



The Herald

First Congregational Church of Tallmadge
United Church of Christ

“Making God the Foundation of Everyday Living”

“Be the Light”

On Sunday, January 21st, the Gospel lesson is from the first chapter of Mark verses 14-20. It begins by stating, “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.” One blogger piqued my attention when he wrote, “watch the verbs – *arrested, came, proclaiming.*”

With the verb *arrested*, we are alerted to something. We are alerted to the fact that those who stand and prophetically proclaim the justice, mercy and love of God are sometimes seen as threats to the status quo.

Now, to be sure, John had called out the ruling elite when he “invited” them to the baptism of the repentance of sin by saying, “You brood of vipers flee from the wrath to come” (in Luke’s telling). It might have been harsh, but it was the voice of justice daring to speak a word in an unjust world.

The next verb *came* reiterates for us that Jesus was on a holy and urgent mission. He’d no doubt heard of the arrest of John and knew there would be consequences for the ministry he was going to undertake. Knowing that, he still came “*proclaiming the good news of God.*” As the blogger Steve Garnass-Holmes states it,

“The word of God's disruptive grace,
the fierce and tender love
that undermines the Empire itself
is good news for bad times.

Jesus had “good news for bad times”!

I, like some of you, have felt that these past several years have been filled with more “bad” news than “good” news. We struggled to be authentic Christians shining the light of Christ into a darkened world. We watched many of our Evangelical brothers and sisters who refused raise a prophetic counter-witness to the unjust practices that had unfolded. But in this season of Epiphany, we are called to be the light. We are called by the light of the world, to share “God’s disruptive grace” and be “the fierce and tender love” in a world that seems to be filled with hate.

Last month, we also remembered the justice work of the Rev. Dr. King. I’ve been thinking of a



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
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quote that I often like to use of his. King once said that, “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. “ I believe that with all of my heart, BUT I also believe that it does not bend by itself. We must be the “benders.” We have the charge and responsibility as the followers of Christ to bend that arc and ensure that movement toward a just world for all. I can say it no better than the Inaugural poet Amanda Gorman when she ended her poignant and beautiful poem, “The Hill We Climb,” by saying,

“When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid.
The new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it.
If only we’re brave enough to be it.”

Grace for the journey,

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

JAN 21 — THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Scripture: Jonah 3:1-5, 10, Mark 1:14-20
Message: *“Jesus, Man of Mystery: An Urgent Mission”*

JAN 28 — FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Scripture: Psalm 111, Mark 1:21-28
Message: *“Jesus, Man of Mystery: Extra! Extra! Read All About It!”*

ANNUAL MEETING AT END OF WORSHIP

FEB 4 — FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Scripture: Isaiah 40:21-31, Mark 1:29-39
Message: *“Jesus, Man of Mystery: Secrets, Secrets, Secrets”*

FEB 11 — TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6, Mark 9:2-9
Message: *“Mountaintop Experiences”*

FEB 18 — FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Scripture: Genesis 9:8-17, Mark 1:9-15
Message: *“Covenant: A Global Guarantee”*

FEB 25 — SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Mark 8:31-38
Message: *“Covenant: Promises We Can’t Keep”*



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season in the church year known as Lent. Lent is a time to prepare for the celebration of Easter and to renew our life in the Paschal Mystery. We will be exploring the theme of “Covenant” during this Lenten season.

When we think about contracts, we think about legal documents. These documents are built on distrust. We want to “protect” our interests through legal means. Yet aren’t healthy human relationships built on trust?

The deepest and most eternal trust that undergirds our souls comes from a relationship with God, who has given all to be

with us and keeps not only God’s promises but ours as well, in an unbreakable love known as covenant.

Make plans to join your church family this Wednesday, February 14 at 7:00pm in the sanctuary for this deeply meaningful service as we begin our Lenten journey.

THE PRAYER CHAIN CONNECTION

We pray for the individuals listed below and also for many other church members and their concerns, which remain confidential. You may call or text Diana Caldwell with your prayer concerns @ 330-265-5723.

Bless be God who did not refuse me the kindness I sought in prayer. Psalm 66:20

Dorothy Achimasi
Cheyenne Andrews (Lucy Larson's mom)
Brad Ashley
Noreen Ashley
Tim Ashley
Marilyn Berta
Bryan Briggs (Judy Woerz's son)
Rob Broocker (cousin of Kristin Yoho)
Steve Burr
Jim Caplinger
Jim and Bonnie Collinson (friends of Connie Mason)
Devin Devies (grandson of Patty Calvarese)
Elaine Engle
Baby Matthew Engel
Lyn Fendenheim (friend of Joe Labay)
Judy Gump
Eleanor Hall
Alleen Hilbish
Walt Holt
Zell Lambert
Kelley Marks (daughter of Sandy Barabas)
Walt and Margie Nicholson
Marie O'Neil
LTJG John Norton (Connie Stone's grandson)
Laura Orr (friend of Karen Sauerbrey)
David and Jackie Parker
Taylor Phillips
Allen Rutledge (Bonnie Fordham's nephew)
Dr. Mike Shimmel (friend of Sandy Farabee)
John Triola (friend of Joe Labay)
Richard Thomason
Alzheimer's Care Giver Support Group
Confidential Names on our Prayer List

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH SPAGHETTI DINNER

3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH | 4:30—7:00 PM
JANUARY 18, FEBRUARY 15

Spaghetti Dinner Menu

Spaghetti and Meatballs	\$9
Spaghetti and Chicken	\$11
Meatballs and Chicken	\$12
Special Dinner	\$12
Children 12 and Under	\$6
Side Dishes	\$2

All meals include salad, bread,
dessert, and a beverage.



For January, we voted on our second entrée, and the winner is ...

a pulled pork sandwich with
coleslaw/applesauce and tater tots for \$12.

Please consider signing up to volunteer. We have many open spots!

To-go orders call: 330-633-3384



Our condolences to the family and friends of:

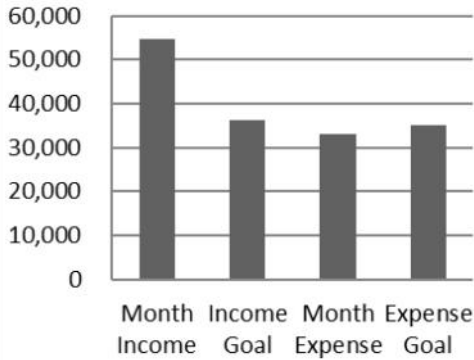
Gil Lane, who died Saturday, December 16, 2023.

Catherine Moore, who died Monday, December 25, 2023.

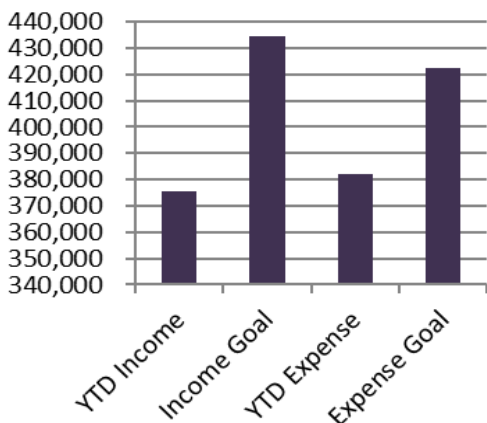
Bea Clarke, who died Thursday, January 4, 2024.

MONTHLY FINANCIALS

December 2023



Dec. 2023 YTD



December, 2023 operating income of \$54,591 was \$18,385 **above** the monthly income budget. Operating expenses for the month were \$32,964 resulting in a **surplus** of \$21,627 in December, and a YTD **deficit** of (\$6,414). We are thankful for the prayerful generosity of our congregation during Advent and Christmas, and we look forward in prayer to a theology of generosity and the ability to strengthen the growth of our ministries as we move forward into 2024. Contact the Church office to find out how to sign up for automatic monthly giving. Offerings may also be made online through a link on our website, mailed to the Church or sent from your bank's online system.

Mission Intern Presentation

February 11th at 9 AM

On Sunday, February 11, 2024, First Congregational church will host Abigail Reed, a Global Ministries Intern, at 9:00am in the Fellowship Hall. Abigail served as an intern in the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK.) In her own



words, "Through the PROK, I primarily work at Yeonggang Shema Christian School; an alternative elementary and middle school that strives to provide students with a global vision through practicing love and consideration for others that resembles that of Jesus. Here, I teach speaking classes and oversee most of the English programming such as spelling bees, English musicals, and more. Secondly, I support the English ministry programs at Yeonggang Church through assisting in English bible studies and teaching English classes at the daycare center."

Abigail will make a presentation in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00am. A light breakfast will be served. Make plans to come and hear about her experience as a ministry intern in Korea!

Christmas Eve Service 2023

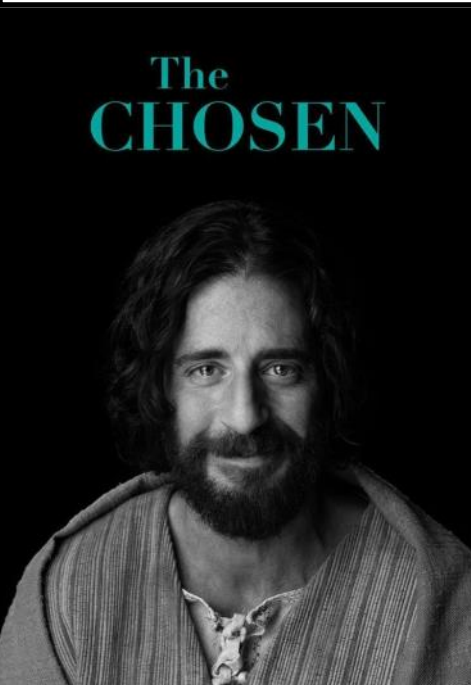




M.S., a Ukrainian refugee, is under international protection status in Greece due to the war. Perichoresis is their refuge and hope. The project, which provides accommodation and services to the family, is funded by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ (UCC) through Global Ministries.

M.S. came to Greece with her two children from the city of Polohy, in the Zaporizhzhia region, occupied by Russians. Since March 2022, their city has been on fire under active hostilities. It has been completely burned and destroyed, and now their house is occupied by the Russian military, and the quarter is destroyed. Today, they have nowhere to return. M.S. is 42 years old and has had three operations with the loss of the corresponding organs and chronic diseases, including those requiring constant medication.

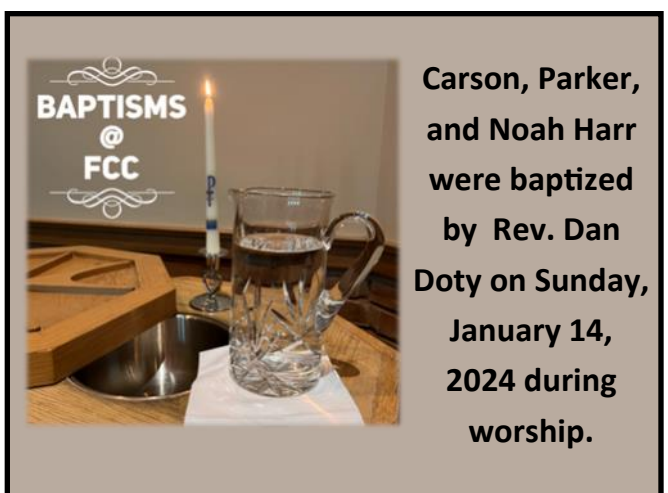
Through the specific project, M.S. and her family have found a house to live in safely and protected, and they live a normal daily life. They have medical care, a social environment, activities to participate in, and hugs from all of us in Perichoresis.



MONDAY VIDEO STUDY

All are welcome to join a video bible study on Mondays at 1 PM. This group meets in the theater room in the basement. They are currently watching "The Chosen." Please consider joining in this opportunity for faith and fellowship.

WNI CHRISTMAS PALOOZA DEC. 11, 2023



Carson, Parker, and Noah Harr were baptized by Rev. Dan Doty on Sunday, January 14, 2024 during worship.

**FCC Tallmadge
Confirmation Retreat
Jan. 5-6, 2024**



SUPER BOWL SUBS



January 28 and February 4, Board of Christian Education and the youth group will be selling subs for you to enjoy during the Super Bowl game. We hope you will take part in supporting youth activities by purchasing a sub for you or someone else. This year, subs are \$8.00. You can order regular or veggie. If you choose to order one for someone else, it will be delivered to one of our local missions. To order, you can stop in the Atrium on Jan. 28 or Feb. 4 or fill out the form below and return it by Feb. 4. Please plan on picking up your subs on February 11 by 11:30 AM.

Super Bowl Sub Order Form (return to Wendy Brown)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

All subs will be dressing-free this year, so you can put on your dressing of choice. Please put the number of subs you wish to order on the line below:

Regular Sub _____ x \$8.00 = \$ _____

Veggie Sub _____ x \$8.00 = \$ _____

Donated Sub _____ x \$8.00 = \$ _____

Total _____

I prefer not to order subs, but I would like to donate to the experience. \$ _____

Treehouse Preschool Registration 2024-25

Registration for NEXT school year, 2024–2025, will be on **Jan. 31 from 10–2pm** for church members and siblings of Treehouse Preschool graduates. On February 1 from 6–7pm is Open Registration for all new families and non-church members. To register, you will need a copy of your child’s birth certificate and \$50.

Classes that are available:

3-, 4- and 5-year-old classes on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9-11:30 am OR 12:30– 3 pm. There is a fourth day option on Mondays for our students going to kindergarten in the fall of 2025. This class meets during the same time frame and focuses on STEM teaching. Preschoolers need to be potty-trained to be in these classes.

For the toddlers, we offer a 2 1/2– year-old class with a parent or grandparent. This is on Tuesday OR Wednesday from 9:45– 11:15am. The students do not have to be potty-trained. For more information, please see our website, www.treehousepreschool.com.

Growing Together



Treehouse
Preschool

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Faith In Action—on the 2nd Sunday of the month, students in grades 6-12th are invited to join in faithful discussion from 9-10 AM in the youth room. Beginning Jan. 14, we will be discussing service to others and relating that to our faith and biblical references.

Youth Group—Students who are in 6th—12th grade are invited to our youth group events. Mark your calendars now:

Jan. 28 @ 2-4 Ice skating at KSU. \$12/ person, FCC will purchase refreshments (Jen Ross)

Feb. 25– we are scheduled to snow tube but we will have to see what the weather brings us.

Confirmation Class—our Confirmation students, 8th grade and older, will be meeting in the David Bacon Room on the following dates @ 11:30– 1:30:

January 21	Jesus
February 18	Worship/Sacraments
March 17	United Church of Christ

FCC YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAY,
JANUARY 28TH

2-4 PM

ICE SKATING AT KENT
STATE ICE ARENA

\$12/PERSON

INCLUDES
ADMISSION &
SKATE RENTAL

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Drop off at the ice arena (650 Loop Rd., Kent, OH) at 2 PM, pick up at 4 PM. Open skate is from 2:15-3:45 PM. FCC will be covering the cost of refreshments (a drink and snack from the concession stand). KSU is a cashless facility...\$12 admission must be paid by credit/debit card. Questions—contact Jen Ross: 330-606-2673.



Socks for Seniors

We are learning about service to others in our youth Faith In Action group. We are currently collecting **NEW** men's and women's socks for Heather Knoll Nursing/Rehabilitation Facility.

Collection Dates: Jan.14– Feb. 14, 2024

Collection Box in the Atrium

4th grade Communion

In our church, we offer open communion. However, when children are in 4th grade, we offer a communion class to help them to better understand what communion is, why we take it, and what it means. On February 4th and 11th, we invite our children in 4th grade and older to take part in communion orientation. We will offer this opportunity during the 9:00 hour both Sundays and then on February 18th, the 4th grade children and their parents will take part in communion together. If you would like your child to participate, please contact Wendy Brown, wbrownfcc@sbcglobal.net.

wbrownfcc@sbcglobal.net.

Christmas Lights

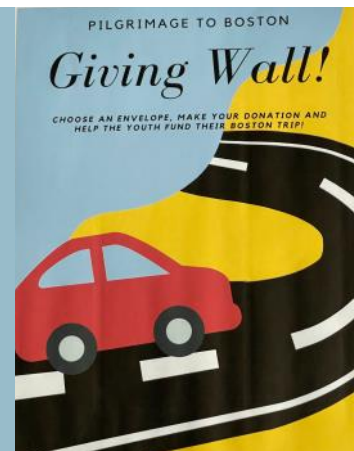
PAGEANT

December 17,
2023



The Giving Wall

Our confirmation class just had a retreat, and they are currently making plans for a Boston trip. Please consider helping support their confirmation experience by participating in the Giving Wall fundraiser in March. The way it works is that you take an envelope from the wall and place your donation in the envelope and return it to the basket. Please make sure your name is with the donation so we can log it with your giving statement. We ask that all donations are made by March 24. You might be one of the lucky ones and find a "thank you" gift in your envelope!. Please keep that gift card before you return your donation envelope.



Thank you!

Dear Members,

Thank you very much for the gift cards for our Christmas distribution. We appreciate your help in feeding our community.

God Bless,

Candy Lorkowski, Tallmadge Good Neighbors

WNI thanks the many church members who donated to Shelter Care's Highlands House. We were able to purchase all the gifts on the teen moms' wish lists for them and their babies. Because of your generosity, WNI also donated \$500 directly to Shelter Care. Our congregation has always been caring and generous, and WNI appreciates your support of our service project.

Sue Lyons and Jackie Mohr

Thanks to everyone who gave to the Special Music Fund in December. I appreciate your generosity in helping to support our guest musicians for Christmas Eve and Easter.

- Nancy Lynn Robinson

I would like to send a big thank you for all my wonderful gifts. Much appreciated.

Love, Teresa

Greetings and happy holidays from the Nar-Anon group that meets on Tuesday nights at 6:45pm. We are very happy with our meeting room and the church. We also wanted to say a special thank you to Teresa, your custodian, for all that she does for our group!

Thank you, John McCulley

Dear friends of the Highlands,

Thank you so much for providing gifts for our mothers and babies for Christmas. It sparked added joy to know that someone did this for them.

Blessings—Mary Kay Dotterer, Program Director

Dear Friends at FCC Tallmadge,

We are overwhelmed by your generosity in giving to Shelter Care. A big thank you for your kind donation of wrapped Christmas gifts for our Highlands Teen Pregnancy Shelter. The moms and babies will have a wonderful Christmas this year! Because of you, they know that they are cared for. Thank you once again for your thoughtfulness and for joining with us in reaching out to the many young adults in our community with critical needs. We are so grateful for all the help!

Thank you and God Bless!

Wesley D. Fair, Ph.D.



Help Support
Our Organization!

SHOP ACME Fresh Market & EARN
5% CASH BACK

IT'S EASY!

Save your Acme Fresh Market receipts dated August 1, 2023 – February 15, 2024 to help us raise money!



Earn 5% Back on Participating Brands!

TURN IN YOUR RECEIPTS
BY THE END OF THE MONTH



FCC Women's Fellowship
February Luncheon



February 1, 2024
12:00 PM

GIVE ONLINE HERE



MEN'S
PRAYER
BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20 | 9 AM

Worship Attendance

December 17	201
December 24 (10AM)	158
December 24 (5PM)	275
December 31	82
January 7	132
January 14	122



WINTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF TALLMADGE

UPCOMING SUNDAYS

Greeters

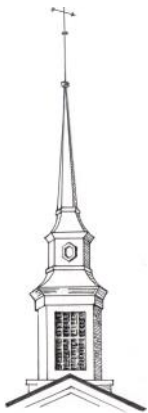
Jan 21	Carol Dowey
Jan 28	Margarete Boschert
Feb 4	Nan Nagel and Sue Canavan
Feb 11	Ann Holt and Dorothy Seal
Feb 18	Terri Poff
Feb 25	Don and Judy Woerz
Mar 3	Dee West

Altar Flowers

Jan 21	Carol Kroah
Jan 28	
Feb 4	Judy Woerz
Feb 11	
Feb 18	
Feb 25	
Mar 3	Nan Nagel

Sign up in
the hallway
\$28 per
arrangement

Ushers



Jan 21	Dave Marconi, Bonnie Fordham, Sandy Haydu, Gary Myers
Jan 28	Larry Robinson, John and Anita Lahrmer, Don Simmons
Feb 4	Dave Marconi, Larry Robinson, Al Lytle, Ken Caldwell
Feb 11	Sandy Haydu, Karen Huth, Kim Fulton, Jane Charles
Feb 18	Dave Marconi, Bonnie Fordham, Sandy Haydu, Gary Myers
Feb 25	Larry Robinson, John and Anita Lahrmer, Don Simmons
Mar 3	Larry Robinson, Dave Marconi, Al Lytle, Ken Caldwell

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
TALLMADGE

ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 28,
2024

Make plans to attend the FCC Annual Meeting in the new year. The meeting will take place at the end of worship on Sunday, January 28, 2024. Come celebrate all that God accomplished through us last year and hear about plans for 2024!

FEBRUARY 2024

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1 10:00 AM—Staff 12:00 PM—WF Lunch 6:00 PM—Bell Choir 6:00 PM—Treehouse registration 7:00 PM—Choir 7:00 PM—Quilting 101	2	3
4 8:45 AM—Social Action 9:00 AM—4th Grade Communion Class 10:00 AM—Worship	5 1:00 PM—Video Study 6:00 PM—Heritage 6:30 PM—Trustees Meeting	6 6:00 PM—Naranon	7 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 6:00 PM—NA 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	8 10:00 AM—Staff 6:00 PM—Bell Choir 7:00 PM—Choir 7:00 PM—Quilting 101	9	10
11 SUPER BOWL SUB PICK-UP 9:00 AM—Speaker 9:00 AM—4th Grade Communion Class 9:00 AM—Sun. School 10:00 AM—Worship 11:00 AM—Lunch Bunch	12 1:00 PM—Video Study 6:00 PM—Heritage	13 6:00 PM—Naranon	14 ASH WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 6:00 PM—NA 7:00 PM—Ash Wednesday service	15 HERALD DEADLINE 10:00 AM—Staff 4:30 PM—Spaghetti Dinner 6:00 PM—Bell Choir 7:00 PM—Choir 7:00 PM—Quilting 101	16	17 9:00 AM—Men's Prayer Breakfast
18 FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT 9:00 AM—EC 10:00 AM—Worship/ Communion 11:30 am— Confirmation Class	19 NO PRESCHOOL/ PRESIDENT'S DAY 1:00 PM—Video Study 6:00 PM—Heritage	20 6:00 PM—Naranon 6:00 PM—Cards	21 9:00 AM—Quilters 10:00 AM—Herald Angels 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 6:00 PM—NA 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	22 10:00 AM—Staff 6:00 PM—Bell Choir 7:00 PM—Choir 7:00 PM—Quilting 101	23	24
25 SCOUT SUNDAY 10:00 AM—Worship 11:30 AM—Scouts Blue and Gold Ban- quet	26 1:00 PM—Video Study 6:00 PM—Heritage	27 10:30 AM—ACSG 6:00 PM—Naranon	28 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 6:00 PM—NA 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	29 10:00 AM—Staff 6:00 PM—Bell Choir 7:00 PM—Choir 7:00 PM—Quilting 101		

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
PO BOX 420
TALLMADGE OH 44278
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
TALLMADGE OH
PERMIT NO. 30

DATE: January 17, 2024

Spiritual and Pastoral Care Ministry Contacts

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group and Elders Ministry	Roberta Nehrenz	330.634.0713	rgnehrenz@att.net
Hearts in Service	Janet McCaulley Barbara Rowles	330.633.3775	34babs@sbcglobal.net
Prayer Chain	Diana Caldwell	330.265.5723	scdcg@icloud.com
Yarning for Peace	Elaine Engle	330.633.0896	elengle@aol.com

Staff E-Mail Addresses

Rev. Daniel Doty	Senior Minister	ddoty66@gmail.com
Cathy Cotter	Administrative Coordinator	tallmadgefcc@sbcglobal.net
Wendy Brown	Director of Family Ministries	wbrownfcc@sbcglobal.net
Nancy Lynn Robinson	Choir Director / Organist	nrbgp@aol.com
Amy Doty	Bell Choir Director	amydeandoty@icloud.com
Bill Hoover	Finance Administrator	bhooverfcc@sbcglobal.net
Teresa Snyder	Head Custodian	budrose42@yahoo.com
Gary Marlow	Sunday Custodian	