

May 2024

Rev. Jeff Bandy

937-372-7601 office@fcum.org www.fcum.org.

9:00am- Sunday School

10:00am-Hospitality Time-Narthex

10:30am-Worship-Sanctuary

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Attendance

Date	Worship	Sunday School
March 24	104	28
March 31	161	no classes
April 7	80	36
April 14	94	28
April 21	96	38

Thank You Laity

“This is such a caring and friendly church” is a comment I’ve heard several times recently. That certainly has been my experience, and I hope yours.

Since January I have been serving as your lay leader. Just what is that? Good question. Those of you who have served in this capacity already know. I am still learning. It involves a lot of listening. Basically, the lay leader is the bridge between the pastor and the laity. “Lay leaders are asked to feel the pulse of the congregation and community, help sense the health and wholeness of the Body, and listen to both the pastor and people.” In addition, lay leaders are to be the liason between the local church and what is happening within the denomination as a whole. In addition to our delegate to the West Ohio Annual Conference, Pam Colbrunn, we communicate relevant information about what’s happening on the conference level. I will share more specifics later, but for now, I would like to focus on how members of our congregation covered the day-to-day activities so that Pastor Jeff could concen-

trate on his time of renewal knowing that our congregation was supportive, praying, and looking forward to his return.

During the month of April when Pastor Jeff was on his spiritual renewal leave, we had an opportunity to see the laity of Faith Community in action.

While the District Superintendent and our Staff/Parish Relations Committee worked out details so we could have as seamless a month as possible, members of our congregation carried on as they so often do. Although there isn't time or space to include everything that happened, the following are representative of how our congregation stepped up: *Before Pastor Jeff's leave, we experienced a seder experience that he supported and helped plan but was the result of an idea spearheaded by the Education Committee and implemented through the efforts of many. *The first Sunday after Easter, our own Victor Hess preached as he frequently has. *The afternoon of April 14, the Sunday when Rev. Jenn Lucas, our District Superintendent preached, we hosted a District training for all the SPRC Committees. *The next evening Mary & Martha group sponsored an amazing evening with the Xenia High School Jazz Band as our guests. This event, open to the greater community, provided a time of fun, fellowship and entertainment. *On April 21 our youth led us in worship. What a fabulous opportunity for all of us to hear what is on the minds and hearts of our youth. *Throughout the month, the Hospital Visitation Team provided daily coverage for all who were facing procedures or hospitalizations. Vic Toney generously supplemented this team by providing pastoral presence and support. (I was personally the recipient of the phone calls, prayers, and visits of this team and it meant a great deal.) While there are so many other ways our laity serve, these are just a few specific ways their efforts were evident during Pastor Jeff's time away.

As we look back on the month of April and welcome back Pastor Jeff, thanks to all of you who continue to serve. I challenge each of us to look for new ways to share our passion. May we continue to build trust, develop deeper relations and share our multiple God-given gifts. By asking questions, shar-

ing thoughts and ideas, I pray that together we realistically look at what is and, through the eyes of faith, look at what can be. God is present with us. May we turn to Him and be led by the Holy Spirit.

~~Becky Cultice, Lay Leader

FCUM College Crew Updates

It is graduation season and we have MUCH to celebrate. We have two graduates to celebrate for their graduation last December, five more college graduates to celebrate now, and two High School graduates to celebrate as well. See below for all the achievements of these amazing Faith Community students:

***Sarah Creone graduated from the Ohio State University with a degree in Marketing in December.**

***Kayla Horney graduated from Bowling Green State University with a degree in Middle Childhood Education in December.**

***Ian Ackenhausen is set to graduate from Ohio Northern University with a degree in Accounting and Finance.**

***Megan Ackenhausen will also be graduating from Ohio Northern University with a degree in Exercise Physiology.**

***Jake Fox will be receiving a degree in Games and Animation from Ohio University this Spring.**

***Grant Smith will graduate from Ohio State University with a degree in Agribusiness and Applied Economics.**

***Moirra Ackenhausen will graduate from high school at Legacy Christian Academy.**

***Molly Mossing will be receiving her high school diploma from Cedarville High School.**

We will be celebrating these students' academic achievements on Sunday, June 2. Please join us that day to celebrate all of them and their successes.

Get Acquainted With Our Communion Stewards

The first Sunday of each month, as well as some special occasions, Faith Community UMC celebrates the sacrament of communion.

The brass containers are filled with bread and grape juice is quietly sitting on the altar, awaiting the special event. How does that happen? Joyce Osburn has been the communion steward for 14 years and her husband Jim is her helper. They come early to prepare the sacrament and when the service ends, clean and put away the containers.

Joyce was trained for the position by a perfectionist and strives to maintain that level of perfection with the juice cups properly filled and the bread cut into uniform pieces. She cuts a loaf of sourdough bread into about 120 pieces the day before and stores it in plastic bags so it is always fresh. She has a device which enables her to put the proper amount of juice in each cup. Depending on the pastor's wishes, there is often a loaf of French bread on the altar as well. The pastor tells them in advance if it will be passed in the pews or the congregation will come forward to the altar.

Joyce grew up in Trinity Church and Jim attended First Church. They were married 60 years ago with the minister from each church presiding over the ceremony. They have lived in other cities, attending church services wherever they lived. Now their permanent church is Faith Community where Jim frequently serves as an usher.

Did you know that they also have an additional ministry? They visit hospitals, bringing cheer to those in need and also nursing homes, often taking a well-trained dog. Pet therapy is welcomed by a number of institutions and schools. One of the dogs they trained has passed away but Lucy, though she has a spinal injury and gets around with a "walker", still wants to visit and soon will be going to T.N.C. here in Xenia to visit

with the patients. Jim does hospital visitations and when their other dog was still alive, would take along a blanket in case a patient wanted to have the dog sit on the bed. Yes, hospitals allow that! Joyce is training a younger dog for pet therapy. They belong to a large group of pet therapy volunteers whose mission is to bring joy to those who enjoy the visiting dogs. Requests for pet therapy visits are frequent and the couple accepts as many requests as possible.

Joyce loves to knit and has knitted afghans for their 12 great-grandchildren.

– Submitted by Joan Baxter

A Voice for Environmental Stewardship

For this article I am borrowing these words of the Fourteenth Dalai of Tibet from the Foreword of the book [HERE: Poems for the Planet](#). When we see photographs of the Earth from space, we see no boundaries between us, just one blue planet, a natural world that supports us all. Therefore, we have to see humanity as one family and the natural world as our home. It is not necessarily sacred or holy but simply where we live, and so it is in our interest to look after it. We humans are the only species with the power to destroy the Earth, so too we have the capacity to protect it. Unfortunately the damages we are doing to the atmosphere happen gradually so we do not notice it until it is almost too late.

Our dependence on fossil fuels is such that although we were warned long ago about the threat of carbon dioxide, we have done little to stop it. Leaders must confront the issue of global warming on an international level for all of our benefit. But on a personal and family level too we must develop a much clearer awareness of our actions and consequences, such as how we use water and how we dispose of our garbage so that taking care of and limiting damage to our natural environment becomes an ordinary part of our daily life. That is the proper way and it can only be achieved through education.

The book, HERE: Poems for the Planet contains many beautiful and generous poems and ideas for actions. It is my heartfelt hope that they will inspire readers who ask themselves, “But what can I do?” to see a way forward—learning to share the Earth and its resources, while taking care of it together.”

Rev. Alan D. Barone, B.A. Science Education, M.Div.,
Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

Mary & Martha

A BIG thank you to all who came out to hear the XHS High School jazz band hosted by the Mary & Martha Gathering and the United Methodist Men. There were so many moving parts that needed to come together to make this community event work AND it did! Thanks to all that made this event happen...too many to name! The next Mary & Martha gathering will be held MONDAY, MAY 13, 6-8 PM at the Greene County FISH Pantry, 774 Cincinnati Avenue, Xenia. In honor of all mothers, daughters, grandmothers, and sisters, we will be volunteering at the pantry to help those less fortunate. Their present needs are: box mixes such as hamburger helper, scalloped potatoes, mashed potatoes, tuna helper and noodleroni; canned meats such as tuna, chicken, Spam, etc.

Bring your favorite dish to share and we will supply the rest! If you don't have time to make something, please don't let this stop you from coming. Questions, call Laurie Krakowiak @ 947-694-8114 or Barbara Mills @ 937-414-4108.

UMW Circles

Women United will meet on Monday, May 20 at 1:30 P.M. in the parlor. All women are welcome to attend.
Dorcas will meet on Tuesday, April 21 at 1:00 PM in 15A-B

United Methodist Men of Faith

The Men of Faith will meet on Monday, May 20 at 6 PM in Room 16A&B. All men are invited to join us. Pizza will be served. We will have social time during the meal followed by a devotional from "God Calls You to More". We will then discuss our annual garden and garage sale projects as well as review the multiple charities we support financially.

JAM

Faith Community's participation in the annual Jackson Area Ministry program yielded 124 seed packets and \$245 in monetary donations. Thank you for your generosity to this very worthy project.

New Member Class

If you are interested in membership at Faith Community, you are invited to attend a one day orientation class on Sunday, May 19 at 1:00pm in the Parlor. Please call the office to sign up or email PastorJeff@fcum.org with any questions.

Proactively Planning for Your Future- The Final Plan

The Unbroken Circle Committee invites you to the next in our series, Proactively Planning for Your Future, on Saturday morning, May 18, from 10-11am in the Youth Lounge. Mary Carr Massie, Director, Embalmer, and Manager of McColaugh Massie Funeral Home will be speaking about how planning for your funeral can be an important part of the end of life transition. We encourage you to come and bring along family and friends. There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Vacation Bible School is set for July 15-19, 2024. Please plan to join us as a participant, either as a child or young at heart staff member. We'll be heading to Camp Firelight for fun adventures as we learn to trust in God. Watch for more details! Call Betsy, 937-768-1143, or Joyce, 937-609-3907 to volunteer or ask questions.

FCUM
March 2024 Financials

Monthly Income	\$ 19,630		YTD Income	\$ 97,311	
Monthly Expenses	\$ 28,943		YTD Expenses	\$ 92,720	
Difference	\$ (9,313)	-47.44%	Difference	\$ 4,591	4.72%

Manley Proverbs

“We can give without loving but we can not love without giving.”

Deadline for June Faith Links: May 20



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May 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary/Chapel	2 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 2-3:45pm-Woman's Club of Xenia-Parlor 6-7:45pm- Magic Volleyball Practice-FCC	3	4
5 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30pm--Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	6 6-7:30pm-SPRC-Room 8 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-9pm-Stephen Ministry-Library	7 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 6-8:30pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C, 16A-B 6:30-8:30pm-Trustees-Parlor	8 6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary/Chapel	9 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 12:30-1:30pm-Membership Care-Parlor 2-4pm-Grief Support-Parlor 6-7:45pm-Magic Volleyball Practice-FCC	10 4-5pm-Private Event-Sanctuary	11
12 MOTHERS' DAY 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am--Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	13 9am-4pm-Lifeline Screening-Comm. Center 6-8pm-Mary & Martha at FISH FOOD PANTRY 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C	14 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 6-7:45pm-Magic Volleyball Practice-FCC	15 6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music Room 6-8:30pm-Volleyball Banquet-FCC 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary/Chapel	16 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 6-7:45pm-Magic Volleyball -FCC 6:30-8:pm-Ad Board-15C	17	18
19 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am--Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary 1-2pm-New Member Orientation-Parlor	20 1:30-3pm-Women United-Parlor 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith-16 A-B 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C	21 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 1-3pm-Dorcas Circle-15A-B 6-8:30pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C, 16A-B	22 6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary/Chapel	23 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 6-7:45pm-Magic Volleyball Practice-FCC	24	25 4-6pm-Private Event-FCC 6-8pm-Double I-15A
26 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am--Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	27 MEMORIAL DAY 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C	28 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor	29 9am-5pm-55th Session of West Ohio Annual Conference 6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary/Chapel	30 9am-5pm-55th Session of West Ohio Annual Conference 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	31 9am-5pm-55th Session of West Ohio Annual Conference	