

# The Grapevine

The e-newsletter of Church of the Redeemer UCC

February 2018

## Staff Information

### Staff Hours and Contact Information

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Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ  
is an Open and Affirming and Just Peace Congregation.

**All are Welcome!**

## In this Issue:

- \* Reflections from the Rev. Jim Cunningham the the Rev. Bob Richardson
- \* Children and Youth News
- \* Monthly Devotional
- \* Meeting Updates
- \* Staff columns
- \* And much, more

## Coming Events and Information

### Chair Yoga

Chair Yoga classes are on Mondays at 11:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. You know you want to join in!

Yoga will be on Christmas break after Dec. 4 and will resume Jan. 8.

Namaste!



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## Prayer List Information Update

The Sunday bulletin prayer list is cleaned out approximately every four weeks. If you wish to have someone remain on the current list, please notify Emma Kozar (440-899-6221).

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## Consistory and Annual Meeting Update

*"... I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward-to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back." -- Philippians 3:14*

Consistory opened their first meeting of 2018 by welcoming new members: Diane Kvasnicka, Johanna Slygh, & Erin Williams. Officers for 2018: President – Janet Kramer; Vice-President – Bonnie Hawver; Secretary – Dorothy Earl; Treasurer – Alex Tomoff; and Financial Secretary – Chuck Zaugg.

### Search Committee Update

The search committee has four interviews for the post of pastor scheduled for the beginning of February.

### Constitution & Bylaws Update

There will be two opportunities to meet with members of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. Q&A sessions on the draft Constitution and Bylaws will be held Sunday, Feb. 25 and Sunday, March 4, after worship. There will be a congregational vote on the final draft by midyear.

### Annual Meeting Update

For anyone who missed the January Annual Meeting, there was a discussion and vote regarding the use of the 2017 year-end surplus of \$27,498. It was voted to move \$20,000 into the facilities fund. The \$7,498 remainder will be used at the discretion of the consistory.

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## Opportunities to Grow

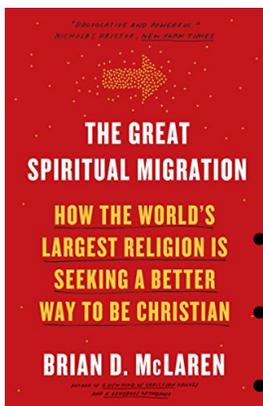
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### Favorite Bible Stories Bible Study

Each Wednesday afternoon, Jim Stone leads a Bible study on some of our favorite passages. Join Jim at 1:30 p.m.

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### Lenten Bible and Worship Study, Feb. 18-March 11



The Rev. Jim Cunningham will lead us through a 4-part Study of Brian McLaren's book, *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World's Largest Religion is Seeking a Better Way to Be Christian*.

There are several ways to participate:

- Attend worship each Sunday during Lent, and listen to the sermon
- Purchase and read each week a portion of the book *Way of Life* ( a "Cliff's Notes" style summary version of the full book)
- Purchase and read each week a portion of the full book *The Great Spiritual Migration*
- On any given Sunday, whether or not you have read either book, pick up your coffee and snack, and then join in a discussion group in a room to be announced.

SIGN UP IN THE GATHERING ROOM TO ORDER AND/OR PICK UP THE BOOK OF YOUR CHOICE: *Way of Life* \$5; *The Great Spiritual Migration* \$6.  
(NOTE: Faith Formation is covering half of the cost of the book)

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## Men's Spiritual Journey Discussion Group

This group meets the second Sunday of each month at 8:45 a.m. Next meeting: Feb. 11 in the Lounge.

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## Science and Religion Discussion Group

The Science and Religion Group, led by [Jim Stone](#), meets the third Sunday of the month after worship in the lounge.

## Opportunities to Serve



### February In-Gathering: Soup and Crackers

In honor of the Super Bowl, February's In-Gathering is soup and crackers. Thank you for your generous contributions!

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## February Offering: Outdoor Ministries



The February offering is for the Outdoor Ministries Fund of the UCC's Ohio Conference. The fund assist our UCC Ohio camps and ministries in their work to benefit church members of all ages.

Thank you for giving generously!

## Children and Youth



## Children and Youth News

- Lenten Devotionals are being provided by the Faith Formation Team. Each child will receive *Jesus Loves Me* and each youth will receive *The See-Son of Lent* to be used at home.
- Special Lenten Children's Bulletins will be provided each week for the time the children spend in worship.
- Children and youth will be collecting for One Great Hour of Sharing as their Lenten offering. Collection boxes to take home will be provided.
- Thanks to the PB&J Youth Group for making 100 table favors and helping to serve at last month's Community Meal which we host with Clague Road UCC. (See photos, below!)
- The next PB&J meeting will be March 5 from 6-8 p.m.



## From Our Church Staff

### Greetings from Our Interim Minister for Worship and Pastoral Care



As many of you heard me announce on Jan. 21, Charlie and I have decided to move to Phoenix, Ariz., to be close to Charlie's father who, at 86, has health challenges; and it will probably be better for my asthma and Charlie's allergies. My last Sunday will be March 18.

Let me be clear. I have loved every minute of my ministry with you. I had every intention to stay until you called a new pastor. We face what was unforeseen circumstances and opportunities we feel we must now follow. We ask for your prayers and understanding and pledge to continue to hold you in love and prayers during your transitional journey.

We cannot take our 8- and 2-year-old cats with us, unfortunately. We would love to find a home where the two can continue to enjoy each other's company. If you, or someone you know, can help, please call or arrange a visit at 440-759-9062. Free,

including a cat tree, litter boxes, cat carrier, automatic feeders, and toys.

As of Jan. 29, we have seven more Sundays to share in worship together, plus an Ash Wednesday service at 7 p.m. on Feb. 14. I look forward to a Lenten four-week sermon series beginning Feb. 18 based on Brian McClaren's book *The Great Spiritual Migration*, with an after-worship discussion opportunity featuring a 15-minute video with the author. You may sign up and buy the book or the "cliff's notes" version study guide if you wish. See the details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Your church leadership is working with the Western Reserve Association staff to find someone to fill my interim role until you call a new pastor.

In Christ,  
Jim Cunningham

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## Greetings from Our Interim Minister for Administration and Transition



Greetings Everyone,

Just a quick note to remind you that I am still here and working very much behind the scenes at CoR in my role as Interim for Transition and Administration. As I noted previously, many of you will probably never see me. However, please be assured that there is a lot going on via email, phone call and personal meetings as requested. If you have a concern, want to tell me something I need to know, want to talk, want to see if I am really 6'11", please reach out to me. Phone is 484-597-0173. Email is [brich948@gmail.com](mailto:brich948@gmail.com).

From my perspective, CoR is an exciting place to be with a wonderful future waiting to be lived.

The search committee is talking with a number of people (shhhh - they can't tell you any more than this at the moment) in their ongoing process of discernment of whom God is calling to be your next pastor. From my time with them, I can tell you that they are a very dedicated group of people. Please give them your patience as they go about their work. It simply takes time – both in terms of the time they're putting into the work, and the over all length of months the work takes. Please also remember them and their work in your prayers – along with your next pastor. I know we don't know who that is. But we can be praying for them now that they're open to God's call in their life to move to Northeast Ohio and partner with you in building the Kingdom of God together in this place. Don't forget – you're not only getting a pastor, I'm getting a new colleague in ministry in the Association! We all want the right person to come.

The Transition Team (remember them from last spring?) is beginning to work with Margaret on a creative and fun (would it be any other way under her leadership?) project that you'll be hearing about soon. Watch – and plan to take part.

Yeah, CoR is an exciting place to be. I hope you're taking part in the fun, and looking forward to all that is to come.

Grace & Peace

## A Minute with Margaret



*We are all on a journey, a personal one, and a corporate one as our congregation. Here is my gift for you as we head together into Lent ... a prayer.*

### A Prayer for Lent

O God, we know we are on a journey.  
We may not know to where we travel  
but we do know that we are traveling.  
We can look down and see that our feet are on a path-  
For some it is a muddy one,

for others a rocky ascent,  
for still others a well beaten path.

Depending on the road we travel, we have readied our feet in different ways –  
some of us are wearing hiking boots,  
others of us may be in heels,  
some even in ruby slippers.

We all carry different baggage with us –  
some have a backpack slung over a shoulder,  
others have an overnight case stuffed under an arm,  
a few of us may even have three piece luggage sets on wheels.

But we all notice that we are not alone,  
that there is always a companion with whom we walk,  
and that

You are always with us.

What is this journey, O God?  
Some will tell us today that it is a Lenten Journey.  
We are told we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus –  
To better appreciate His walk to the cross,  
To better understand His journey to the tomb now emptied.  
This seems to be true –  
But is there more, God?

Some will tell us that this trip is life.  
We must travel carefully noticing the road signs and detours  
So that we can discover its meaning.  
We must watch out for road construction and accidents that might block our way  
So that we are not impaired in discovering our purpose for living.  
This rings true to us –  
But is there more, God?

Some tell us that it is a travel towards justice and peace.  
We are to carry the good news into the corners of the world.  
We are to fill the bags we carry with food for the hungry,  
clothes for the naked,  
hope for the prisoners,  
care for the lonely.  
There is no room for tourists on a journey such as this.  
We feel truth resting in the palms of our busy hands.  
But is there more, God?

Some tell us that this journey is an inward one.  
Our travels are ones that take us to hidden places of the heart.  
Our itinerary includes the quiet corners where only You dwell.  
Repentance provides the directions.  
And Your love is our only guide.  
This resides like truth inside of us –  
For we realize that You are the more.

God of trip and travel  
Creator of all wayfaring strangers  
Bless our every footstep  
Keep all of our paths –  
this Lenten journey  
and all that are to follow  
to their final destinations.  
For You are our constant companion,  
faithful and loving.  
The only destination to which all of our travels take us  
And because of You ...  
there is always more. AMEN.

*Blessings,  
Margaret*

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### **A Musical Note from Carol**



We are busy preparing for some exciting music performances during the next few months.

On Sunday, Feb. 11, at 3 p.m., we will once again feature music students in concert from the Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory of Music. Our very own Jason Aquila will be accompanying.

The Chancel Choir will be presenting a Spring Concert, "FEELIN' THE LOVE," on Sunday, May 20, at 3:00 p.m. You will hear some of your favorite love songs!

The Sharon Signers, under the direction of Cory Svette, will also be presenting a concert (date TBA) featuring "Beauty and the Beast."

We will continue to update everyone regarding any concert details.

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support of our music program.

Blessings to All!

Carol Peddie  
Director of Music

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### **A Message from Nurse Gayle -- Heart Health**



If my source is correct, for the first time since 1934 our Lenten journey will begin on February 14, Valentine's day, and the month we focus on heart health!

I am confident that through your daily faith practices you will experience God's heart healing peace during this time. But, what are you planning for your heart health and valentines celebration?

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in America and it is one of the most preventable. I challenge you to give your valentine a gift combining your spiritual and heart health.

Perhaps the greatest gift you can give your valentine is to care for your heart and your future. Write down one small step that is important to you and include it with your valentine celebration. Need some suggestions?

Consider: 1) taking your blood pressure and cholesterol medication as directed 2) pay attention to your nutrition, portion size, salt content, fruits and vegetables, 3) stop smoking 4) exercise, begin with walking 15 minutes three times a week and in three weeks increase to 30 minutes three times a week 5) write down your family health history 6) begin a stress reduction program or 7) schedule that medical or dental appointment you have been putting off.

If you like to multitask try adding a yoga class you can attend with your valentine for a bit of stress relief and exercise. Having a hard time outlining a plan that will combine your Lenten journey and heart health? I would be happy to visit with you. Leave me a message or send me an [e-mail](#).

Have you completed an emergency contact form? Did you know we can no longer rely upon finding your children's phone number in the phone book? At the annual meeting, I introduced a basic form to update our records with phone numbers for the individual(s) you would like us to contact in case of an emergency. We might also contact your special person if we are not able to locate you after a hospitalization etc. [Download the form](#), or find a hard copy in the parish nurse information rack across from the bulletin boards. Have a question? Please leave me a message or send me an [email](#).

On Feb. 25, Care givers will meet following worship in the Sunday school room. We will be reviewing our list of homebound, college students and planning for the year. April 18, we will continue with our Senior Living Tours! Join us for a tour of Wesleyan Village in Elyria. The Wesleyan van will pick us up in the church parking lot at 10:30 a.m. We will have a tour of the village with independent apartments, assisted living, memory care, rehab and cluster homes. Please sign up on the bulletin board no later than Sunday, April 15. The van will transport 17. If we have more, we will car pool.

Blessings,  
Gayle

## Deadlines and Reminders

### Deadlines to remember

**Sunday bulletins and screens:** If there is a church event you want listed in the Sunday bulletin, please turn in the information and contact name/number to the

church office by Monday morning at 10 a.m., or it will not make it into that week's bulletin.

**Grapevine:** The deadline for getting information into the monthly Grapevine is the third Tuesday of the month. Anything received after that will not make it into that month's Grapevine.

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## We need YOU to Sign Up!

Sign-up sheets for flowers and the bulletins, are on the main bulletin board in the hallway. The community meal signup is posted there, too.

Please DO remember to sign up as you pass by!

In addition, emails were sent to past liturgists and acolyte families. Please respond by clicking the link in the email and signing up!

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## Phone Guide

Trying to reach someone at the church? Here's a handy list of extensions:

Worship Times 1  
Faith Formation Minister Margaret Borelli 3  
Parish Nurse Gayle Donahue 4  
Main Office 0

## Monthly Devotional

*Each issue of the Grapevine will feature a UCC devotional for meditation.*

## Sinai Sabbatical

**By Mathew Laney**

*When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron, and said, "Make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." -- Exodus 32:1*

Rev. Moses was gone a long time on his Mt. Sinai sabbatical, and the church got impatient. They felt abandoned by him and neglected by God. So Aaron, the associate pastor, made a golden "comfort God" based on the familiar bovine deities they knew from Egypt.

As the people had a wild worship party around their glittering idol, Moses returned, ready to share what he had received while on retreat: ten rules for godly living, the first three of which commend monotheism and condemn idolatry.

Moses was fit to be tied. He dropped his sabbatical report, incinerated the golden bull and made the Israelites eat the ashes. As far as we know, Moses never took another sabbatical.

These days, sabbaticals are a bit less tumultuous, but the pitfalls haven't changed.

For all the blessings sabbaticals bring, they can inspire resentment in the congregation and staff and sometimes less than ideal decisions from those minding the store. Sometimes the first day or week back is a bit bumpy for everyone.

Sabbaticals are as healthy for pastors as they are for members of the congregation. Sometimes church folk need a sabbatical—a planned time of separation from the church concluding with an intentional return—to maintain an engaged faith and a healthy relationship with the community.

In either case, we discover anew that the church is God's, not ours. We are wanted, but not needed. Loved but not required. When we assume too much ownership, we inevitably turn ourselves into an idol and miss the real thing.

### Prayer

God, there is a season, and a time for every matter in the church: a time to step up and a time to step back; a time to grab on and a time to let go; a time to act and a time to wait. Help me, and my pastor, to know the difference. Amen.

### About the Author

Matt Laney is senior pastor of Virginia Highland Church UCC in Atlanta, and the author of *Pride Wars*, a fantasy series published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Young Readers. The first book, *The Spinner Prince*, will be released March 9, 2018.

## Birthdays, Anniversaries, Joys, & Concerns

### February Birthdays

3	Jean Badger
5	Tonola Branch
6	Janet Denk
9	Dan Zerbey Jeanne Long Amanda Lee Earl
11	Barb Zaugg Deborah Bracy Karen Farmer
14	Julie Miller
15	Sally January
16	Kirk Suhart
17	Megan Moran
18	Chad Bernard Brienna Earl
19	Ben Miller
22	Amy Reitz

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Bonnie Hawver (2017)

### Deacons:

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