

A sermon preached by Sarah Ahrens, 2010 Confirmation Class of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2010, dedicated to my church family, my family, my mentor Jenny Provenzano, the memory of my Aunt Janice Higgins, and always to the glory of God!

“Dreams and Visions”

Acts 2:1-21

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Let us pray: May the words of my mouth and the meditations of each one of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our salvation. Amen.

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Even though I have been coming to First Church since I was 4, when I entered the Confirmation class last fall there were quite a few classmates I didn't really know. I had been looking forward to this class since watching my brothers Luke and Daniel get confirmed. Now here I was with my dream of starting this journey of faith about to begin.

We had great food, two phenomenal teachers, wonderful mentors, enjoyable homework, field trips planned to St. Dominic Church, a mosque, a synagogue and a retreat to Temple Hills, a room full of interesting teen-agers and a great God to worship. What more could I hope for?! In the end, the year went fast and we had fun!

I loved this year in Confirmation because we went into depth with topics about our faith. We didn't just say, "Jesus did this," or "Jesus did that," and just completely move on to another topic. If we had any questions, there was always a time to ask those questions. We could ask anything and get it cleared up. It's one of the many things I loved about this faith

journey. One time, I was stuck on a question and I asked my class for help. Four or five other confirmands jumped in with an answer. That wasn't unusual. They were there for me on a number of occasions. My mentor, Jenny Provenzano, was amazing. She helped me with my prayer life, my faith life and every day kinds of things. She even started the Sarah Ahrens Track Fan Club and let my parents join it!

On behalf of all 11 members of the class of 2010 – James, Steven, Alex, Reel, Thomas, Betsy, Katie, Anna, Allison, Morgan and myself – I would like to thank all the church members for your love and support of us this year and all the years we have been here.

In the story of Pentecost in Acts, I like the part where it says, “Your sons and daughters will be prophets; your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams.” In my life I have had dreams and visions. I would like to thank you on a personal note for all of the support you gave me when I had dreams and visions here. About three years ago, when I was only 11 years old, I had a dream about the lot next door to the church. I dreamed our church would own it. So I made and sold Buckeye necklaces and gave all the money to the church. It was \$250 for Heifer Project International and another \$250 to buy the Byers lot.

It turned out this was the first gift toward buying the lot. It was originally just an idea. But thanks to you, you are making the dream come true. Everyone is helping out the most that they can. And I'm blessed to be surrounded by such members who have faith in a small dream. I've found out that it takes a little faith to get a great dream going. At our church, I discovered even an 11-year-old can make a difference. Without your faith, none of this would be possible.

But I am not the only one in the class of 2010 who has dreams and visions. Steven dreams of being a movie director and expanding our church on the Byers Lot. Katie dreams of being married in our church and likes our church just the way

it is. She loves how we help people in the community. Betsy dreams of being an Olympic swimmer (and I think she'll win the gold medal) and she likes the church the way it is. Anna dreams of being a psychologist or a singer (I think she's great for both jobs!) and she dreams of having a youth choir, here at the church. Reel wants to be successful and loves the church the way it is. Thomas dreams of being an architect or a teacher, and loves the church how it is and how it helps our community. James doesn't have a specific dream yet, but I know he'll make a difference. And he loves the laid back 9 a.m. service. Allison doesn't care what she does as long as she loves or enjoys what she is doing. She loves the two services the church has but thinks we could have stronger youth groups. Morgan has lots of talents and abilities. She doesn't have a specific dream, but she will be great at whatever she does! She loves the church just the way it is.

Our young men and young women are prophets and dreamers just like in the early church. When God gave birth to the church, he must have had all of us in mind. My church is the place where dreams come true. Thanks be to God! Amen.

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