

THE CARILLON



SCRIPTURE LESSONS

July 6	Acts 5:27-42 "The Power of Naming"
July 13	Luke 10:25-37 "To Reach out in Neighborly Mercy"
July 20	Luke 10:38-42 "The Hostess with the Mostest"
July 27	Luke 11:1-13 "A Life Persistent in Prayer"

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CLARIDON

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JULY 2025

7	Trustees meeting
9	Deacons meeting
15	5:00 pm Claridon Community Helps dinner and Strawberry Festival 6:30 Geauga County Fair Band
23	6:30 Cabinet meeting

Mini-VBS each Sunday in July during Sunday School time

Each Sunday: Worship 10:00 am

Each Wednesday: Choir Practice 5:30 pm
Bell Choir Practice 6:30 pm

Each Thursday: Bible Study 6:30 pm



PRAYER LIST

Doris Wilson
Bree Ellis Banks
Cecil Stokesberry
Clay Milliken
Dale Baptie
Rick Juhasz
Connie & Wayne Streble
Kelly Wagner
Ed Ward
Bonnie Clemson
Joe Berninger
Lee McCurry
Pennie Baptie
Tim Engelman
Scott Pricer

Polly Cole
August Speziale
Shawn
Norm Zepp
Sharon Hunter
Beth Christian Sharp
Kevin Playman
Denny Bihary
Thomas Woods
Rheta Crowley
Carrie Foster
Gary Branstein
Jeffery Przybysz
Kinson/Kellogg family

“Independence and Balance Equals Freedom”

Gal 5:13-14: “For you were called to freedom, brothers (and sisters). Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

As North Americans living in the land of the free, we tend to associate the month of July as our nation’s birth month. We celebrate the sentiment of freedom being as a God given right to those who legally live in this country. We wear the privilege of freedom as part of our DNA with the built-in expectations of independent thinking and behaving coming as a guaranteed subset of qualities within our cultural makeup. This being said, we are now facing a cultural change with the global influx of cultures that are coloring and threatening to change our landscape of foundational principles many of us “old timers” have grown up with and have accepted without question. This is not such a bad thing. It is a new thing which can offer freedom within us if we entertain the maturity calling to consciously review. Growth and maturity can be a scary thing, especially when we cease to seek understanding. After all, being imprisoned for stubbornness is not a license to obtaining freedom.

As we can see from our scripture, Jesus calls us to live a life in balance. This way of life takes practice and mindfulness each breath we take, to live in the present, aware of self and allowing God to work within. Often in our country, we have historically looked outward for the advantages we wish to gain and the lifestyle we desire to freely live with independent spirit and rights. Yet, it seems to me, that living with this careless sense of ownership has left us at a scriptural disadvantage to our spiritual development. Jesus teaches us followers of The Way are those who seek balance in life and give over the war within to God seeking peace and submission for the balance in life. In our country, this message tends to get drowned out with all the posturing and positioning of those who have power and seek to win the fight for the advantages sought for at the time of perceived need. In this space comes the imbalance of human wealth and health within the principles Christ refers to for the obtaining of The Greater meaning in our lives. Our lives on this earth are here for the practicing to become closer and more in balance with The More that which we are created to become. All else is just tools to help us get to this place. How we use our time, place and space is the determining factor in how well we find balance which leads to ultimately our eternal everlasting freedom. We are called to be independent thinkers for the individual paths we are to take for enlightened healing, releasing us from the overprotecting and narrowed eyesight of our former past. In God, we are released into freedom and new life. A true life of independence and balanced fullness. A life in this world but not of it.

So, as a church family, let us mindfully consider what it means to rethink what it means to be a Christian in the country we live in within today’s landscape and global influences. May we consciously accept the calling of God’s enlightened wisdom into our hearts as we mature with our country in celebrating another year of existence and growing. May we prayerfully reflect and listen to the message of how it is we can obtain balance within. May we let the balance within restore to us and others the path for recovery of the Good News message Jesus came to teach. In this spirit may we let the reawakening and rebirth of us all for the accepting of God’s healing saving grace. May this become our birthday wish for one another as we continue to work on our balanced living within the new sights of understanding and realities which impact our way of life. May we trust in God’s way to let freedom ring.

Blessings to All!

Pastor Julie ☺

DEACONS

June 11th Deacons Meeting

Prayer-Julie Western; Devotional-Sara Hamrick

Minutes were read and approved from previous meeting.

Old Business

Becky will order more cards. The church has a card with a picture of our church on it that can be used for visitors. On Father's Day Sunday we will celebrate Dads with a lunch of hot dogs, chili, salad, chips, and cookies. Robin Stanley will help out if pastor is absent (emergency)

New Business

Deacons of the month: July-Buzz, August-Carane, September-Becky, October-Mary-1st Sunday-"Breads Around the World " use grapes, November-Linda, December-Sara, and

January-Buzz

A liturgical calendar was hung up on the bulletin board in the office. Diane Wilson zoomed our service, and is interested in being part of our church. Cards were sent to four different families in our church. The question was asked if we want to have a church picnic this summer. The month of July was suggested.

June deacon, Sara Hamrick

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We are excited to welcome children to our **mini-VBS: Seeds, Sheep, Strong Foundations & Service** during the Sunday School hours in July!

We will learn about Jesus' teachings through the parables, have fun with songs, crafts and games, we hope to build relationships with one another! We will work together during the final Sunday to create some yummy snacks to serve to the congregation after church! Please plan to join us after church on July 27th!

If you have kids in your life, please invite them to church during the month of July! We will go downstairs together after the children's message. All kids are welcome!

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

Strawberry Festival: July 15, 2025 6:30 pm

Please join us for our annual Strawberry Festival following The Community Helps dinner from 5 to 6:30 pm. Location: Claridon Township Park. Come and listen to The Great Geauga County Fair Band and enjoy strawberries, cake, and ice cream along with whip cream toppings on Tuesday, July 15, 2025 at 6:30 pm. Bring a lawn chair. Of note, our church is supplying cake and strawberries also for the Community Helps Dinner. We are asking for cakes, frosted or unfrosted, and toppings for this event. If you wish to purchase a cake mix, Barb and I will make the cakes for you. A signup sheet will be at church Sunday. Also Volunteers are needed that evening. Please contact Barb Petersen 216-406-6566 or by email barbinohio21@yahoo.com with your contribution and if can assist in serving.

Next Cabinet Meeting: July 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm

TRUSTEES

We have signed an agreement with Profound Projects to install the new front doors that Dan Weaver is making. (Dan made the beautiful pulpit doors in the sanctuary). He recommended Profound Projects.

We are installing an off and on switch for the dishwasher, Also adding surge protection to our electric panels. This will be done by Kennington Electric.

Technology is still working on our sanctuary TV's connection to our system.

Starting to work on the Safe Church Policy. Nathaniel and Dennis K. will be on the committee to finalize it.

Working on obtaining an ARD for the church. Fred Dively has done all the leg work, and we will also have certified instructor to come show us how to use it.
Judi's lunch program underway and very busy. Remember to buy when out shopping an industrial size can of corn or green beans, applesauce...Every little bit helps!

Outside broken railing (to lower parking lot spaces) is on Dylan's list to repair.

TREASURER

This Update for January through June 2025 shows preliminary financial results for the First Congregational Church of Claridon. Total Revenues in the Operating Fund are approximately \$8,400 more than budgeted for the first half of the year and include several annual gifts that will be used to cover Operating Expenses throughout the year. Revenues for operations do not include gifts restricted for scholarships or the music fund or that will be passed through to other organizations. Total Operating Expenses are about \$3,500 less than budgeted for first quarter, leaving Net Operating Revenue approximately \$11,900 higher than budgeted through June 2025.

Operating Activity for January through June 2025:

Pledges and Gifts	\$ 62,983
Fundraising and Other Revenues	176
Interest Income	1,509
Funds from Endowment for	
Operations	<u>9,436</u>
Total Revenues	74,104
Less Operating Expenses	<u>(62,091)</u>
Net Operating Revenue 2025	<u><u>\$ 12.013</u></u>

The Revenues include funds drawn down from the Endowment of \$9,436, for use in 2025 operations. The Endowment currently shows a balance of \$119,652 and is evaluated by the Endowment Committee each year to determine the amount to be spent. The Endowment Committee meets quarterly and will consider committee requests for upcoming special projects with funds to be drawn from the Endowment in 2026.

Other Funds –

Balances as of June 30, 2025 in other Funds are as follows:

- Memorial Funds \$ 40,859
- Scholarship Funds \$ 40,391
- Pass-Thru Contributions \$ 4,675
- Contingency Fund \$129,412
- Capital & Building Fund \$ 72,999

If you have any questions, please let me know and I will do my best to answer them.

Pam Plott, Treasurer