7:15-Handbell practice-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice-Sanctuary	<b>19</b> 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	<b>20</b> 3:30-5:30pm-XHS Winter Guard-FCC	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:15-10:15- Sunday School-15C, Parlor 10:30-11:30-Worship  29 9:15-10:00- Sunday School- 15C, Parlor 10:30-11:30-Worship	<b>23</b> 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C  30 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith-16A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8-Spec. Olymp.-FCC	<b>24</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC 5:30-7pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC 6-8:15pm-Girl Scouts-15ABC; 16A-B  <b>31</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC 5:30-7pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC	<b>25</b> 6:15-7:15-Handbell practice-Music Room  <b>No Choir practice</b>	<b>26</b> 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	<b>27</b> 3:30-5:15-XHS Winter Guard-FCC	<b>28</b> 6-8pm-Double I-15A/K