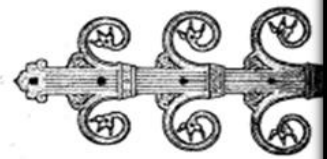




# First Church News



First Congregational Church  
*United Church of Christ • Columbus, Ohio*

Dec. 15, 2010  
Vol. 158, No. 12



## 'Windows of Our Souls'

By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister ([tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@first-church.org))

*The windows of my soul I throw wide open to the sun.*  
~John Greenleaf Whittier

The story of our faith is depicted all around us in the sanctuary of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. Whether to allow light and hope to shine on our faith journey, comfort in times of grief or offer catechetical lessons of the Judea-Christian story, our stained-glass windows shed light on our pathway to God.

As we enter to worship, we are surrounded by glorious narratives framed in chards of glass. We are truly blessed by the story of our faith told in the windows of our church.

**See the complete schedule for the sermon series "Windows of Our Souls" on Page 2**


The story of Creation, the virtues and values of faith, the stories of Jesus and his parables of grace, the music of Bach, the presence of Mary and the disciples all surround us each time we cross the threshold of our sanctuary. Across the daylight hours, the windows change the spirit and temperament of our holy space. We are blessed by the windows of our souls.

In 2011, we celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> year of glorifying God and worshiping at 444 East Broad St. 2011 is our 159<sup>th</sup> year of First Church. To begin this celebrative anniversary year, I will offer an eight-part Epiphany sermon series entitled "Windows of Our Souls." The series will follow the scriptural texts of the season but take us around the sanctuary as we look at "the windows of our souls" in new ways.

I invite you to join me on this journey. Bring friends, co-workers, family and friends from January 9 to March 6 as we enter to worship and feel empowered to serve in new ways.

Throughout the season, Rick Sayre and other gifted leaders in the history and art of First Church will give guided tours of stained-glass windows in the Sanctuary, Narthex and Chapel. Let us enter this great year of celebration together.

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## *Christmas at First Church*

*December 19, 4 p.m. (Prelude at 3:30 p.m.)*

*Service of Lessons and Carols  
(Broadcast on WOSU-FM, 89.7)*

*December 24, Christmas Eve*

*7:30 p.m. ~ Pageant*

*11 p.m. ~ Candlelight Service*

*December 25, Christmas Day*

*Bethlehem on Broad Street ~ 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.*

# From the Pastors

## What Have You Been Given?

By the Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson, Associate Minister  
([jwilson@first-church.org](mailto:jwilson@first-church.org))

I have a familiar question, but it may seem out of season: **What have you been given?** It sounds like a post-Christmas morning question, doesn't it? I ask it as a stewardship question. This has been a year of looking forward – everything new for me – and now I'm enjoying the glance over my shoulder in the opposite direction, reflecting over our process and content of "stewardship 2010-2011."



One of the things I've seen is the way God calls everyone to be a good steward. We are to be stewards of the **gift of our life, our generosity, of missions and ministries** and stewards to the **gift of hope** (Callahan). We aren't called to address just one or two of these, but all of them.

It's easy to think about stewardship as seeing who can put their hands in their pocket the fastest (you can decide if that's a reference to hiding hands or using them), but stewardship is much more than that. Being a faithful steward includes discovering, developing, growing, advancing, building up and sharing the gifts God has given us. Our generosity does not flow outward only from what we have, it flows from what we have been given and knowing to whom we belong.

I wonder what life, generosity, mission and hope from God look and feel like in your life? Do you notice them? Are you at receiving them? It may surprise you, but I'm not writing this to tell you what to give. So many are happy to give and give, a little or a lot, but then receive with great difficulty. My intention in asking is to encourage you to notice what you have been given and then practice *receiving*.

My end of the year offering comes in the form of a few brief questions:

- \* Are you taking good care of the gift of your life? Do you know physically and spiritually what makes your heart rate go up and down?
- \* Are you open to receiving the generosity of God?
- \* How practiced are you at receiving God's gift of mission and ministry?
- \* Are you a steward of the gifts of hope and joy?

The more open we are to receiving, the more delighted we become the generous givers of life, gifts, mission, hope and joy. May God's blessings be received within you and through you,  
Merry Christmas,  
Janine

## Rev. Ahrens' Upcoming Sermons and Texts

### Epiphany Sermon Series



**January 9** - The Baptism of Our Lord -  
Matthew 3:13-17  
"Desert Water" (Jeffery Window - Baptism)

**January 16** - Martin Luther King Weekend - John  
1:29-42  
"Justice and Mercy Embrace" (The Gladden Window)

**January 23** - Ecumenical Sunday - Matthew 4:12-23  
"At Home in Kafer Nahum" (Jeffery Window - Calling the disciples)

**January 30** - Congregational Meeting Sunday (10 a.m. service only) - Micah 6:1-8; I Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12  
"A Vision of Beauty: Unseen, Unforgotten" (The Rose Window)

**February 6** - Youth Sunday - Matthew 5:13-20  
(The Ella Miller Window - Motherhood)

**February 13** - Racial Justice Sunday - I Corinthians 3:1-9, Matthew 5:21-37  
"Anger, Lust, Divorce and Swearing" (Jeffery Window - Jesus and the Pharisees)

**February 20** - Matthew 5:38-48  
"Retaliation and Loving Our Enemies" (Jeffery Window)

**February 27** - Matthew 6:24-34  
"Worry Lines" (Orlando Miller as dedicated to Francis Sessions - Friendship Window)

**March 6** - Transfiguration Sunday - Matthew 17:1-9  
"In Light, Inaccessible, Hid From Our Eyes" (Jeffery Windows)

*Change of Address, Phone or Email?  
Be sure let us know  
[home@first-church.org](mailto:home@first-church.org) or 228.1741*

## Bethlehem on Broad Street to Celebrate 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday

By Arlene Reynolds, Coordinator

Twenty five years ago, the First Congregational Church became the setting for the St. Lawrence Haven's and Cum Christo annual Christmas dinner party. Four years previously, in 1981, a young woman had asked if the daily feeding place would be opened on Christmas Day. Two volunteers, Ralph Emerick and Jim Bateson, said no, but then decided to ask the Catholic bishop for some money to do so. The bishop agreed, and the young lady became the volunteer to cook, and each year the crowd grew until there was "no room at the inn."

In 1984, the First Congregational Church council approved the use of the church's Parish Hall for the birthday party. In a sermon on January 2, 1986, the Rev. Matey Janata gave the name to our mission when she reflected upon her impressions and those of the congregation newly charged to the true meaning of Christmas Day.



**A volunteer serves those attending the Bethlehem on Broad Street dinner. To help during this year's event, call 228-7338.**

"This was for many of us an entirely new experience of the true meaning of Christmas. What a contrast to the usual orgy of too much food and too many presents that finally ends with the question 'whose birthday is it anyway?' " Janata said.

For this church, the annual pageant on Christmas Eve became real the next day in the faces of the hungry who sat down to a bountiful hot dinner and plenty of warm fellowship. It was "Bethlehem on Broad Street."

There is more than physical hunger. "I need to talk more than I need to eat" has been true throughout the years. Perhaps the most important opportunity for our volunteers is to serve as listeners, who offer hospitality throughout the building, showing concern for the individual needs and listening to their struggles.

With dignity and devotion, some of our guests write such things as, "I want to come back next year as a volunteer to help those less fortunate than me." Some of our most cherished volunteers are guests of Christmases past. The mission offers many ways that an individual, a family, organizations and corporations meet the needs of more than 1,000 guests that attend each Christmas.

On our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we will be honoring some of our longtime volunteers that have dedicated their time, efforts, but, mostly their hearts, to serving others each year. Bethlehem on Broad Street volunteers for at least 20 years include: John Armstrong, Lancaster; Colleen and Brian Barta, Livingston United Methodist; Bill and Shirley Bellamy, Delaware Bible and Oak Creek Friends, Ridgewood; Ruth Brown of Christ Memorial Baptist; Paul Flocken; the Revs. Mary Anne and Herb Goetz, and their son, Matthew, all of First Congregational; Nancy and Tom Grilli of Groveport St. Mary Catholic Church; Donna and Vic Palmer of Cypress Wesleyan in Hilliard; Tim Price of Broad Street United Methodist; Pearle Rogers of Tabernacle Baptist; Lise Wadkins of Westerville Community UCC; and of course, Santa Claus!

## Reflections on Bethlehem on Broad Street

*This was David Holt's mission moment during December 11 worship:*

Today's offering is for Bethlehem on Broad Street. My part for many years has been to arrange the food and supply purchasing. One of things I love most about Bethlehem On Broad Street is that it is not only a gift for the guests who make the journey to the corner of Broad Street and Cleveland on Christmas Day; it is also a gift for the volunteers who work so joyfully to make our guests feel welcomed.

Three to four hundred volunteers will work here at First Church leading up to and on Christmas Day. It is a tremendous ecumenical and inter-faith effort. Volunteers and organizers come from various Protestant denominations, from mainline and evangelical, from suburb, exurb and city. Some are Catholic, some come from Judaism or Buddhism and some are unchurched.

Some volunteers are previous guests who return to pay forward the kindness. For some it is a cherished annual fellowship with their Bethlehem On Broad Street friends. For some it is a traditional get together for a group of friends or family. For some it is a respite from the commercialization and the consumption frenzy that often occurs with the secular celebrations.

For some it is an escape from loneliness if they are not able to share Christmas with family. For some it is a blessed opportunity to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome a stranger, for the least among us. For many it is simply their way of celebrating the birth of Christ. For First Church it is an opportunity to be not just a downtown church but also an inner-city church. Today, I invite each of you to participate in this mission through your offering.

## Music Notes

By James E. Bobb, Minister of Music  
(jboobb@first-church.org)

### December 2010

*Let every heart prepare him room, and  
heaven and nature sing.*

- Isaac Watts



Prepare your heart in worship this season. Our worship is full of ancient symbolism that unites us with Christians throughout the ages. The universal Christian anticipation of the incarnation is summarized by our regular use throughout Advent of the hymn *O come, O come, Emmanuel*. This hymn is derived from the Great O Antiphons. Originally to be sung at Vespers as the antiphons to the Magnificat (Mary's Song) from December 17 to Dec 23, the antiphons address the Messiah with various titles drawn from the Hebrew scriptures, and concluding with a plea for God's presence and action.

**December 17** – O Sapientia – O Wisdom, which hast come out of the mouth of most high, and mightily ordereth all things, come and teach us the way of wisdom.

**December 18** – O Adonai – O Holy Lord, deliverer of the house of Israel, who in Sinai did'st give the law to Moses, come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

**December 19** – O Radix Jesse – O Root of Jesse, standing as a banner for the people, whom the nations shall seek, come and deliver us, and tarry not.

**December 20** – O Clavis David – O Key of David, that openest and no one shutteth, and shuttest and no one openeth, come and bring the prisoner out of the prison house.

**December 21** – O Oriens – O Dayspring, brightness of light everlasting, and Sun of Righteousness, come and enlighten them that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

**December 22** – O Rex Gentium – O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone who maketh reconciliation, come and save humankind, whom thou hast formed of clay.

**December 23** – O Emmanuel – O God-with-us, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of the nations, come and save us, O Lord our God.

The Latin text of the O Antiphons imbeds an acrostic: read in reverse order from the last to the first antiphon, the second word of each begins with the letters ERO CRAS, Latin for "I shall be present tomorrow," the text not revealed until the singing of the final antiphon on December 23.

Try using these texts in your devotions, or perhaps compose your own prayers on these models, such as: *O God of time and eternity, you hold each of us in your care throughout our earthly lives, come and free us from our bondage to time and bring about your loving purpose for our lives and all on earth.*

Isaac Watts' vision of redemption is universal. "Fields and flood, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy." Yet it begins in the heart of each person. A new piece the First Church Choir is preparing for the season uses Watts' classic text, yet changes the line order. The striking result is an emphasis on Christ's advent in each life, as well as in the world:



Isaac Watts

Let every heart prepare him room and heaven and  
nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her  
King!

While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the  
sounding joy, the Savior reigns: joy to the world, let us  
our songs employ.

Sing Emmanuel. Sing God is with us. Gloria!  
(Adapted by composer Cary Ratcliff)

### Next Compline is January 16

Plan to join us for the evening service of Compline, offered the third Sunday of each month, except on Congregational Concert days, at 9 p.m. This 30-minute service of unaccompanied plainsong chant is illuminated by candlelight.

It is a beautiful, peaceful, prayerful way to end the Lord's Day. Compline at First Church will be January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17 and May 15.

## Famous 19<sup>th</sup> Century Editorial Resonates Today for Christians

By Jackie Dean, Interim Christian Education Director  
([jdean@first-church.org](mailto:jdean@first-church.org))

Yes, Virginia . . .



Francis Church

In 1897, 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Sun* (Francis P. Church) asking about the existence of Santa Claus. Church's reply was an immediate hit and went on to become one of the most famous editorials ever written. In fact, the editorial was reprinted every year until 1949 when the paper went out of business.

Church, the son of a Baptist minister, was often assigned controversial subjects, especially those dealing with theology. Virginia herself, who spent 47 years with the New York City school system as an educator, personally responded to inquiries to the letter until her death in 1971 at the age of 81.

As a young child, reading Virginia's letter and Church's reply became a part of my family's Christmas tradition. In retrospect, I believe that editorial was foundational in my faith development. Hebrew 11:1 defines faith as being "the essence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Isn't that what being a Christian and this season are all about?

The editorial eloquently addresses the issues of requiring a childlike faith, searching for truth and knowledge, the existence of love, generosity and devotion, and the sharing of gifts and imagination that "abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy." Without them, "the eternal light which with childhood fills the world would be extinguished."

Ah, Virginia, there is a Jesus and He is the reason for the season.

## Christian Ed Hour to Examine Immigration in January

Adult Education will look at the immigration issue the for four Sundays in January, beginning January 2. Ruben Castilla Herrera, the Ohio Director for the Campaign to Reform Immigration for America, will open the series with background information and our Christian response through connections to scripture.

The Campaign to Reform Immigration for America is a united national effort that brings together individuals and grassroots organizations with the mission to build support for workable comprehensive immigration reform.

## A Big Thanks to First Church Blood Donors

Many thanks to the following people who signed up to donate blood November 21. Our goal was to get 23 donations and we beat that by having 24!

Gerry Worth, Pauline Endo, Nancy Loy, Scott Becker, Marty Worth, Fran Panek, Dave Ghose, Carrie Ghose, Charlie Weaver, Leslie Fulford, Candace Cummings, Paul Fishel, Amy Wagner, Sue Cook, Susan Sittler, Bill Rhoads, Tom Bishop, Patricia Bishop, Reggie Cannon, Summer Petras, Mike Petras, Shannon Washington, Ben Rowley, Cori Rowley, Thomas Brownfied, Tom Worley and Pastor Tim.

I would also like to thank Nancy Loy, Summer Petras, Robyn Petras, Anne Hudson and Sarah Frank for help in recruiting donors, getting donors signed in and making cookies and sandwiches. The next blood drive will be announced soon! - **Beth Buchholtz**

**Keep watch in 2011 -  
Joyful gatherings are coming your  
way!**

*Tables for Eight*



## Stewardship Campaign Doing Well But Still Needs Your Help

By Jan Provenzano and John Matchett, co-chairs

Many thanks to everyone who attended the kick-off dinner for our annual stewardship campaign on November 14. Over 200 members and friends were on hand to see the church budget presented in pictures and song, and to embrace the on-going needs of the church for 2011.



To date, more than \$400,000 has been pledged toward the needs of our congregation for next year! This is a great response, but we need everyone's participation to put us over the top. Our church property is insured for \$18 million. To meet the needs of our programs and to take care of our

building, it takes a lot of money. Most of this money comes from our members, so we need your help.

If you have not turned in your commitment card yet, we ask that you pray about your current gift to First Church and to turn in your card by December 25. There are three ways to make your pledge: You can put your card in the offering plate on Sunday; call Sharon Leidheiser at 614-228-1741, ext.11; or you can go on-line to our Web site ([www.first-church.org/stewardship](http://www.first-church.org/stewardship)).

If you have already turned in your card, we say, "Thank You." If not, please accept this note as a friendly reminder!

## Different Ways to Pay Your Pledge

By Sharon Leidheiser, Business Administrator  
([sleidheiser@first-church.org](mailto:sleidheiser@first-church.org))

There are several ways to meet your pledge intent for 2010 to First Church. In addition to checks, money orders, cashier's checks and cash (do not send cash through the mail), consider the following alternative methods of payment:



**Online Bill-Pay:** Online banking is growing in popularity among members as a way to make their pledge payments. Set up First Congregational Church in your bill-pay payee list so that either recurring or one-time payments are withdrawn from your account and automatically sent to the church in the amount you choose on the day you request. Please indicate in the memo field: Pledge (or other purpose) and your name

so we can credit the appropriate account. Contact your bank for more details.

**Direct Deposit through Payroll Deduction:** Many employers will allow you to make a regular payroll deduction from your paycheck. Members find this way of paying their pledge easy because the contribution is made automatically every pay period. Contact your payroll specialist to see if this option is available and have your employer contact Sharon Leidheiser at the church.

**Stock, Bond, Mutual Fund, CD Transfers:** We accept transfers from your investment accounts as payment towards a pledge or other purpose. If you have stocks, bonds or CDs and you want to avoid possible capital gains taxes, you can transfer the security to the church's account at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney Citigroup.

Please be aware that transfers may not happen immediately and market value changes may occur between the time you make your transfer request and when the church receives and sells the investment security. If you are selling a security for a loss, it may be to your tax advantage to sell it outright and donate the proceeds, rather than transfer it directly.

**In conclusion:** For all forms of contributions, be sure to inform Sharon of your payment method and how you want it apply your donation (pledge, capital campaign or Our Future's Broadening Way, Trustee endowment fund, Good Samaritan Fund and many more). You also can designate a contribution in 2010 to prepay part or all of your 2011 pledge.

The church depends on and appreciates your pledge commitment. Please consider these alternative payment methods as you complete your 2010 intent/pledge and make your intent/pledge for 2011. Please contact Sharon or David Holt if you have questions.



## BREAD Chooses Crime and Violence for 2011 'Research to Action'

By Priss Endo

Delegates to the BREAD Annual Assembly on November 15 chose crime and violence as the problem for "research to action" in 2011.

The 40 congregations represented at the assembly cast their votes after hearing testimony on crime and violence, jobs and youth and education. Other business addressed at the assembly was a report by Ed Leonard, county treasurer, on his work to implement a county land bank corporation to deal with the home foreclosure crisis in Franklin County.



The research kick-off for the problem of crime and violence began December 6. Extensive investigation over the next four months by the research team will lead to the development of an issue to address crime and violence, which will be presented to the public at the Nehemiah Action Assembly on May 2.

## Home Visits With Rev. Ahrens

Throughout the years, Rev. Ahrens and the associate ministers of First Church have made home visits with members of the church.

As the church has grown and as staff positions supporting Rev. Ahrens' calling and caring ministry have been cut back, it is become much more challenging to set up the visits.

He would like to know if you or your loved ones would like visits to your home, nursing home or care facilities. Please call 228-1741, ext. 13, for Rev. Ahrens or email: tahrens@first-church.org to set-up visits in the near future. If you would like to have coffee, meal time or other times with him, call or email as well. Thank you.

## Synagogue Preaching, Mosque Visit Set for Interfaith Week In January

January 23-30 is Ecumenical Week in the church year. This January, we are expanding this to "interfaith week." Mark your calendars and sign up in the office for an experience of worship with Jews and Muslims.

Rev. Tim Ahrens will preach at Temple Beth Shalom in New Albany on Friday, January 28, at 8 p.m. On Saturday, January 29, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., he will lead a group of Christians and interested friends to Noor Cultural Islamic Center in Dublin.

If you would like to be part of either or both, please sign up in the office or call- 614-228-1741, ext. 13.

### A Note of Thanks

Dear Friends at First Church,  
Thank you so much for you love, care, emails, food, cards and prayers during my cancer treatments. My partner, Tim, and I feel so blessed by your love. We want to wish you a joyous Christmas and a wonderful and exciting New Year. I will be back to worship and work in the coming months. Looking forward to a new year with you!

Blessings,  
Mark Williams and Tim Carsey

## Missions Offering Schedule



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

- January 2** - Faith Mission
- January 9** - Church World Service Safe Water Project
- January 16** - Martin Luther King Memorial
- January 23** - Gladden Community House
- January 30** - Good Samaritan Program

**Don't Forget! First Church Annual Meeting, January 30, 2011  
11 a.m. in the Sanctuary  
One Service Only That Day at 10 a.m.**

## Ellen DeGeneres Invited to Speak at 2011 General Synod

By Jeff Woodard  
United Church News

In a unique bid to showcase the carefree, creative component of the UCC, the church has officially invited popular talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres to appear as keynote speaker at General Synod 28 in Tampa, Fla., July 1-5, 2011.

Writing on behalf of the Synod program and planning committee, the Rev. Geoffrey Black, UCC general minister and president, rolled out the UCC welcome mat for DeGeneres to help Synod-goers live the theme of General Synod 28: "Imagine What's Possible; God Is Still Speaking."



"Your life, values and humor represent the best of what our church hopes to embody through our witness in the world: joy, love, hope and service," Black wrote DeGeneres. "At a time when religion is often used to divide and exclude people, we seriously believe your participation at our biennial event could send a powerful message to the world.

"Imagine what's possible if we could set aside our need to be right and focused instead on bringing hope and healing to one another, if we could lighten up — and love instead," wrote Black. "We feel you are the one to deliver this message."

Black noted the UCC's reputation as "the church of firsts" — first to ordain an African-American (1773), a woman (1853) and an openly gay person (1972).

High-profile personalities are no strangers to General Synod. In recent years, Barack Obama, Bill Moyers, Eugene Robinson, Marian Wright Edelman, Andrew Young and Lynn Redgrave have appeared.

Acknowledging the vast number of speaking engagements requested of DeGeneres, Edith Guffey, associate general minister for the Office of General Ministries, said that persuading her will take some effort.

"While we're not asking Ellen to bring her show to Synod, we do think she will need some heavy convincing as to why a major Christian denomination would want

her to be their keynote speaker," Guffey said. "Ellen receives hundreds of invitations annually; we want our invitation to stand out."

It's not uncommon for DeGeneres' fans to launch campaigns to bring her show to their area. Most recently, fans in Australia have been doing so.

"We are asking UCC members and churches to unleash their inner Ellen by creating funny, inviting photos and videos and submitting them so we can upload to YouTube and send them along to her," said the Rev. J. Bennett Guess, the UCC's team leader for Publishing, Identity and Communication.

"We're a church that resonates with Ellen's personality, even as we advocate for justice," he said. "Ellen's address before a major religious body could send a powerful message to the world, a message of hope, inclusivity and acceptance — and the need for more love and laughter."

Learn more about the "Get Ellen to Synod" campaign at [www.ucc.org/get-ellen-to-synod](http://www.ucc.org/get-ellen-to-synod).

## Youth @ General Synod Slated

Youth @ General Synod, which will parallel the United Church of Christ's General Synod in Tampa, Fla., is scheduled for June 29 to July 5.

It is open to young people going into grades 9-12, plus 2011 high school graduates. The program offers service projects, concerts, workshops, games and an immersion in issues facing the church. To learn more, go to [www.ucc.org/youth](http://www.ucc.org/youth).

## Elaine Fennell to be Ordained Jan. 22

Elaine Fennell, former First Church member, will be ordained and installed at 3 p.m. on Saturday, January 22, 2011, at Grace United Church of Christ, 1226 Shady Lane Rd., Columbus.

Elaine has been called by Grace as an associate pastor to work with children and youth in the community and with issues relating to mental health.



## Tom Robertson to Direct Conference Outdoor Ministries

By the Rev. Bob Molsberry, Ohio Conference Minister



After a lengthy search, Tom Robertson has been selected as the new executive director for Outdoor Ministries of the Ohio Conference.

Tom was Development Minister for Camping and Spiritual Formation for the United Methodist Church in Iowa. In that capacity, he oversaw three Methodist camping sites. He will work out of the Columbus office.

Tom has 16 years of experience in leading Christian camping and retreat centers in Connecticut, Indiana, Alabama, North Carolina, Louisiana and New Mexico.

## End-of-Year Reports Due January 1

Members of the First Church committees and commissions are reminded that their reports for the 2010 annual report are coming due. Reports may be sent in beginning December 15, and the final deadline is January 1.

Please send your report to Denny Mahoney at [dmahoney@first-church.org](mailto:dmahoney@first-church.org) by that date. The annual report must be prepared and printed for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting January 30.



### Current Pledge Income

Annual Budget - \$587,779  
 November Actual - \$35,271  
 YTD Actual - \$478,542  
 YTD Budget - \$538,797  
 Below Budget - \$60,255

### November Mission Offerings

Darfur - \$564.75  
 Good Samaritan - \$4,512.83  
 Bethlehem on Broad Street - \$2,313.35 (two Sundays)  
 B. R. E. A. D. - \$25  
 CROP - \$65  
 Deep Griha - \$100  
 Gladden Community House - \$10  
 Our Church's Wider Mission - \$25  
 Total - \$7,615.

## Member Happy January Birthdays

1: Priscilla Mondiek	16: Dee Sturgill
2: Amos White	16: Lisa Warrick
2: Gerry Worth	19: Jordan Cole
3: Rick Welch	20: John Deliman
4: Sarah Giffen	20: Mike Henderson
4: Jorge Polo	21: Rebecca Sterret
4: Mark Williams	22: Hope Hacker
4: Jordan Knerr	24: Joyce Ward
4: James Knerr II	24: Sarah Lange
5: James Woodard	24: Kevin Butler
5: Tom Hadley II	25: Aryn Mason
6: Taimur Chaudhri	26: Gunter Garbe
7: Harry Guynn	26: Julie Stewart
7: Gary Gray	27: Janet Younger
8: Brad Keely	28: Ben Lightbourne
8: Michael Bishop	28: Teresa Polo
9: Carl Gelfius	28: Katie Kutschbach
9: Amy Nosse	29: Jane Ward
11: Ray Pendell	29: Catrina Drotleff
11: Jon Wilson	29: Tom Brownfield
12: Linda Mumford	29: Martha Fullemann
12: Patrick Keller	29: Sarah Mitchell
13: Jim Fewlass	29: Wayne Henry
13: Abby Cave	29: Amy Fulton
13: Kendra Worley	31: Laura Collins
14: Katie Waller	
15: Thom Smith	
16: Pam Kallner	

## Member Happy January Anniversaries

3: Sondra and Wally Kesler
4: Kristi Thompson and Stanley Myers
5: Malini Gnanatheeban and Pavan Peter
6: Deena and David Bowers
9: Barbara and David Knox
16: Carol and James Woodard
25: Marilyn and George Minter

If we miss your birthday or anniversary, contact Denny Mahoney at 228-1741, ext. 17, or [dmahoney@first-church.org](mailto:dmahoney@first-church.org)



### Fair Trade Gift Baskets on Sale Now

Sandra Geronimo has created gift baskets containing Fair Trade coffee, tea or cocoa. The baskets are lovely gifts for hosts, teachers and friends. They may be purchased in Parish Hall after the services.

**Don't Forget!**  
**Office closes at 12:30 p.m.**  
**December 24**

# Church Calendar

## Sunday, December 19

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room  
9 am - Early Worship Service - PH  
10 am – Choir – Choir Room  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am - Worship Service – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH  
4 pm – Congregational Concert – San

## Tuesday, December 21

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
7 pm – Church Council – LC

## Wednesday, December 22

7 pm – Adult Education – LC

## Thursday, December 23

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 p.m. – Choir – Choir Room

## Friday, December 24 (Office Closes at 12:30 pm)

6 pm – Pageant Make-Up Call – Bell Room  
7:30 pm – Pageant – Sanctuary  
10 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room  
11 pm – Candlelight Service – Sanctuary

## Saturday, December 25

7:30 am – Bethlehem on Broad Street

## Sunday, December 26

9 am – Early Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship Service – San  
12 pm - Fellowship Hour – PH

## Monday, Dec. 27

*Building and Office Closed*

## Thursday, Dec. 30

*Building Closed, Office Open, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.*

## Friday, December 31

*Office Closes at 12:30 p.m.*

## Saturday, January 1

*Office and Building Closed*

## Sunday, January 2

9 am – Early Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship Service – San  
12 pm - Fellowship Hour – Parlor

## Monday, January 3

*Office and Building Closed*

## Tuesday, January 4

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
6:30 pm – Children's Ed. Committee – Ed Wing Rm. D  
7 pm – Deacons – LC  
7 pm – Mission Committee – PFR  
7:30 pm – Youth Ministry Team – Ed Wing Rm. C

## Wednesday, January 5

11 am – Book Study – Parlor

## Thursday, January 6

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – Choir – Choir Room

## Saturday, January 8

10 am – First Church Quilters – LC

## Sunday, January 9

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH  
6 pm – Youth Groups – PH

## Monday, January 10

7 pm – Trustees – LC

## Tuesday, January 11

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
6 pm – Music Committee – PR  
7 pm – Executive Committee – PFR

## Thursday, January 13

2 pm – Art Committee – Parlor  
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 p.m. – Choir – Choir Room

## Saturday, January 15

9 am – House and Grounds Committee - PFR

## Sunday, January 16

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am – Worship – Sanctuary  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH  
9 pm – Compline – Sanctuary

## Monday, January 17

*Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – Office/Building Closed*

## Tuesday, January 18

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
7 pm – Church Council – LC

## Wednesday, January 19

11 am – Book Study – Parlor

## Thursday, January 20

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 p.m. – Choir – Choir Room

## Sunday, January 23

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH



"We're off to the Christmas Eve candlelight service."

# Prayers

## January Fellowship Hour

January 2: Romans  
 January 9: Ruth  
 January 16: Samuel  
 January 23: Zechariah  
 January 30: Acts

## January Acolyte Schedule

January 2: Adam Wade and Emily Cooke  
 January 9: Ella Koscher and Jack Koscher  
 January 16: Will Zimmerman and Ben Allen  
 January 23: Victoria Washington and Annie-Rose Cooke  
 January 30: Sarah Ahrens and Jansen Allred  
 (Schedules online at [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org))

## Next Newsletter Deadline

**Articles Due:** Monday, January 10, by noon

**Prayer Request:** Please let us know of a prayer concern for yourself, a family member or other church member by calling the Rev. Timothy Ahrens at 614.228.1741, ext. 13, by using prayer request cards found in each pew or by emailing [tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@first-church.org).

*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.*

### Baptisms

Alaina Margaret and Caroline Frances Thompson – November 28

### Marriages

Ashlee Carver and Matt Girard – December 4  
 Dana Schell and Joseph Houseberg – December 11

### Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on January 2 and 16 during Fellowship Hour. This is a UCC coffee project initiative and your participation is greatly appreciated.

~ Remember Your Loved Ones ~  
 With a Dedication of Flowers

Contact Marty Worth at 614.228.1741, ext. 12,  
[mworth@first-church.org](mailto:mworth@first-church.org)

### Church Staff

Timothy C. Ahrens.....Senior Minister  
 Janine Wilson.....Associate Minister  
 James E. Bobb.....Minister of Music  
 Mark S. Williams.....Director of Christian Education  
 Jackie Dean.....Interim Director of Chr. Ed.  
 G. Dene Barnard.....Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus  
 Sharon Leidheiser.....Business Administrator  
 Martha Worth.....Program Manager  
 Bill Beckett.....Building Manager  
 Denny Mahoney.....Office Manager  
 Kelvin Murphy.....Custodian  
 Frank Wall, William Lee.....Custodians  
 Nikki Boop, Rosemary Pawandiwa.....Nursery  
 DeAndree Norris.....Nursery  
 Linda Mumford.....Wedding Coordinator  
 Jane Chavers.....Wedding Coordinator  
 Fran Panek.....Wedding Coordinator

### Church Council

Melody Leidheiser.....Moderator  
 Sarah Reed.....Vice-Moderator  
 Trish Bishop, Judy Smith.....Secretary/Assistant  
 David Holt, Jim Fewlass.....Treasurer/Assistant  
 Frank Cook, Sandy Bennett.....Administration/Assistant  
 Wayne Piper.....Church Growth  
 Diane Cole, Priss Endo.....Education/Assistant  
 Wally Giffen, Vince Papsidero..House & Grounds/Assistant  
 Anne Hudson, Patrick Keller.....Mission/Assistant  
 Julia Myers.....Parish Life  
 Gerry Worth.....Senior Deacon  
 Kevin Butler.....Deacon  
 Jane Chavers, John Deliman.....Music, Arts, Heritage/Ast.  
 Nancy Loy.....Nominating Chair  
 Jordan Knerr.....Member-at-large  
 Tom Brownfield.....Member-at-large

**The First Congregational Church**  
United Church of Christ  
444 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3885

DATED MATERIAL - VERY IMPORTANT  
Please Deliver By: *Monday, December 20, 2010*

TO:

[Empty dashed box for recipient information]



**The First Congregational Church, UCC**

444 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Phone: 614.228.1741 FAX: 614.461.1741  
Email: [home@first-church.org](mailto:home@first-church.org) Web site: [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org)  
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed Major Holidays

**“An Open & Affirming Faith Community”**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS**

Worship at 9 a.m. ~ Parish Hall  
Worship at 11 a.m. ~ Sanctuary