

THE **CARILLON**



SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Oct 4	Matthew 21: 33-46 "From Jacob to Jesus"
Oct 11	Romans 12: 9-21 "Learning How to Love"
Oct 18	Matthew 22: 15-21 "For the Love of God and Money"
Oct 25	Matthew 22: 34-46 "Love Breaks Commandments"

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF CLARIDON**
13942 Mayfield Rd
Huntsburg, OH 44046
440-635-1467
claridonchurchsecretary@gmail.com
Reverend Julie Western 812-605-1816
jwestern001@gmail.com

OCTOBER 2026

- | | |
|----|---|
| 11 | 11:30 am Deacons meeting |
| 12 | 7:00 pm Trustees meeting |
| 18 | New Members welcomed |
| 20 | 5:00 pm Claridon Community Helps dinner |
| 28 | 5:30-8pm Trunk or Treat @ Geauga County Sheriff parking lot |

Each Sunday: Worship 10:00 am

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

Each Thursday: Bible Study 6:30 pm

“Praying in Jesus’ Name”

- ***John 14:13–14: "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."***
- ***John 15:16: "...then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."***
- ***John 16:23–24: "Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."***

Have you ever wondered what it means to pray and then more specifically to pray in Jesus’ name? Why do we do this after all? I know, as Christians we think we know and we understand the meaning behind such actions. However, I find myself wondering about the actual application of such instructions into our Christian walk in life.

For instance, sometimes my prayers are shorter than adding the phrase, “In Jesus’ Name” at the end of my prayer. And sometimes, I wonder, “do I mean it?” Or do I really just want Jesus’ will to be complimentary to my will and wants? Honestly, there are times it all just seems like a lot to think about and I just don’t want to contemplate it all. Honestly, I would just like for me to want everything God wants for me and to be okay with it all without having to work so hard at my discipleship. Then my prayers would be easier and my life less stressful, or so I tell myself.

And it all comes back to meaning. What meaning do we give to ourselves and life? Prayer is the time we take to converse with God. What meaning do we give to this time? These are just ways for us to examine and understand ourselves better without judgments. Judgments, after all, are just like expectations and grudges, roads to divisions, pathways to death. Godly conversations are pathways to new life and living.

Jesus taught his disciples to always talk to God in the Spirit of Christ, not by mere selfish wants and desires. This is the true meaning of saying, “in Jesus’ Name.” When we add this to our prayer, not as a tag line, but as even an address (yes we can pray opening with the phrase “in Jesus’ Name...” we ask for...we give thanks for...we honor you....we seek guidance and direction in....) you get the idea, this opens our hearts to a new invitation for perspective and perspective to alter and form our living according to the intentions of our Lord. And we can trust our faith in Christ for Jesus would never lead us astray.

So then, what’s the difficulty? Maybe it is the final letting go of control within that fights the total release of freedom in Christ. Perhaps it is the peace of not worrying that causes a sense of abandonment to the sense of being in control of our own destinations. Who knows. It could be a lot of things. However, what really matters is why we pray, or don’t, in the first place and how often we practice the discipline of relationship and in what spirit.

As we all know by now, Christ doesn’t tell his disciples to follow him in their own way with their own wants and desires and God will answer in the affirmative to appease us. God is not here to be the Make a Wish Foundation for that would leave us lopsided in growth and substance. God is here for us to become whole and complete. The way to this destination is through Christ who teaches us the human way possible to find this desired goal. Yet, we each have a choice. Do we want to go the path of Christ? And if so, at what level? Are we willing to address, ask and end our living in the Name of Jesus/ Or would we rather live in our name with Jesus following us?

These are just some thoughts on prayer and what it means to live in the Spirit of Christ each day. May our hearts find enlightenment and new perspectives to help us along our journey growing in the Lord this day forward. Amen.

Blessings to All,
Your Pastor Julie ☺



PRAYER LIST

Doris Wilson
June Webb Hunt
Joyce Vargo
Rick Juhasz
Wayne Streble
Joe Berninger
Scott Pricer
Karen Baptie
Ken Temple
Will Angstrom
Joe Kronic

Sharon Hunter
Beth Christian Sharp
Bihary family
Thomas Woods
Rheta Crowley
Gary Branstein
Jeffery Przybysz
Ben Armstrong
Jan and John Wargo
Gretchen Bryan
George Anderson

MEMBERSHIP

On Sunday, October 18, during church service, we will be welcoming a new member, Abigail Larson and Beth Christian Sharp as an Associate member of our church. There will be a reception after worship. Welcome to our church.

Memorial Service

The Memorial Service and luncheon following for Dennis Bihary is fast approaching. The service is on November 7, 11:30am and luncheon to follow.

As part of our funeral committee in charge of the luncheon portion I am looking for volunteers for many positions. I need a few strong volunteers for set-up on Friday November 6 at 10:00 am. for tables and chairs to be arranged.

On Saturday we need a few people for advance work on meal , 10:30 ish and then a few during the actual serving for beverages, and dishes and food to be refilled etc....

We will also be asking for salads and desserts. Can't work? Volunteer to cook, assemble or bake!

Following the service there is of course the clean up! More hands make light work! Tables and chairs need to come down, food needs to be put away and always dish washing.

I will put up a sign sheet in the entry way. Thank you in advance!

Basket Auction Update

Thank you for everyone that contributed to the auction. If you worked, bought tickets or baked, it was greatly appreciated. Our share of the proceeds was \$2064.00 The bake sale alone made a total of \$550.00

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the care of the physical aspects of running our church so that the ministry and spiritual portion of the church can be fulfilled.

We are all stewards of the First Congregational Church of Claridon and we all need to take this responsibility seriously.

Over the next several weeks, officers and committee members will be sharing thoughts on how stewardship is a part of each and every aspect of our Church. How sharing of our time, talent and financial resources is essential to the daily and long-term continuation of our ministry here in Claridon.

The Cabinet

Heartland Conference

The 2026 Heartland Conference Annual Meeting was held on Friday, September 25th and although I had planned to attend via a live YouTube presentation, there were technical difficulties. A full recording of the meeting is available on the Heartland Conference UCC YouTube Channel if you are interested in watching.

The business portions of the meeting focused on the final sale of Temples Hills Camp which closed on September 22, 2026. The funds of \$2.6 million received from the sale have been placed into a Board Designated Endowment Fund for Ministry. The earnings from that fund will be used going forward to support Conference activities. The budget for 2027 shows a deficit to be funded from reserves of \$31,716, as compared to a deficit of \$236,170 budgeted for 2026..***Anyone interested in learning more about our Association or Conference can go to their websites at <https://heartlanducc.org/> or <https://livingwaterone.org/>.***

Living Water Association

Anyone interested in attending with me, please just let me know! Thanks,
Pam Plott

Save the Date! 2026 Association Annual Meeting



Awards Committee

The Awards Committee discussed what worked well this year and any changes for 2027. The planned deadline for submission of all applications will be a Monday at 11:59 PM. All applications are to be submitted by email. No exceptions will be considered. "Church members will have first priority. No students, member or non member, will be given an award for a third year" will be added to a page which gives them instructions. Easter is early this year and we tentatively chose April 25th for Awards Sunday. We will continue to notify Awardees by "snail" mail of their award before their names are released to our congregation. Four 2026 Awardees have already been able to receive their reimbursement. Another email will be sent to two Awardees reminding them to submit their receipts for reimbursement.



The Red Tulip Project is very grateful for the donations for our tenants last month. We appreciate everyone who attended the Road to Recovery Fundraiser. Whether your support is monetary, through donated items, or with your prayers, it is making a huge difference in the lives of those recovering from the effects of addiction. The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:40

Bicentennial Update

At our September meeting we set the dates for our Bicentennial Celebration of the founding of our church. It will be the last weekend of August 28, 29, 2027. The week before the fair, still good weather good for those traveling and before Fall events start up.

As we said before we will have a cemetery walk, open house, special service and a dinner. I am counting on all you to make this a special memorable event. Claridon's motto is "Land of Steady Habits" and what is more steady than a church that has stood for 200 years in the community?

Next meeting is November 1, 2026, 11:30 am after church. No meeting in December, start back in January.

Finance Update

This update shows preliminary financial results for the First Congregational Church of Claridon through September 2026. Total Revenues in the Operating Fund are approximately \$8,500 more than budgeted for the three quarters of 2026. 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 \$8,000 less than budgeted for the nine months, leaving Net Operating Revenue approximately \$16,500 more than budgeted through September 2026.

Operating Activity for January through September 2026:

Pledges and Gifts	\$ 103,124
Fundraising and Other Revenues	2,614
Interest Income - estimate	1,778
Funds from Endowment for	
Operations	<u>4,000</u>
Total Revenues	111,516
Less Operating Expenses	<u>(101,717)</u>
Net Operating Revenue 9/30/26	<u>\$ 9,799</u>
Balance in Operating Fund	<u>\$ 72,246</u>

Total Revenues in all funds include funds drawn down from the Endowment of \$16,000, for use in 2026, which were split between the Scholarship Fund, Contingency Fund, Music and Christian Ed (both in Operating Fund). The Endowment shows a balance of \$122,152 at September 30, 2026 and any withdrawal of earnings is evaluated by the Endowment Committee each year. They will recommend spending to be approved at the Annual Meeting in January. The Endowment Committee meets quarterly and considers committee requests for upcoming special projects with funds to be drawn from the Endowment in the following year.

In April, the Trustees directed that the Dorothy and Manville Rose Memorial Funds as well as several smaller Memorial Funds, totaling \$39,141, be transferred into the Capital and Building Fund to pay for the repair to the beam under the front doors of the church.

Our grant application to Living Water Association for a \$4,000 Faith in Action Grant to support the Red Tulip Beyond Project was received and were passed through to Red Tulip. The Project is in full swing!

Other Funds –

Balances as of September 30, 2026 in other Funds are as follows:

- Restricted for Music \$ 4,214
- Memorial Funds \$ 2,174
- Scholarship Funds \$ 46,168
- Pass-Thru Contributions \$ 2,349
- Contingency Fund \$139,095
- Capital & Building Fund \$ 39,803

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

Pam Plott, Treasurer

PRESIDENT

We are excited to announce that we have a new Christian Education Director, Abigail Larson!

She is very excited to begin this journey with Claridon Congregational. Abigail has been coming to our church and sits in the front row with her daughter Brielle. Please express your support and pleasure when you see her.

We must now try to grow our Sunday School attendance as well as our church attendance. If you have neighbors or friends that may be interested in coming to our church and or Sunday School, this would be a good time to invite them. Reach out!

Janet Sherman

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

October is the month we usually associate with Trick (Trunk) or Treat! We will do Trunk or Treat a little differently this year. We signed up to join other organizations participating in the Geauga County Sheriff's Office Trunk or Treat program. We thought it would be a good idea to represent Claridon Congregational Church at a huge event like this. The Trunk or Treat will be held October 28 from 5:30-8:00 in the Sheriff's parking lot. We will want ideas for decorating our trunks, kids and people of all ages from church, and lots of bags of candy! More information will be forthcoming...or speak to Abigail if you would like to help.

Abigail Larson

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be NO middle school (grades 5th-8th) Sunday School on Sunday, October 11th. We will plan to meet on October 25th. Don't forget to bring a friend!

~Lisa Sherman

MISSIONS

Missions will be collecting stuffing mix and instant boxed potatoes for the Burton Food Pantry during the month of October. These items are not provided by the food bank and are quite popular with their clients.

We have chosen to support Doors of Hope in Middlefield which provides temporary shelter and supportive services for families in need in Geauga County. Their needs are that of any other home. Some items requested are bar soap, body wash, dish soap, laundry detergent (not pods please), dryer sheets, baggies, plastic wrap, foil, paper towels, napkins and tissues. Shampoos and conditioners are also needed.

Missions Committee will also be supporting the UCC special collection for Neighbors in Need this month. The Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries.

In 2025, the Neighbors in Need offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. Learn more at www.ucc.org/nin

When you give to Neighbors in Need, you help build a just world for all. Thank you!

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us. Ephesians 5:1-2 (NRSVUE)

For the bulletin in October:

The Missions Committee is seeking donations of boxed stuffing mix and boxed potatoes for the Burton Food Pantry. We are also collecting for the Doors of Hope family shelter in Middlefield. There is a list of needed items on the basket in the back hall. And please don't forget our Neighbors in Need offering this month.

SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM

(See Summer Lunch Program stats and summary attached separately from this newsletter.)