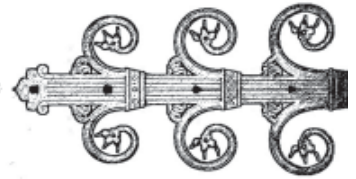




First Church News



First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ • Columbus, Ohio

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The Time For Us To Decide Is August 10

by Reverend Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister



The headline in the *Columbus Dispatch's* Business Section on June 9 read, "Landmark Out of Retirement." The story highlighted the renovation of the Seneca Hotel on the southeast street corner of Grant and Broad.

Nearby, on the northwest corner of Cleveland and Broad, the Columbus College of Art and Design's work on the old Byers building is making great progress. The sign on the outside of the building reads, "The Excitement is Building." Further north on Cleveland Avenue, CCAD is building a new student-housing center, between Gay and Long streets. Broad St. United Methodist Church is in the final stages of restoring its building facade on the southwest corner of Washington and Broad streets at a cost of millions of dollars. The Columbus Museum of Art is raising nearly \$100 million to expand its building back to Gay Street.



All of this is happening within several hundred yards of First Congregational Church. All of this I witnessed on June 9, the morning after the Columbus Arts Festival ended its wonderfully successful weekend run in our neighborhood. Our neighbors are all building. All around us excitement and dust fill the air as we watch the Discovery District come to life in new and exciting ways.

Immediately to our west is a piece of land that I believe holds a promising future for the ministry and mission of First Church. We call it the Byers lot. It has been mostly vacant for 2 1/2 years, and has been for sale during that time. We have been studying this situation. We have drawings of what it could look like with a park, with west side entrances, with parking, and, yes, even with buildings belonging to the church. The question is what will we do?



We are fortunate that our neighbors are busy building, fixing up their buildings and raising funds to build. No one in the neighborhood seems poised to buy the land. That cannot and will not be true for too much longer. It is the only open parcel of land on E. Broad Street from the Statehouse to at least one mile past I-71. With all the excitement building in this area, something will happen to that land and we will miss the opportunity of a lifetime to buy, and thus control, the future use of the Byers property.

On August 10, immediately after our 10 a.m. worship, we will hold a critical congregational meeting to figure out how to buy the land and raise money for improvements there and to our current building. This meeting was called by a vote of the Church Council on May 20.

We need all the members of the church to be there. This is a church family decision. We need everyone to vote and weigh in to help make this happen.

In the late 1920s, our forbearers in faith had the faith, courage, strength, vision and wherewithal to buy the land on the northwest corner of 9th and Broad streets. Now is our time to step forward. **I believe purchasing the land and building our dreams will open up new possibilities for faithful service to Christ in the heart of the city.** Now is our time to decide our next step.

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Thoughts To Ponder

by Reverend Barbara R. Cunningham, Minister of Pastoral Care



When we judge too quickly, without the facts, we can ruin friendships and resist hearing the words we may need to hear. So many things happen quickly and rumors spread. It is not helpful for us to decide the truth until we hear the whole story. When we observe only pieces, we can become bitter and filled with resentment. I received this beautiful story from my sister-in-law not long ago that I would like to share with you. Please ponder what it might mean to you.

"You cannot judge a tree or a person by only one season."

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"There was a man who had four children. He wanted them to learn not to judge things so quickly, so he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go look at a pear tree that was far away.

"The first went in winter, the second in spring, the third in summer and the youngest in the fall. He called them together much later to describe what they'd seen.

- *The first child said the tree was ugly, bent and twisted.*
- *The second said no, it was covered with green buds and full of promise.*
- *The third said it was laden with blossoms and smelled sweet – it was the most graceful, beautiful thing he had ever seen.*
- *The fourth agreed with him and said the tree was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.*

"The father explained that they were all right because they had each seen only one season of the tree's life. You cannot judge a tree or a person by only one season. The essence of who they are and the pleasure, joy and love that come from life can only be measured at the end when all the seasons are up.

"If you give up when it's winter, you will miss the promise of your spring, the beauty of your summer and the fulfillment of your fall. Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of all the rest. Don't judge life by one difficult season. Persevere through difficult patches and better times are sure to come some time.

"Aspire to inspire before you expire. Live simply, love generously. Care deeply, speak kindly and leave the rest to God. Happiness keeps you sweet. Trials keep you strong. Sorrows keep you human. Failures keep you humble. Success keeps you glowing. God keeps you going."



The Top Six Things You Should Know About Youth

by Reverend Laura Tisher, Youth & Young Adult Minister



1.) Teens need time: Like many people, teens need a little time to think about what they want to say. When having a conversation with teens, resist the temptation

to jump in with "the right answer" and don't feel you have to fill in every moment of silence with talking.

2.) Teens like adults: Teens do enjoy the companionship of adults. They just aren't always sure that older folks like them, so they can seem stand-offish at times. In fact, many are at a point in their lives when they are seeking other caring adults, besides parents, to serve as mentors and role models.

3.) Teens have a lot to teach adults: Young people are unique individuals with unique talents, gifts, attitudes and perspectives. It would be a mistake to lump them all together as one homogenous group or to diminish their individual gifts and talents.

4.) Teens are passionate: The first part of the teenage brain to fully develop is the emotions center. This means teens can have high highs and low lows all in one day. They really connect with the hurt of others, and can be very passionate about the things they believe in.

5.) Teens want to "own" their experiences: When teens talk about their struggles, often times adults have a temptation to say things like, "Oh, I went through the same thing at your age," or "I had the same problems and I survived it," or "Here's how I handled that problem." In many ways, the experiences of teens today are quite different from those in times past. Their struggles are real to this day and age and they want them to be taken seriously, not dismissed with, "I survived that and you will too." Often, the best approach with young people isn't to offer advice, but just to listen.

6.) Teens are fun to be around: You might think hanging out with adolescents would make you feel old or be uncomfortable for both of you, but it's just the opposite. Teens often offer a perspective on life and the world that is refreshingly honest and hopeful, along with a new sense of hope and possibility that can be contagious. Get to know the youth at First Church. They are an amazing bunch!

(Adapted from www.rethinkingyouth.blogspot.com.)

From the Pastors

A Personal Commitment To Green

by Reverend Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister



The Sacred Earth Committee, a part of the Mission team, has been exploring ways to make First Church more “green.” As your senior pastor, I feel compelled to set an example, which is why I’m making a public commitment regarding what I can do personally. Therefore, **I’ve pledged to recycle more, ride my bike more, walk more and write our political leaders about concerns on the environment and global warming.** I’m also inviting every individual in the church to consider making their own public commitment as it works in their lives.

As you think about your commitments, please keep the following in mind:

- 1. Start with prayer.** How would God want you to show your appreciation for the Creation?
- 2. You decide how big or small the commitment is.** The important thing is that all of us make a commitment.
- 3. Remember to keep your goal realistic.** We want you to be successful.
- 4. Share your commitment** with someone else who will hold you accountable.
- 5. If you’re not sure what to do, refer to the Sacred Earth Committee’s information** on the Mission bulletin board to help with ideas.

I’m also asking the various committees and leaders from the church to inform the Sacred Earth Committee about the commitments they will make. We’ll post those commitments on the bulletin board, and on a quarterly basis, we will update you on the progress toward those goals by posting the information.

Thank you for stepping up in faith as we demonstrate to the community at large that First Church is serious about protecting our environment.

Pastoral Care Developing: Prayer & Care Groups

by Reverend Barbara R. Cunningham, Minister of Pastoral Care

There are so many times in our lives, after we have given something to another person, that there is a deep sense of satisfaction and peace. It is wonderful to see someone enjoy a gift of love, whether it is some “thing” or an intangible part of yourself.

As we develop First Church’s Prayer and Care Groups, we will be giving part of ourselves and receiving the gift of love from others. What greater gift can we give than to pray for another person and receive their prayers for us? Along with the one-on-one ministry of the Stephen Ministers, First Church is building a community of listening, being present and giving and receiving love.

You will soon have the opportunity to meet with your church member neighbors as we form the Prayer & Care Groups. When you get the call to participate, I hope you will consider the chance to get to know a small group of members in your neighborhood. Have questions? Call Barb Cunningham at 614.228.1741, ext. 26.

A Pilgrimage to Iona, Scotland 2009

by Reverend Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister

Iona, Scotland is a holy place. In 563 AD, an Irish missionary, Columba, established Christianity on this tiny island just off the west coast of Scotland. The name, “Iona” means “Dove” in Hebrew. St. Columba, known as “the Dove of the Church,” brought Christianity to Iona along with 12 followers. Later, Benedictine monks and sisters would settle in Iona. The Book of Kells was written there. Scottish kings and queens were buried there. Gaelic prophecy believed that the Second Coming of Christ would happen on Iona.

Today, in the reconstructed abbey built by the Benedictine monks more than 800 years ago, an ecumenical community known as the Iona Community worships together, studies together and welcomes people worldwide. Celtic music and liturgy fill the air. The art of centuries surround you on the rock-hewn island.

It was to this island that my family and I traveled on my 2004 sabbatical, a place we now consider one of the most beautiful locations on earth. On that trip to Iona, we danced, sang, worshiped and prayed with travelers from across the globe. Iona is a community committed to eco-justice and peace.

In June 2009, I am planning to lead a trip of 15 - 20 pilgrims to Iona. Because the abbey has limited space, we cannot take more. Already, 11 have signed up. In the next couple of weeks, we will present a complete itinerary. We are expected to live in the community on the island for one week, but will add trips off the island to see Puffins and perhaps whales in the Gulf stream waters. Outside of Glasgow and a few Scottish castles, there will not be many other sights on this 12-day trip.

Located on a parallel with Nome, Alaska, the sun never really sets on Iona in the summer months. I invite you to join us as we experience renewal with the light of God and God’s people on the island of Iona, Scotland.



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India Trip

by Valerie & Phil Stichter

Don't miss out on the January 2009 trip to India being planned jointly by our church and First Community Church. We will take in many of the extraordinary sites and experiences this exotic country has to offer, including the Taj Mahal in Agra, a boat ride at dawn on the sacred Hindu river Ganges in Varanasi, the living museum of Rajasthan, a tiger sanctuary and a tour of several small villages - each devoted to a local craft.

We will also spend several days in Pune, visiting one of First Church's oldest mission projects run by our dear friends, Rev. Bhaskar and Dr. Neela Onawale, who in 1972 spent time at both Columbus churches. In 1975, they founded the Deep Griha (Lighthouse) Mission, starting with one room in their home. Since then, they have developed and sustained health, social and educational services throughout three large slum areas in Pune.

Those from Columbus who have already visited Deep Griha testify to the amazing work being done by the Onawales and the grateful faces of the adults and healthy children being cared for and educated by their staff and volunteers. Though these American visitors were touring very poor areas of the city, they were surrounded by those who clearly showed the difference good health care and education have on those Deep Griha serves.

We have an outstanding local guide we will use while touring the country. People can choose to extend their trip to include other stops if they wish.

We need to firm up our plans soon and urge you to contact Phil or Valerie Stichter at stichter@columbus.rr.com, or 614.885.0730, if you are interested in joining us or would like additional information.

The Music Of First Church

by Marti Rideout, Interim Minister of Music

2008-2009 Congregational Concerts

Looking ahead, the music department is putting together an exciting 2008-2009 season. *Congregational Concerts* will feature:

Sept 21.....*The Mainstreet Brass*

Oct. 19.....*Organist Thomas Trotter*

Nov. 9.....*Three Choirs Concert at Broad Street Presbyterian*

Dec. 21.....*Christmas Lessons and Carols*

Feb. 22.....*Handbells Columbus (Featuring a commissioned piece for handbells and organ.)*

March 29..*Choral Society and Organ*

April 26....*Organist Eric Plutz*

Additional information will appear in summer newsletters, epistles, bulletins and letters. Your presence is always welcome and appreciated!

CHURCH PICNIC

Mark your calendars for this year's Annual Church Picnic on August 24. The theme is

Membership Through the Decades.

This is sure to be a great event with many fun activities planned.

Summer Sermon Titles

by Reverend Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister

June Sermon Schedule

June 22: *A Crash Course for Spaceship Earth*

June 29: Barb Cunningham preaching - Rev. Ahrens preaching in Chautauqua, NY: *This One's For You*

July Sermon Schedule

July 6: *If I Was A Christian in America*

July 13: *Tell Them How You Made It Over*

July 20: Rev. Tisher Preaching

July 27: Rev. Cunningham Preaching

August Sermon Series *Jesus: The Peaceable One...*

Aug. 3: Rev. Tisher preaching - Rev. Ahrens preaching in Lakeside, OH, *Jesus, Messiah of Peace*

Aug. 10: *The Peaceable Messiah*

Aug. 17: *The Peaceable Prophet*

Aug. 24: *The Peaceable People of Faith*

Sunday Summer Worship

During the summer, First Church offers one Sunday service at 10 a.m. through August 31. During the summer we will be honoring the world church, highlighting a different country each week. In order to honor the tradition of the 9 a.m. service, communion will be celebrated each week.



Summer Sunday Worship Picnics

On the first Sunday of June, July and August, we will have an after-church picnic at Goodale Park. Meet at the play structure at 11:30 a.m.

First Church News

Board Of Trustees (Part 3 in the series)

by Phil Stichter, Trustee Chair

Last month, we described the basic characteristics of different categories of gifts that donors make. One major distinction is when the donor instructs that only the income of the gift is to be used and that the principal of the gift remains in perpetuity. These are called "endowment gifts". The donor also specifies the purposes for which the income is to be used. Examples include the general support of the church or specific uses, such as music, missions, building, education, arts, or other special projects or programs.

The trustees administer these *endowment gifts* (collectively called the "endowment funds") to be sure that the *principal is properly preserved and invested* and that the income is used in accordance with the donor's instructions. The purpose of this article is to describe some of the existing endowment funds, to which additional gifts can be made at any time by members or friends.

Washington Gladden Memorial Fund: On March 6, 1917, a trust agreement executed by Celia C. Jeffrey established this endowment fund. It stipulated that "\$100,000 shall be kept and held intact, but, the income on such \$100,000 shall then be applied towards the maintenance and the defraying of the operating expenses" of the church. Joseph Jeffrey and his wife, Celia, were extremely generous in their support of the church. During the final years of her life, gifts by Celia helped greatly to make possible the construction of our present church building and its maintenance.

Comstock Fund: This fund was created from a bequest in 1874 from Rodney Comstock's residual estate in the amount of approximately \$14,000 "to be and remain a perpetual fund forever, the interest of said fund to be applied for the benefit of said Church."

Frederick W. Schumacher Fund: This fund was established pursuant to the 1947 Eighth Codicil to the Will of Frederick W. Schumacher in the amount of \$23,000. It provides that the income is to be used "for the liquidation of the expenses of the said First Congregational Church." Mr. Schumacher was an immigrant from the Island of Fehmarn and became a man of means. He was most generous, as evidenced by his gifts to the Columbus Museum of Art and to our church. The two large tapestries hanging in our sanctuary were his gifts. He funded the Schumacher Awards given each year to deserving young women students.

Next month, additional examples of our current endowment funds will be featured. **It is our hope that knowledge of these funds and the purposes for which they were created will stimulate your interest in making a donation to one or more of them.** Such donations can be made at any time and by a variety of ways. Making a contribution of cash or other liquid assets as an outright gift, providing in your will a bequest to one of the church's endowment funds, naming the church as a beneficiary on your life insurance, or purchasing a charitable annuity are some of the examples of planned giving.

We've Been Discovered!

by Sarah Lange



During the weekend of June 6, 7 and 8, central Ohio came to the Discovery District for the Columbus Arts Festival, and First Church was ready! Over the course of three days, the staff, along with more than 80 members and friends of First Church, provided a clean, cool, welcoming environment for over 1,100 visitors and musical guests.

A choral festival, the sale of teas and sandwiches (provided by the Missions Commission), concerts, recitals and sales of the cleverly-themed and decorated bentwood chairs raised more than \$1,580 to benefit Doctors Without Borders. These monies also help defray costs of the First Church Arts Festival Committee for this and the next three years.

The First Church Arts Festival Committee (Deborah Anderson, Sarah Lange, Marti Rideout, Rick Sayre, Janet Wade and Mark Williams) thank everyone who contributed in to the success of the weekend. Without the volunteers and church staff, First Church would not have been the showcase of music, art and history that it was!

Good Sam Gets A Boost

First Church would like to offer a big thank you to the Columbus Kiwanis Foundation for its donation of \$500 to our Good Samaritan Fund. The money will help us to continue providing assistance to the many needy people that Good Samaritan serves each month. If you would like to be a part of this valuable mission, your donations would be greatly appreciated. Contact Marty Worth at 614.228.1741, ext. 12.

Rev. Ahrens' Summer Schedule

Rev. Tim Ahrens will be on the road this summer, teaching and preaching in New York and at Lake Erie. He will be at the Chautaugua Institution near Jamestown, N.Y., from June 29 to July 4, and at Lakeside, OH, from Aug. 3 to 9. In September, Rev. Ahrens will be preaching at St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. For three days in October, he will be at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Conn., where he will receive the school's William Sloane Coffin Peace and Justice Award.

Christian Education

Notes From Christian Education

by Mark S. Williams, Director of Christian Education



Children Raise Funds for Deep Griha

The church school children will be donating \$200 to the playground project in Deep Griha. The children raised this money through weekly offerings, lemonade stands, garage sales and other fun activities in their homes. The children had a fun time collecting the money, but also learned about giving to those in need. Many thanks for all their efforts.

CHURCH SCHOOL OFFERING GROWS!

A new offering program was started this past year for the children of church school. A box of offering envelopes was given to each child as a way to teach the importance of stewardship. Each envelope had Bible trivia for the parents and children to discuss. Sunday after Sunday, the children of First Church brought their offering envelopes to church school filled with pennies, dimes, quarters and dollar bills. The year-end total offering was more than \$400 and will benefit Deep Griha (\$200) and the church budget (\$100). The remainder carries over to the next year.

Summer Worship Family Resources Available

The Christian Education Department has prepared a "Summer Worship Learning Resources for Families" to coordinate with the themes for summer worship. The resource flyer lists books and Web sites concerning the countries and regions highlighted this summer in worship. They are available in the pews, parish hall and the office.

FALL PROGRAMMING ALMOST COMPLETE

Committees and staff have been busy planning for the next program year. The fall calendar is almost complete and some activities are planned through next summer. More details will follow in the next two months. You will "GLOW" with excitement as the details unfold!

Thank You Teachers!

Thank you to all the teachers-facilitators who made this past Christian education program "Stepping-Up in Faith" a year of spiritual growth! What a wonderful ministry to lead the learning process for all ages. May God bless you! We look forward to seeing your **GLOWING** faces next year and encourage new faces to join this important ministry.

Put It On Your Calendar

Church school teacher training and orientation will be held Aug. 17, from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. More details to come.

Letting Kids Succeed

Letting Kids Succeed has returned to First Church for the summer, and nearly 160 young people (ages 5 to 15) will be livening up First Church halls for 10 weeks.

The day-long program, in its fourth year, was founded by Linda Slocum. Slocum said it focuses on getting kids prepared academically for the next school year by working on areas in which they have difficulty. It also fosters self-respect and confidence, aiming to help the children be responsible. But it's not all work. The kids will be taking field trips and have an exciting schedule of fun activities planned.

Slocum said Letting Kids Succeed changes lives and she appreciates the wonderful setting and staff at First Church.

New Members Class

If you are interested in joining First Church, our next class will be held on Sun., Aug. 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This is the only New Members Class during the summer months. The class will meet for breakfast and conversation before attending the 10 a.m. worship service as a group. A light lunch will also be provided.

To register, fill out the attendance pad indicating the membership category, sign up in the church office or email Denny Mahoney at dmahoney@first-church.org. Childcare will be provided - but let us know in advance if you need it. The class will join on Aug. 24, during the 10 a.m. service and celebrate afterwards at the annual church picnic.

Sacred Space



Summer Women's Book Study

Women are invited to join in reading and discussing books by Sue Monk Kidd. The book study will be held here at the church. Feel free to come to as many discussions as you can. The dates and books to be discussed are:

- Wed., July 2, 7 p.m., *The Mermaid Chair*
- Wed., Aug. 6, 7 p.m., *When the Heart Waits*

Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Parents For Others

by Reverend Laura A. Tisher, Minister of Youth & Young Adults



First Church stay-at-home or part-time working mothers and fathers who desire to reach out in service to those in need are gathering together every month in a setting that is baby- and child-friendly to work on service projects without having to worry about child care! The group will

meet at 3:45 p.m. in the Toddler Room of the Education Wing (enter the building at the end of the education wing) on the following dates:

Thursday, July 10	Friday, August 8
Thursday, September 11	Friday, October 10
Thursday, November 6	Friday, December 12

If you are interested in participating, contact Catherine Kennedy at cskennedy1981@yahoo.com or 614.578.6762. We look forward to hearing from you!

Young Adult Dinner Group: First Church Young Adults will be going to dinner at **Spagios** in Grandview (1295 Grandview Ave.) on Sat., July 5, at 6:30 p.m. Spagios is a Grandview institution serving up delicious Mediterranean and Italian fusion-style food. Wood-fired pizzas, pastas, sandwiches and salads are a favorite at Spagios. Meet at the restaurant. RSVP to Rev. Lori by July 2.

Young Adult Zoo Trip: First Church Young Adults will be going to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium on Sun., June 22, from 2 - 5 p.m. Children are welcome. Cost: \$10 for adults, \$7 for kids 2 to 9 and free for children under 2. Meet at the zoo entrance at 2:30 p.m. RSVP to Rev. Lori by June 12. The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is the third largest municipally owned zoo in the US. Current special exhibits include Manatee Coast, where injured Manatees are brought back to health before being released to the wild. Columbus boasts one of the most successful breeding programs for captive animals, including the first gorilla born in captivity.



Bike & Build Group: Thirty-two young adults riding their bikes across the country to raise awareness of housing and inequities will be spending the night at First Church on June 29. This group will ride six days a week and spend one day a week building a house in eight locations. The Young Adult Ministry is providing meals and hospitality while they are in Columbus. For more about Bike & Build, visit www.bikeandbuild.org.

Congrats to First Church Grads

by Reverend Laura A. Tisher, Minister of Youth & Young Adults



Please join us as we celebrate the following First Church graduates.

Kelly J. Dodd: Kelly graduated from The Ohio State University Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She plans on joining The James Cancer Hospital in July and hopes to go into hospice nursing in the future. Kelly would like to thank all her friends and family that have encouraged and supported her through this journey and for their belief in the talents God gave her.

Elise Poppe Faith: Elise graduated from Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She's very proud to have completed her degree in just three years, thanks to her post-secondary studies in high school. Elise will be working at OSU this summer as she studies for her nursing board exams. Elise just completed three years as part of the First Church nursery staff, is an active member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority and served as recruitment chair this year. Elise plans to pursue graduate school to become a nurse midwife and women's health nurse practitioner. She is the daughter of proud parents Bill Faith and Barbara Poppe and big sister to Ben Faith.

Corine (Cori) Benner: Cori was listed in the last newsletter as graduating from CCAD where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Industrial Design (BFA). We neglected to mention that she also graduated Magna Cum Laude, was the student government leader, Industrial Design Society of America Student Merit Award Finalist, Dean's Scholarship Award Winner, Columbus Foundation Scholarship Award Winner and National Art Honor Society Scholarship winner. Cori is engaged to First Church member and 2007 CCAD graduate Benjamin Rowley. They are looking forward to being married at First Church in October 2008.

Jacques Washington: Jacques graduated from Reynoldsburg High School this June and will be attending Ohio Dominican University in the fall where he will begin exploring his career options. His proud parents are Shannon & Christopher Washington.

Paige Rochus: Paige graduated from Grove City High School and Southwest Career Academy and will be joining the U.S. Coast Guard. Paige is the daughter of proud parents, Tammy and Julie Roth-Alexander and Scott Rochus.

Congratulations to all our graduates and best wishes for a lifetime of happiness!

Missions

What's New With CATALYST

by Heather Biggers

CATALYST is the mission relationship between First Congregational Church UCC, the communities of downtown Kingston and the Grace and Staff Foundation. Downtown Kingston, Jamaica, is home to many wonderful families living in extremely poor and violent communities. These families have asked us to help them educate their children, so CATALYST assists students who use Grace and Staff's homework center - the Learning Centre of Central Kingston (LICK).

Only a relatively small part of Jamaica is a tourist paradise. Jamaica is really a developing country. Kingston, its capital, with close to a million people, is peppered with "garrison communities" controlled by drug lords. Residents of the garrison communities receive no monetary benefits from the wealth generated by the world-renowned tourist facilities and live in the midst of the constant terror of drug warfare. In 1997, when I began working in Kingston, the average monthly income for a family living in a "garrison community" was approximately the equivalent of \$300 United States dollars and remains the same today. Many prices in Jamaica are comparable to those in the United States, but some items such as clothing, toiletries, books, pencils and pens, cost more. This is the reality of a developing country only a few hours away by plane.

What We Do: CATALYST provides assistance to help students living in Kingston's garrison communities obtain a secondary education. Since parents have to pay tuition for secondary education, your gifts to CATALYST will enable 36 students to receive partial secondary scholarships this year. Dozens of additional students who use the LICK Centre benefit from CATALYST enrichments programs such as an essay contest, photography club, mentoring and SAT coaching. Eight CATALYST students have attended college and graduate school on scholarships and contributions to CATALYST.

The following is a sample of a recent CATALYST request received from Mr. Curtis Sweeny, program manager at Grace and Staff. *"I had indicated in a previous email that Kemoy Smith of the LICK centre was accepted in the Engineering programme at Kettering University in Flint, Michigan. The total fee is US \$33,000 and he has received funding for US \$28,000. He had participated in the Academically Interested Minorities (AIM) programme at Kettering last summer and placed second overall. This, in addition to his 1710 SAT score, has earned him the scholarship. Grace and Staff are currently seeking the funds to support him with the shortfall of US \$5,000. Could Catalyst assist, perhaps with airfare."*

Grace and Staff found the money to cover the \$5,000 and CATALYST will provide the plane ticket, warm clothing and a duffle bag suitcase. In the fall, we hope to do classes during adult education as well as hold our "Taste of Jamaica" lunch and fundraiser. Stay tuned, and please donate what you can to CATALYST. Checks can be made out to First Congregational Church, just write CATALYST in the memo line. Every dollar CATALYST receives provides direct services or assistance to our students! To learn more, visit:

CATALYST: www.catalystworks.org

Grace and Staff: www.gracekennedy.com/GRACEcorp_Citizenship_GS.htm.

Curtis Sweeny: www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20060827/out/out2.html.

Jamaica's Garrison communities: www.jamaica-gleaner.com/pages/politics/kerr.pdf.

Mission Offerings Schedule

In July, the undesignated loose offerings will benefit the following missions that First Church supports:

July 6: *CWS Relief Myanmar* - Church World Service is providing tarpaulins to help shelter thousands suffering from the devastating cyclone.

July 13: *Re-Member* - Re-member assists people living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

July 20: *Darfur* - Relief to help those caught up in the military conflict in western Sudan.

July 27: *Faith Mission* - Homeless men and women are provided with food, shelter and clothing in our own backyard on Long St.

Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales are available July 6 and July 20 (first and third Sundays of the month) during fellowship hour. This is a UCC Coffee

Project initiative and your participation is greatly appreciated. If you miss the regular sale, you can call Nancy Burba on Wednesdays in the First Church office at 614.228.1741, ext. 28. Submitted by Nancy Burba.

Food at First Church

As the economy worsens, area food banks are experiencing an increased demand for assistance. Our "Food at First" program is being expanded to help meet this growing need. We are asking for contributions of non-perishable food and paper products each week now, rather than just on the first Sunday of the month. The collection baskets will remain in the same locations. The contributions will be distributed equally between the Gladden House pantry and the Broad Street Presbyterian pantry. Please be as generous as you can - the need is great! Submitted by Marilyn Minter.

Correction: Last month I reported three First Church members tutored at Siebert Elementary School this past year. In truth, Valerie and Phil Stichter were also at Siebert and Phil reported he loved tutoring. The principal has asked for three more tutors. Please contact Valerie Stichter to learn more about this much-needed service. Submitted by Dawn George.

News & Announcements

Walk To Remember, Remind & Renew

AIDSWalk Central Ohio, Sat., July 12

Registration at 8 a.m.

Kickoff at 9 a.m.

Franklin Park Conservatory

Visit www.aidswalkcentralohio.org to create or join a team, donate and more.



Computer Technician Volunteer Needed!



The First Church business office is looking for a volunteer to help manage our 2003 small business server for the church. This person would help with updates, determine the needs of the server, monitor activity of viruses and

malware, etc. The volunteer would work closely with the business administrator. If you have the skills and experience of working with a server and can help the church, we want to hear from you! If interested, please contact Sharon Leidheiser at 614.228.1741, ext. 11, or shar@first-church.org.

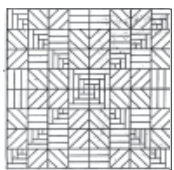
Moderator Calls For Congregational Meeting

Tom Stewart, moderator of Church Council, is calling a congregational meeting on August 10, at 11 a.m. to vote on a plan to move forward on acquiring the Byers lot and initiating a capital campaign. Please plan to attend. In early July, a special letter from the moderator will be sent out with all the information known to him at that time. In addition, he will be available for discussion at the coffee hour following worship on July 27 & Aug. 3.

Summer Grounds Volunteers: First Church is currently recruiting volunteers who would be interested in planting and caring for First Church gardens and property throughout the summer. If interested, contact Stan Parron at 614.228.1741, ext 25, or sparron@first-church.org.

Spirituality Network: Spirituality Network programs enlighten and inform.

The Spirituality Network Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper (*main course and beverages provided - bring a side dish or dessert to share*) Tuesday, June 24, from 6 - 9 p.m. at The Church for All People, 946 Parsons Ave. **RSVP:** 614.228.8867 or spiritnetwk@hotmail.com.



Quilters Wanted: If you're a former, current or wannabe quilter - let's talk. We're interested in meeting to discuss quilting and the possibility of forming a quilting group at First Church. All people and skill levels are welcome.

Contact: Marilyn Minter at 614.855.7945 mlminter@insight.rr.com or Gleva Stephens at 614.258.5940, gleva@copper.net.

Member Happy Birthdays

7/1:	Larry Walquist	7/16:	Sharon Leidheiser
7/1:	Roger Fox	7/16:	Elizabeth Drotleff
7/2:	Frank Hunnell	7/16:	Michelle Gies
7/2:	Josh Anderson	7/17:	David Carpenter
7/3:	Judy Wolff	7/18:	Abner Bagenstose
7/3:	Ashley Hartz	7/19:	Bob Avers
7/3:	Laura Hadley	7/19:	Bev Cook
7/4:	Cori Benner	7/20:	Dale Ann Gray
7/5:	Nancy Evans	7/20:	Jacqueline Masek
7/5:	Susanna Heer	7/21:	Barbara Kirk
7/6:	Kevin Leidheiser	7/21:	Katie Whipple
7/7:	Kathy Brownfield	7/22:	Kim DeWitt
7/7:	Carrie Keller	7/22:	Eric Chambers
7/8:	Joyce Campbell	7/22:	Megan Powell
7/8:	Sandra Geronimo	7/23:	Jim Kyle
7/8:	Michael Rippel	7/23:	James Borling
7/8:	Lindsey Kirk	7/24:	Bob Williams
7/8:	Christopher Hughes	7/24:	Alvin Schaffer
7/9:	Ed Waller	7/24:	Kristi Thompson
7/9:	Joan Lebold	7/24:	Linda Gieseke
7/10:	Monique Penfield	7/24:	Frederick Hadley
7/11:	Linda Meredith	7/24:	David Postlewaite
7/11:	David Bowers	7/25:	Nancy Braverman
7/11:	Kaitlin Olsen	7/25:	Frederick Hunker
7/11:	Ross Preisser	7/25:	Sarah Welsh-Huggins
7/12:	Karen Behm	7/26:	Joanne Morse
7/13:	Carol Lowy	7/27:	John Hayes
7/13:	Logan Browne	7/28:	Steve Sterrett
7/14:	J.B. Davis	7/28:	Katelyn Hoffman
7/14:	Shawn Copeland	7/30:	Karen Carpenter
7/15:	Joseph Glick	7/30:	Priss Endo
7/15:	Elise Faith	7/30:	Fran Panek
7/15:	Todd Hills	7/30:	Ryan Weddle
7/15:	Patty Amy	7/31:	Carolyn Watkins
7/16:	Twink Starr	7/31:	Leon Axt
7/16:	Steve Brandehoff		
7/16:	David Magers		

Happy Belated Birthday to Judith Hunter.
Her birthday was March 28.



Member Happy Anniversaries

7/1:	Sharon & Larry Walquist	7/14:	Carrie & Patrick Keller
7/1:	Robyn & Mike Petras	7/14:	Christen Coyle & Jason Holton
7/4:	Sandra & Gilman Kirk	7/15:	Anne & Gerry Hudson
7/4:	Nancy & Leland Burba	7/15:	Sarah & Erik Mitchell
7/7:	Kerry & Rob O'Leary	7/17:	Carol & Jim Gallagher
7/7:	Trish & Tom Bishop	7/23:	Lissa & Drew Wade
7/8:	Denise & Nate Vogt	7/26:	Catherine & Todd Cunningham
7/9:	Mary Ann & Herb Goetz	7/31:	Catrina & Jim Drotleff
7/11:	Shelly & Tom Gies	7/31:	Sarah & Brett Zickafoose
7/11:	Murley & Alan Miller		
7/13:	Julia & Tom Stewart		

OOPS! If we've forgotten to list your birthday or anniversary in the newsletter, please let us know by contacting the church office at 614.228.1741, ext. 16, or by emailing bjens@first-church.org.

Church Calendar

Sunday, June 22 (Focus on India)

8:30 am: Music Search Comm - PR
10 am: Worship Service - San
11 am: Fellowship Hour - PH
2:30 pm: Young Adult Zoo Trip - Meet at Zoo

Monday, June 23

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
6:15 pm: First Church Softball - Whetstone Park

Tuesday, June 24

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7pm: Personnel Comm - LC

Wednesday, June 25

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
9 am: Staff Meeting - LC

Thursday, June 26

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms

Friday, June 27

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
10 am: Dene Barnard & Group Practice - Choir Rm

Saturday, June 28

9 am: Faith Mission Lunches

Sunday, June 29 (Focus on Hispanic Cultures)

9 am: Summer Choir Practice - Choir Rm
10 am: Worship Service - San
11 am: Fellowship Hour - PH
1 pm: Bike & Build Group - Ed Wg Rm C & D

Monday, June 30

6 am: Bike & Build Group - Educ Wg Rm C & D
8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
6:15 pm: First Church Softball - Whetstone Park

Tuesday, July 1

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
6:30 pm: Children's Ed. - Ed Wg Rm C
7 pm: Exec. Comm - PFR
7 pm: Evangelism & Church Growth - PR
7 pm: Deacons Meeting - LC

Wednesday, July 2

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
9 am: Staff Meeting - LC
6:30 pm: Youth Ministry Team - Educ Wg Rm D
7 pm: Sacred Space Women's Book Study - PFR

Thursday, July 3

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms

Friday, July 4 (Independence Day)

Building and Office Closed

Sunday, July 6 (Focus on America)

10 am: Early Worship Service - San
11 am: Fellowship Hour - PH
11:30 am: Summer Worship Church Picnic - Goodale Park
6 pm: Youth Group - PH

Monday, July 7

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms

Tuesday, July 8

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7 pm: Mission Comm - PR

Wednesday, July 9

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms
9 am: Staff Meeting - LC

Thursday, July 10

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms
10 am: Eastside Fellowship - PR
3:45 pm: Parents For Others - Toddler Rm

Friday, July 11

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms
6 pm: LKS Family Night - PH

Sunday, July 13 (Focus on Native American Cultures)

10 am: Worship Service - San
11 am: Fellowship Hour - PH

Monday, July 14

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
9 am - Good Sam Day - PR & LC
7 pm: Trustees - PR

Tuesday, July 15

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR

Wednesday, July 16

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
9 am: Staff Meeting - PR

9 am: Newsletter Folding - LC

Thursday, July 17

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms

Friday, July 18

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms

Sunday, July 20 (Focus on Africa)

9 am: Summer Choir Practice - Choir Rm
10 am: Worship Service - San
11 am: Fellowship Hour - PH
6 pm: Youth Group - PH
9pm: Compline - San

Monday, July 21

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
7 pm: Budget & Finance - LC

Tuesday, July 22

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Educ Rms
12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7 pm: Personnel Comm - LC

Wednesday, July 23

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms
9 am: Staff Meeting - PR

7 pm: Adult Ed - LC

Thursday, July 24

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms

Friday, July 25

8 am - 6 pm: LKS - PH & All Ed Rms
6 pm: Faith Mission Men's Shelter Meals

Saturday, July 26

9 am: Faith Mission Family Shelter Lunches

LOOKING AHEAD >>>

Washington Gladden Presentation

Mark your calendars for Tues., Aug. 26 from 10 a.m. - noon. Rev. Ahrens will be delivering a presentation about the life and work of Washington Gladden at the Martin de Porres Center at St. Mary of the Springs, 2320 Airport Dr. To register by Aug. 20, call 614.287.5858. The cost is \$15.

Gladden, senior minister at First Congregational Church in Columbus from 1882 to 1914, was one of the strong early proponents of the Social Gospel, using Christian principles to address society's social ills. He believed Christians had a duty to help others and sought to reconcile Christian ethics with political action.

Church & Prayers

July Fellowship Hour

July 6: Micah - Amy Mailer
July 13: Numbers - Julia Myers
July 20: Proverbs - Pat Patterson
July 27: Psalms - Bill Rhoads

Next Newsletter Deadline

Articles Due: Monday, July 7 by noon
Email: bjenks@first-church.org
Folding Team: Wed., July 16 at 9 a.m.

Prayers

Please pray for those who continue to walk through grief and loss, for those battling illness and addictions in their families, for all serving in Iraq and elsewhere and for others in need. Please offer prayers for those who are lonely, lost and hurting. Pray for our nation as we face all too much anxiety, fear and uncertainty with faith, hope and love. May God bless you in your giving and in your living in Christ's love and grace. Amen.

Prayer Request: Please let us know of a prayer concern for yourself, a family member or other church member by calling the Rev. Barbara Cunningham at 614.228.1741, ext. 26, by using Prayer Request Cards found in each pew or by emailing bcunningham@first-church.org. We welcome the opportunity to give thanks for your joys and prayers for your concerns.

~ REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES ~
WITH A DEDICATION OF FLOWERS
Contact Marty Worth at 614.228.1741, ext. 12,
marty@first-church.org

First Church Room Scheduling: If you are considering scheduling a room for a church meeting or event, please contact Sharon Leidheiser at 614.228.1741, ext. 11, or shar@first-church.org.

Directory Update: If your address, email or phone number has changed, please contact the church office at 614.228.1741 or home@first-church.org.

Church Staff

Timothy C. Ahrens.....Senior Minister
Barbara R. Cunningham.....Minister for Pastoral Care
Laura A. Tisher.....Minister of Youth & Young Adults
Marti Rideout.....Interim Minister of Music
Mark S. Williams.....Director of Christian Education
Roger Sankey.....Resident In Pastoral Care
G. Dene Barnard.....Organist Choirmaster Emeritus
Sharon Leidheiser.....Business Administrator
Martha Worth.....Program Manager
Stan Parron.....Building Manager
Barb Jenks Triffon.....Communications
Denny Mahoney.....Admin. Assistant to Senior Minister
Kelvin Murphy.....Custodian
Nikki Boop.....Custodian
Bill Wirsching.....Custodian
Chinyere Newsum.....Custodian
Eric Trepkoski.....Custodian
Caroline Sansbury.....Nursery Staff
Elise Faith.....Nursery Staff
Jessica Yaeger.....Nursery Staff
Kelsey Weber.....Nursery Staff
Linda Mumford.....Wedding Coordinator
Jane Leidheiser.....Wedding Coordinator
Fran Panek.....Wedding Coordinator

Church Council

Thomas Stewart.....Moderator
Kay Metz.....Vice-Moderator
Carol Gallagher.....Secretary
David Holt.....Treasurer
Phil Stichter.....Trustee Chair
Randy Hoffman.....Administration Commissioner
Al Waddell.....Church Growth Commissioner
Pam Kallner.....Education Commissioner
Harry Campbell.....House & Grounds Commissioner
Beverly Cook.....Mission Commissioner
Amy Beymer.....Parish Life Commissioner
Craig Oyler.....Deacon
Sandy Bennett.....Deacon
Drew Wade.....Member-at-large
Duan Cannon.....Member-at-large
Stan Lange.....Member-at-large
Bill Lange.....Nominating Chair

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
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DATED MATERIAL - VERY IMPORTANT

PLEASE DELIVER: *Saturday, June 21, 2008*

TO:

[Empty dashed box for recipient address]



The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
444 E. Broad St. Col., OH 43215
Phone: 614.228.1741 FAX: 614.461.1741
Email: home@first-church.org Web site: www.first-church.org
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed Major Holidays

“An Open & Affirming Faith Community”

SUMMER SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS

One Sunday Service at 10 a.m. ~ Sanctuary
Fall Worship Hours Resume September 7