

First Church News

First Congregational Church, UCC
Columbus, Ohio

"Enter to Worship - Depart to Serve"

September
2011
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Gearing Up for a Special New Season in September

By The Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister
(tahrens@first-church.org)



The staff and lay leadership of First Church have been hard at work "gearing up" for a new fall season. From worship and preaching, to Christian education, to music ministry, to stewardship, to long range planning, to building preparation, to justice and mercy missions, to joyful times of togetherness, we have been

preparing for a great fall season!

Inside this issue you can read about the excitement that has been building. I will deliver a Labor Day Sunday sermon on September 4, "To Love and to Work," which will look at the place of love and labor in our lives. Then, the fun begins! On September 7 at 11 a.m., I open up our (not so new) book *I and Thou*, written by Martin Buber in 1923.

With the theme "Gearing Up!" we will come together on Celebration

Sunday to kick off the new fall season September 11! We will celebrate our life together in worship at 9 a.m., an exciting new education program for all ages rolled out at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m., in which we welcome the choir back for the fall after their glorious experience at the National Cathedral. On September 12, our virtual Bible study begins.

On September 18, the joyful celebration continues in worship and education and we head to Sunset Shores in Vermilion, Ohio, to dedicate the worship space our youth in mission built this past July. You are all invited to join us on the road trip north about two hours. The dedication will take place at 4:30 p.m. We will all go out for pizza and ice cream in downtown Vermilion before heading home.

See related stories below and inside this edition.

On September 25, we welcome the Rev. Dr. Kate Huey as our guest preacher on the 159th anniversary of First Church and our special congregational meeting to vote on the long range goals of our church for the next three years. All year, the committee has been listening to your joys and concerns, and your heartfelt dreams and visions for our beloved congregation.

(See **GEARING UP**, Page 2)

'God's Wonderful Gifts' - Stewardship 2012 Under Way

By Brian Cave, Stewardship Committee Co-Chair

The Stewardship Committee has been hard at work the last few months. We are energized and we are excited about the upcoming events we have planned. This



year, we have 12 members on the committee, which is the biggest stewardship committee we have ever had at First Church.

The committee is led by Kent Rambo and myself. Kent Shimeall is our year long/Earth care steward. Mary Day Fewlass is our "master of tasks." Jim Griffen is our "steward of hospitality." Cori Rowley is our "publicity and brochure steward." Dr. Paul Leidheiser, Jr., is our "great giving steward." Matt Meyers leads as our "fun and speaker bureau steward." John Matchett is our "follow-up calls steward." In addition, Neal Brower, our Administration Commissioner-Elect, brings tons of experience in development and will focus on this committee in 2011. Cindy Conn, our Assistant Treasurer, will help us log in and track the giving in the fall. Sandy Bennett is our 2011 Administration Commissioner. (See **STEWARDSHIP**, Page 3)

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There's Nothing Trivial About Our Connection to the UCC

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

Here's some UCC trivia that is far from trivial. Are they true or false?

1. More than 600 of the 5,700 UCC congregations were formed before 1776.
2. The UCC was the first to ordain an African-American, a woman and an openly gay pastor.
3. The first mainline denomination to form a foreign mission society was UCC.
4. Eleven signers of the Declaration of Independence were members of UCC predecessor bodies.
5. The UCC supports liberty in our pulpits.
6. The 1.2 million members of the UCC are encouraged to affirm their own conscience and agree, disagree and wrestle with life's biggest questions – *all in a spirit of love*.



Pretty cool, isn't it! The information above is from the UCC.org Web site. (See answers at the end of the article) Even this short list helps us begin to catch a glimpse of the tip of the sunrise of what it means for our always creative God to still be speaking. How terrific that you and I get to be part of this dynamic denomination!

The questions above are also a snippet of the kinds of things we share in new member's classes. (And by the way, even if you are currently a member and would like a refresher on some UCC theology and history, or have a refresher on just how pivotal the uniqueness and giftedness of all believers – you are always welcome to come to any new members class and join in the fun of learning about one another, as well as some history and theology of yesterday, today and tomorrow.)

Learning and reminding one another that we affirm a personal encounter with the Gospel, have an emphasis on mission, have centrality as local congregations and are committed to Jesus Christ, all helps us to celebrate that as part of the UCC. We also stand for just peace, are multi-cultural-multi-racial, open and affirming, seek to be accessible-to-all, that we have no creeds and celebrate two sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion).

We are grounded in the Christ and affirm our desire to follow the Gospel, all the while reminding one another of

the vision of our motto: "That they may all be one." (John 17:21) and "In essentials – unity, in nonessentials – diversity, in all things – charity,"

How good it is to be busy participating in the reign of God now and coming as First Congregational Church! And, an invitation to be part of our intentional growing -- Church Growth Commission is looking for three new participants. Meetings are fun, goals concise and laughter is part of every meeting. For more information, please contact Melissa Prendergast, or give me a call at 614. 228.1741, ext 21.

With joy,
Pastor Janine

1. True.
2. True - 1785; 1853; 1972.
3. True.
4. True.
5. True.
6. True.

Upcoming Sermon Titles



September 4 – Communion Sunday - "To Work and to Love" - Matthew 20:1-16

September 11 – "Gearing Up!" - Genesis 50:15-21; Matthew 18:21-35

September 18 - "To Progress in Joy and Faith" – Philippians 1:21-30, Matthew 18:15-20

September 25 – 159th Church Anniversary – Special Service at 10 a.m.; Guest Preacher is Rev. Kate Huey.

October 2 - World Communion Sunday - Communion Meditation by Dr. Neela Onawale co-founder and executive director of Deep Griha.

(GEARING UP, Concluded from Page 1)

Now, we place before you the goals, strategies, and possible action steps to take in our forward movement. More important than voting, come and find yourself in the plan of our life together for the next three years. On that day, Education Hour will be at 9 a.m., worship at 10 a.m. and the congregational meeting at 11. We will join to celebrate immediately following worship in Parish Hall.

We have daily and weekly plans being laid, as well as Sundays at First Church. So come and join the joyful, celebrative, exciting life together we know as First Church.

I love working with the staff and lay leadership of First Church! This fall, my 12th fall season with everyone, will be our best ever. I will see you in church!



First Church hosted a free produce giveaway for low-income people August 27. The produce was provided by the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. The event was successful and it is hoped another can be held in the fall.

9/11 Commemorations Planned At Synagogue, Statehouse

First Church is among the sponsors of the Interfaith Action Movement of Youth (I AM Youth) conference and music fest on Sunday, September 11, from 6-8 p.m. at Congregation Tifereth Israel, 1354 E. Broad St., in Columbus, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

“Better Together: Path to Peace and Justice: Faith, Service and Unity” is a multi-generational conference intended to revive community spirit by remembering the sacrifices of many people on that day.

During the event, community leaders who have strived to provide interfaith leadership and promote social justice will be recognized. The Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, First Church senior minister, will be among those recognized.

For more information on the 9/11 event, email info@iamyouth.net.

Also on that day, a 9/11 prayer service will be held at the Statehouse Atrium from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The event is sponsored by a number of central Ohio interfaith organizations.

The event is designed to: pray for all affected by the tragedy; honor the creative human responses; promote peace and interfaith harmony; and foster unity among people of Ohio.

For more information, email the Interfaith Association of Central Ohio at iaco@iaco.org.

(STEWARDSHIP, Concluded from Page 1)

Personally, I am excited to be a part of this team because I am looking to grow in my faith as a steward of God. I am constantly inspired by the other committee members. This has been an exciting journey to be a part of. We are starting the 2012 stewardship effort in God. His magnificence and wonder, the gifts we receive from God, ultimately lead the committee to theme “God’s Wondrous Gifts.”

This year, we are trying new ways to grow our faith as stewards. We thought about this in scriptures. In the next few weeks, you be receiving mailings and weekly postcards with scriptures about God and our relationship to God. We will be growing as stewards in this effort. We encourage you to collect these postcards each week and reflect on them.

Also mark your calendars as Rev. Tim Ahrens will be hosting a weekly virtual Bible study on Monday nights from 7-7:30 p.m. to discuss and analyze the weekly scripture. The online virtual Bible study will start September 12 and run until the end of October. We look forward to going on this exciting journey with you each week.

Our stewardship season launched August 28 and ends October 30. Be on the lookout for emails and mailings with additional details on how to get involved. Don’t forget to check out the church’s Facebook page because this will be a forum for stewardship information and discussions. You also will be able to meet members of the committee at each Fellowship Hour starting September 11 to find out more about stewardship.

As we begin, I have a question for each of us to consider: “What do I personally do with the ‘Wondrous Gifts’ that God has given me?”

Virtual Bible Study Begins September 12

Each Monday night, beginning September 12, we will be “virtually” studying the Bible. I will be online to guide the study. You can be at home or anywhere else to join me. The Stewardship Committee has come up with this exciting new concept and while I can’t explain now how it will work, I am excited by the possibilities. Each week you will receive postcards in the mail with the texts of scripture we are studying. I will share some insights and you will have the opportunity to respond and interact. This is new to me. So, I am hoping and praying it will go well. Stay tuned. We are virtually ready to go.

– Rev. Tim

Preparation – Gearing Up

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



The life of a concert artist is very different from that of a church musician. For example, concert pianists are expected to perform entirely from memory, which means they have both the luxury and the pressure to know their selected repertoire in great detail. It may mean spending many hours a day for weeks or months getting to know every nuance and every imaginable interpretation in order to be prepared to confidently impart a transformative musical experience to the listener.

The preparation process can be profound, albeit sometimes lonely. The church choir, on the other hand, is routinely cycling through different repertoire on weekly basis with only a small amount of time on each piece. It is a very dynamic and social entity, though rarely does it have the rich experience of digging deep into the music the way a concert artist must.

This summer, 38 members the First Church Choir dedicated themselves to preparing for a day at the National Episcopal Cathedral in Washington D.C. Most singers managed at least six extra rehearsals in the summer months leading up to the two Eucharist and one Evensong services on August 14. The day exceeded our expectations, musically and spiritually.

Although many would say that the afternoon Evensong service was the high point in our weekend, I encourage you to go to the home page of the First Church Web site (www.first-church.org), click on “First Church Choir Sings at the National Cathedral” to view the Sunday morning Eucharist. The cathedral Web site also gives information about the damage of the recent earthquake and how to contribute to the cathedral restoration.

But the key to our experience was the preparation. Behind the scenes, Marty Worth managed the tour for months before the chaos of questions could even be articulated. I had to plan and submit the repertoire list to the cathedral staff in February, well before I knew for sure what the balance of singers would be. Of course, the choir members had to arrange their work schedules and rehearsal schedules, etc.

By the time we got to D.C., our advance preparation gave us the confidence and clarity of mind to enjoy the beauty of the day. Our unusually thorough knowledge of the music gave the flexibility to adjust to and enjoy the new acoustical and aesthetic surroundings. Personally, I was filled with awe, humility and gratitude for the

opportunity, and I admit, I was also filled with pride in the people before whom I am privileged to stand each week. Soli Deo gloria, to God alone be glory, for the many blessing of our life together. Thank you for keeping us in prayer.

Now, remembering the lesson of preparation, we look forward to gearing up for a new year of ministry. Below you will find start dates for the various musical ensembles. But let’s give a moment of preparation to worship on Celebration Sunday.

In the days of the great hymn writers such as Isaac Watts, the Wesleys, Phillip Nicolai, etc. the poetry of hymns was published and widely disseminated as devotional material. Christians knew those texts in the context of private devotion and prayer as well as in the context of Sunday worship services. In that spirit, I share the text of the Hymn of the Day for Celebration Sunday. It will be a partner with the Prayers of the People, each successive stanza sung in response to a portion of the prayers.

If you have a chance to use this in your personal devotion now, how much deeper will be your experience of worship when we are all assembled together on September 11! Now, not all hymn texts achieve the quality of great poetry, but its purpose is to unite our expressions of praise and prayer in music. This hymn of Marty Haugen’s does that:

O God of blessings, all praise to you!
Your love surrounds us our whole life through.
You are the freedom of those oppressed;
you are the comfort of all distressed.

Come now, O holy and welcome guest:
Soli Deo gloria! (To God alone be glory!)

All praise for wisdom, great gift sublime,
through words and teachers of every time;
for stories ancient and knowledge new,
for coaches, mentors, and counselors true
whose life of service brought us to you:
Soli Deo gloria!

All praise for prophets, through grace inspired
to preach and witness with hearts on fire.
Your Spirit chooses the weak and small
to sing the new reign where mighty fall;
with them may we live your gospel call:
Soli Deo gloria! . . .

(See PREPARATION, Page 5)

**New Publications Available
in Alma Keeler Children’s Library**

By Elaine Warren

Check out (literally) some new purchases for the Alma Keeler Children’s Library on the parent resources shelf. We have added multiple copies of the UCC publication *What Matters for Children and Families: Engaging Six Vital Themes of Our Faith* (edited by Frank Proctor), which helps families instill in their children from an early age our core values:



- We are people of God’s extravagant welcome.
- We belong to Christ.
- We are one at the baptism and the table.
- We are people of covenant.
- We thank God by working for a just and loving world.
- We listen for a still-speaking God.

There is a chapter in *What Matters* devoted to each of these core values that includes a Bible passage for both younger and older children, questions for reflection/discussion and family activities, followed by a suggested prayer to conclude the time together. Also, each theme is illustrated by a literary selection suggested for both younger and older children to be used, perhaps, during family story time that will encourage discussion of important values. These titles have been added to the library as well, and address a variety of social issues through the lens of our core values.

Here is part of the text of one of the suggested picture books that illustrates our peace and justice values:

What if Zebras lost their stripes,
And some lost black and some lost white?

Would they think that it’s all right,
Or would the Zebras start to fight?

Would there be separate Zebra “types”
If the Zebras lost their stripes?

Would different colors be the end
of living life as loving friends?

Would Zebra see themselves as Zebras?
Or would their colors make them start

To only see black or white
And not what lives within their hearts?

All of the suggested books, including this one – *What if Zebras Lost Their Stripes?* – can be checked out of the library.

(PREPARATION, Continued from Page 4)

A billion voices in one great song,
now soft and gentle, now deep and strong,
in every culture and style and key,
from hill and valley, with sky and sea,
with Christ we praise you eternally:
Soli Deo gloria!

Congregational Concerts

Sunday, September 25, 4 p.m.

Stephen Secan, principal oboist of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra leads a star-studded roster of musicians in this concert of chamber music for winds and organ. The program includes Secan’s own transcription for oboe and organ (two players) of Jean Françaix’s concerto for solo oboe and orchestra *L’horloge de flore (The Flower Clock)*, and chamber music for winds and harpsichord. Other featured performers are organist G. Dene Barnard, flutist Randall Hestor and bassoonist Christopher Weait.

Sunday, October 23, 4 p.m.

Choral Evensong with the First Church Choir.

Sunday, November 21, 4 p.m.

Ohio Capital Winds, Catherine Hope Cunningham, director.

Sunday, December 18, 4 p.m.

Live broadcast of Lessons and Carols. Prelude begins at 3:30.

Compline

Plan to join us for the evening service of Compline, offered the third Sunday of each month (unless there is a Congregational Concert) 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 and provide a reflective oasis before the week begins anew. Compline this fall at First Church will be September 18 and October 16.

Education Hour Kicks Off Sept. 11

By Mark S. Williams, Christian Education Director
(mwilliams@first-church.org)

The Education Hour on Sunday mornings begins on September 11. As an adult, maybe you've wondered what Sunday school means for you. Maybe you've heard people talking about Christian Formation, and are wondering what that means. Maybe you're wondering where Christian Education has gone. We have the answer for you, and it includes two classes on Sunday morning (usually at 10 a.m.). These two tracks offer you two different ways of growing and shaping your life and faith in ways that draw you closer to God and into community with others.



The first track offers you both information and a chance to share your concerns and perhaps work out some answers to perplexing issues of faith, life and culture.



The **Faith and Life Class** meets each week to discuss the tough issues confronting us as we grow in grace. Whether you're a parent wondering how to protect your kids from the challenges of an online life, an adult trying to cope with the issues of

financial insecurity, someone trying to plan for end of life and health care issues (for yourself or your loved ones), or a concerned citizen puzzling out your response to the front page news, then this class offers something for you. It is designed with two or three weeks on a single topic, but you can come anytime.

The classes are led by members and friends of the congregation who have some expertise in the area. They will invite you to explore the issue and relate it to your personal faith. In addition they'll give you some tools and guidelines to help you grow in your faith and life.

Our second track, the **Opening the Word Class**, does exactly that. One of the pastors will help you discover or rediscover what the Bible says, and invite you on a journey to grow and shape your faith and life in ways that take that book seriously as God's rich and changing Word to you.

This fall, Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson will open the Bible with you, exploring the topic "*Spiritual, But Not Religious?*" It will take a look at what these terms mean and why so many people are claiming that they are spiritual but not religious. The Book of Genesis has some of the most familiar and beloved stories from the Bible (Adam and Eve, Noah and the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah and

and thus "*Genesis From Scratch*" is the perfect book to begin Bible study. Faith and life are formed in response to God's still speaking message, and this class invites you to listen and answer. We hope you'll join us Sundays as we form our faith and life together.

Church School for Children and Youth

The Education Hour for young people also begins on September 11. The children and youth will use the curriculum "Seasons of the Spirit," which is a wonderful resource for our teachers and leaders.

The first three Sundays will focus on the season of creation. In the season of creation, we will immerse ourselves in the reality of forest, land, wilderness/outback and river. We will explore what it means to be in kinship with all of creation – Earth's community.

As we continue in the season after Pentecost, we find ourselves accompanying the Hebrew people in their immersion in wilderness. Like their 40-year journey, the season after Pentecost is a long, faith-forming time that shapes the character of those who are in it, and reminds God's people of what matters to God.

The season will end in the gospel of Matthew and the encouragement of Jesus to live in such a way as to reflect God's reign. With each lesson are wonderful opportunities of crafts, drama, music and art that connect to the scripture of the day. Also, each quarter the children and youth will be focusing on a mission project to help those in need. Church school is a great time for all our children and youth to participate together and learn.

We hope to see everyone there on September 11!

Fourth Grade/New Youth Bible Presentation

Every year our church presents a New Revised Standard Version Gift Bible to children in the fourth grade, or those who are older but have joined in the past year. It is our way of continuing to encourage our children in their faith journey.

This year the presentation will be **Sunday, September 25**, during the 9 and 11 a.m. services.

Dr. Neela Onawale to be Featured Guest on October 2

By Valerie Stichter

If you have never met Dr. Neela Onawale, don't miss this unique opportunity to hear from and meet this exceptional woman and visionary on Sunday, October 2. She will speak at both worship services, meet with the children during the Education Hour and be our guest at a special reception/coffee hour after the 11 a.m. service.

Dr. Onawale is director and co-founder, along with her late husband the Rev. Bhaskar Onawale, of the Deep Griha (Lighthouse) Society projects in Pune, India, which our church has supported since 1975. Starting that year in one



Neela Onawale

room in their home, Dr. Onawale opened a free clinic to serve the poor in the city of more than 5 million people. It wasn't long before the Onawales went on to start seemingly endless projects in three large slum areas of the city.

There are a host of health-care programs, including pre-natal care and maternal education, dental care and all the usual family health needs as well as HIV/AIDS. Services are offered free or for whatever amount a family is able to pay. In addition to health care, there are education and job training classes for adults and education for children starting with pre-school. There are temporary housing facilities for women and children needing safety from abuse at home and help in finding solutions to the causes.

Deep Griha's Aadhar Kendra Sponsorship Programme (City of Child) allows churches, groups, businesses and individuals to sponsor children. It has a new modern school and residential facility in a rural area outside Pune and serves children whose families lack even the basics of human life – food, clothing, safe shelter, etc. The school includes grades K-4 and a grade is being added each year.

In addition to the special Sunday offerings here at our church that we designate for the Deep Griha Society each year, our church sponsors four of these Aahar Kendra students annually. A few church members also sponsor students on their own. For \$220 a year, a sponsor can provide a child with school supplies, clothing and shoes, an annual medical and dental check-up and other needed health care, as well as access to cultural sites and events held in the Pune area.

At the October 2 reception, there will be a showing of a 25-minute video about Deep Griha. Volunteers will answer questions and help those who are interested in setting up a personal sponsorship with a child through the Aahar Kendra program. If interested, you will need to have cash or your check book with you that day when you fill out the short sponsorship form.

Dr. Onawale will be in Columbus for two weeks, meeting with groups and individuals from the three churches who have now joined together as DeepGrihaUSA to support the work. Pavan Peter and Valerie Stichter from our church currently serve on the DGUSA board.

Building Manager's Notes

By Tom Luff, Building Manager (tluff@first-church.org)

A few updates for everyone:

* We're working on stripping and waxing the Parish Hall and Education Wing floors. We should be done by the time you read this, but please take notice of any caution tape or signs indicating which areas might be cordoned off.



* Several folks from the congregation have been active in caring for the flower beds around the church and your efforts are greatly appreciated. An offer was made to donate some perennials from a home garden to help fill in some of the beds along the west lawn. I think this is great idea and would like to hear feedback. A suggestion also was made that we coordinate a focused effort in the months of October and November. Please contact me if you would like to participate.

* We've worked out a tentative recycling plan. Not only will we avoid any net increase in costs, we also will be able to avoid sorting the recyclables. Be on the lookout for bins around the church. As always, my ears are open to comments and suggestions.

Missions Offering Schedule

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



September 4 - Columbus Coalition for the Homeless

September 11 - Italian Children's Mission

September 18 - Good Samaritan Fund

September 25 - United Church Homes

2012 Confirmation Class Ready to Go and Grow!

The 2012 Confirmation is ready to begin on September 18. With 10 or more youth in eighth and ninth grade joining together with Rev. Tim and Jackie Dean, their soon-to-be-determined mentors, and host of helpful parents, we are excited to have a new class for this new year.



You will be hearing much more about this class as the nine months of study, mission, field trips and more unfolds. But we are excited to welcome them into this time of exploration, discovery and decision about their faith in Christ. Welcome Class of 2012! – Rev. Tim

CCAD Scholarships Available for the Saturday School

Beginning in late September, the CCAD Saturday Art Program for children of all ages all across central Ohio is ready to go! First Congregational Church has scholarship available to the members' children of our congregation.

Go to the community programs page at www.ccad.edu for information on classes. When you sign up, tell them you are a member of First Congregational Church. If you have questions, talk to Rev. Ahrens. Our neighbors are eager to welcome your children to their campus of learning and art exploration! – Rev. Tim

Choir Rehearsals Begin Sept. 8

First Church Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m., beginning September 8. If you are interested in joining, contact James Bobb to set up a meeting before attending a rehearsal.

Teen Choir rehearsals are Sunday mornings, 9 – 9:50 a.m., beginning September 11.

Treble Choir rehearsals are Sunday mornings, 9 – 9:50 a.m., beginning September 11.

Handbell Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 7:15 p.m., beginning September 22.

Church Women United Plans Trip to Roscoe Village

While enjoying the beautiful fall colors, Church Women United members will join the 200th celebration of Roscoe Village in Coshocton, Ohio, for the fall fund-raising trip. The group will travel by bus to this living historical district on Thursday, October 13.

The town has been restored to resemble the way it looked in the mid-19th century when the area was a thriving business center along the Ohio-Erie Canal. Before trains and cars, Ohio's canals connected the Ohio River to Lake Erie. The first canal boat docked at Roscoe Village in 1830 and the town became a major canal port.

Some of the highlights of the trip will be visiting the Toy Cellar, filled with toys from 1860-1960, antique shops, the Roscoe United Methodist Church for a historical presentation about the area, and a ride on the Monticello III, a horse-drawn canal boat. The cost of the trip is \$45 for the bus fare, lunch and the canal ride. Call Arlene Reynolds (268.9875) for more details.

Bethlehem on Broad Meeting Set for Sept. 10

The first planning meeting for Bethlehem on Broad Street will be held at First Church on Saturday, September 10, at 10 a.m. Anyone interested in helping BOBS during December is welcome. Please email or call Arlene Reynolds (arlenerey@aol.com or 268.9875) for information.

2nd Thursday Fellowship Meets Sept. 8

The Second Thursday Fellowship will meet in the Parlor on Thursday, September 8, at 10 a.m. Following refreshments, our new building manager, Tom Luff, will speak to the group about his background and his view of our building. Tom is glad to have this opportunity to meet folks with whom he does not regularly come in contact with and welcomes any questions you might have. Everyone is welcome.

New Members Class

Saturday, September 17, 9 a.m. to Noon

Call the Office (228-1741) or

email jwilson@first-church.org

To Sign Up



Fair Trade, Recycling Efforts Promoted by Sacred Earth

By Jim Griffin, Sacred Earth Chair

The Sacred Earth Committee wants to encourage First Church members to consider buying our Fair Trade coffee, cocoa and tea products. By purchasing Fair Trade products during coffee hour you are participating with the farmer as he grows his crop in an



environmentally sustaining way. Purchasing products is not just an act of charity; it is a partnership for sustaining the earth. We also want to thank those individuals who already support our mission by purchasing Fair Trade products.

The committee is thrilled that Tom Luff, our new building manager, has established a comprehensive recycling program for First Church. Since our recycling program within the church stopped several months ago, it was one of Sacred Earth's goals to re-establish a recycling program. Please remember to bring your newspapers and magazines and drop them in the recycling dumpster located on the west side of our building. (Please no phone books!)

Sacred Earth also plans to sponsor again our upcoming annual pet blessing in October (date TBA). In the coming months, look for how we as a congregation can help our environment at church and at home through newsletter articles, programming, postings on our Web site (www.first-church.org) and bulletin board displays. Sacred Earth also has decided to hold its rummage sale next spring (details to follow in January).

Finally, please consider joining the committee, which is a committed and active group. We meet the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Parlor. We ALWAYS have a meal with our meeting, too! I hope you will consider participating with this very worthwhile committee.

Monthly Budget Update

Current Pledge Income

Pledges Budgeted -- \$529,872
 July Actual -- \$28,079.38
 YTD Actual -- \$310,239.29
 YTD Budget -- \$309,092
 Needed each month -- \$41,268.90

July Mission Offerings

Youth Mission Trip - \$788.30
 CWS, Joplin, Mo. - \$464.35
 RE-Member - \$389.75
 Spirituality Network - \$302
 Gladden House - \$698
 Downtowners - \$20
 Good Samaritan - \$1,438
 Total - \$4,100.40

Member Happy September Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2: Diane Cole | 22: Alex Weaver |
| 4: Marilyn Koetz | 23: Victor John |
| 5: Chris Bonito | 23: Stan Lange |
| 5: Elisa Batchelor | 24: Wayne Piper |
| 6: Katie Kreimer | 26: Elizabeth Allen |
| 6: Alice Panek | 26: Gerry Hudson |
| 7: Dave Proctor | 26: Daniel Ahrens |
| 7: Vince Papsidero | 27: Bernie Bouman |
| 7: Christen Coyle | 27: Ron Reiger |
| 8: Sallie Danneberger | 27: Pavan Peter |
| 9: Steven Ferris | 28: Tom Kuhn |
| 9: Kosby Carrico | 29: Betsy Zahn |
| 10: Amy Nicholson | 29: Pauline Fritz |
| 12: Bob Fowler | 29: Cassie Reid |
| 12: Linda Reiger | 30: Robert Lucas |
| 12: Matt Lazar | 30: Carolyn Pettigrew |
| 13: Lucille Kropp | 30: Janine Wilson |
| 14: Doug Zimmerman | 30: Cami Curren |
| 14: Meredith Kneue | |
| 18: Christopher Washington | |
| 18: Deena Bowers | |
| 19: John Bachman | |
| 15: Richard Grieser | |
| 16: Charles Hire | |
| 19: Tom Daniels | |
| 19: Caroline Sanders | |
| 20: Jim Gallagher | |
| 20: David Mondiek | |
| 20: Jonathan Hoffman | |
| 21: Shannon Washington | |
| 22: Bill Kutschbach | |
| 22: Janette Hoffman | |

Member Happy September Anniversaries

- | |
|--|
| 1: Melinda and Jon Anderson |
| 1: Janice and Amos White |
| 1: Betsy and John Zahn |
| 6: Elisa and Andrew Batchelor |
| 9: Diane and Kent Rambo |
| 10: Elizabeth Drotleff and Eric Chambers |
| 12: Lisa and Scott Warrick |
| 13: Dayna and Michael McCrary |
| 16: Lisa and Andy Thomas |
| 16: Bev and Bert Cook |
| 18: Peggy and Doug Buck |
| 19: Jennifer and Michael Weaver |
| 19: Marilyn and Ed Koetz |
| 20: Queenie and Tony Lee |
| 21: Suzie and Bill Rhoads |
| 24: Leslie and David Fulford |
| 25: Susan and Matt Walton |
| 25: Roland Weller and James Gaugh |
| 30: Kelly and Matt Allen |

OOPS! If we miss your birthday or anniversary, contact Denny Mahoney at 228-1741, ext. 17, or dmahoney@first-church.org.

Next Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles for the October *First Church News* is September 20 at noon. It will be published Friday, September 30.

Calendar

Sunday, September 4

9 am – Worship – Sanctuary
10 am – Long Range Planning Presentation – LC
11 am – Worship – San
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH

Monday, September 5 (Labor Day)

Office and Building Closed

Tuesday, September 6

5:30 pm – Sacred Earth – LC
7 pm – Deacons – LC
7 pm – Mission Committee – PFR
7 pm – Education Committees – Ed Wing, Room D

Wednesday, September 7

11 am – Book Study

Thursday, September 8

10 am – Second Thursday Fellowship – Parlor
2 pm – Art Committee – Parlor
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

Saturday, September 10

10 am – First Church Quilters – LC
10 am – BOBS Planning Meeting – PFR

Sunday, September 11 (Celebration Sunday)

9 am – Treble/Teen 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
12 pm – Long Range Planning Presentation
6 pm – Sonreir – PH
6 pm – Middle School Group – Middle School Room

Monday, September 12

7 pm – Trustees – LC

Tuesday, September 13

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

Thursday, September 15

4:30 pm – Parents of Preschoolers
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

Saturday, September 17

9 am – House and Grounds – PFR
9 am – New Members Class – Parlor

Sunday, September 18

9 am – Treble/Teen 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
12 pm – Long Range Planning Presentation
6 pm – Sonreir – PH
6 pm – Middle School Group – Middle School Room

Tuesday, September 20

7 pm – Council – LC

Wednesday, September 21

11 am – Book Study – Parlor

Thursday, September 22

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

Friday, September 23

6:45 pm – Faith Mission Meal

Saturday, September 24

10 am – Parents of Preschoolers – Church Lawn

Sunday, September 25

9 am – Treble/Teen Choir – Choir Room
9 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D
10 am – Worship – Sanctuary
11 am – Congregational Meeting – Sanctuary
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH
4 pm – Congregational Concert – Sanctuary
6 pm – Sonreir – PH
6 pm – Middle School Group – Middle School Room

Monday, September 26

6:30 pm – Stephens Ministers – Adult Library
7 pm – Budget and Finance – LC

Tuesday, September 27

12 pm – BREAD Meeting – LC
12 pm – Card Care Ministry- PFR
7 pm – Personnel – LC

Thursday, September 29

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

***I and Thou* Starts Fall Book Season**

On Wednesday, September 7, at 11 a.m. in the Parlor, we will begin a new book study, featuring Martin Buber's *I and Thou*. Books can be purchased in the church office for \$10. Written in 1923, *I and Thou* is a classic. Buber's main proposition is that we may address existence in two ways: That of the "I" towards an "It," towards an object that is separate in itself, which we either use or experience; and that of the "I" towards "Thou," in which we move into existence in a relationship without bounds.

One of the major themes of the book is that human life finds its meaningfulness in relationships. All of our relationships, Buber contends, bring us ultimately into relationship with God, who is the eternal thou. - Rev. Tim

Thanks For Your Generosity in Helping Those in Need



Thanks to the congregation for your generous donations to the Good Samaritan Fund last Sunday, August 28. The \$1,352 will be used for our September Good Sam Day to help those in need. It is truly a blessing that, when our funds are at the lowest and we wonder how we will help, First Church responds with such compassion.

On behalf of all the volunteers and clients,

Marty Worth
Good Samaritan Fund Administrator

September Fellowship Hour

September 4: Jeremiah
 September 11: Kings
 September 18: Leviticus
 September 25: Micah

September Acolyte Schedule

September 4: Will Zimmerman and Ben Allen
 September 11: Joe Spofforth and Ben Allred
 September 18: Jansen Allred and Courtney Batchelor
 September 25: Annie-Rose Cook and Anna Rambo
 (Schedules online at www.first-church.org)

Worship CDs Available: We provide copies of worship services on CDs. The CDs are available in the literature rack outside the church office after worship. A \$1 donation for the CD can be left in a container on the church office counter.

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.

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.

Baptism

Catherine Sophia Baird – August 28

Weddings

Elise Faith and Stephen Cribb – August 27

Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on September 4 and 18 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. 14,
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
 G. Dene Barnard.....Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus
 Sharon Leidheiser.....Business Administrator
 Martha Worth.....Program Manager
 Denny Mahoney.....Office Manager
 Thomas Luff.....Building Manager
 Kelvin Murphy.....Custodian
 Frank Wall, William Lee.....Custodians
 Nikki Boop, Rosemary Pawandiwa-Priore.....Nursery
 Chinyere Newsum.....Nursery
 Linda Mumford.....Wedding Coordinator
 Jane Chavers.....Wedding Coordinator
 Fran Panek.....Wedding Coordinator

Church Council

David Holt..... Moderator
 Gerry Worth.....Vice-Moderator
 Judy Smith, Bev Cook.....Secretary/Assistant
 Jim Fewlass, Cindy Conn.....Treasurer/Assistant
 Sandy Bennett, Neal Brower.....Administration/Assistant
 Melissa Prendergast.....Church Growth
 Tanya Miller.....Education
 Wally Giffen, Charlie Weaver...House & Grounds/Assistant
 Fran Panek, Bruce Panek.....Mission/Assistant
 Jackie Dean, Abby Cave.....Parish Life/Assistant
 Mary Weaver.....Senior Deacon
 Elaine Warren.....Deacon
 John Deliman, Jim Gallagher...Music, Arts, Heritage/Asst.
 Melody Leidheiser.....Nominating Chair
 Sheldon Taft.....Trustees
 Emma Welsh-Huggins.....Member-at-large
 Tom Brownfield.....Member-at-large

The First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
444 E. Broad St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3821

DATED MATERIAL - VERY IMPORTANT

*Please Deliver By: **Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2011***

TO:

[Empty dashed rectangular 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 Web site: 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