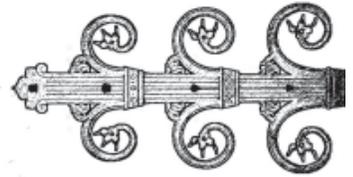


First Church News



First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ • Columbus, Ohio

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First Church Newsflash: September 7th Kicks Off a Great Fall Season!

by Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister



At a recent staff meeting, your senior minister, "The Rev. Rip Van Winkle," returned to a bundle of great surprises - all good! The staff and many of our members have been hard at work all summer to clean-up, tune-up, plan and prepare for a GREAT fall schedule. I am so impressed!

It all begins September 7 at the 9 a.m. early worship, the 10 a.m. education hour for all ages and the 11 a.m. worship (with the return of the adult choir). Get ready, because beginning NOW, exciting worship, music, concerts, educational programs, preaching, teaching, youth and young adult activities and pastoral care plans for the whole congregation are being set in place.

I am beginning my ninth program year this September and I can't remember a time that has been this creative and exciting. As the church grows in spirit and numbers, we need to come together to celebrate God's presence in our family of faith. I am re-energized after preaching 22 sermons this summer and I can't wait to dig into the texts that are coming in September. The theme for the fall program is GLOW! We will glow with the love of God and God's light burning within us for one another. Come to worship. Come to education hour. Come to special concerts and programs throughout the week. Come and celebrate the glowing love of God for each one of us at First Congregational Church, UCC - where "God IS still speaking!"

GLOW SUNDAY

by Mark S. Williams, Director of Christian Education



You will be glowing on September 7, and throughout the entire program year at First Congregational Church. **GLOW Sunday**, which is also known as Rally Day in our Christian education department, will kick-off the 2008 - 2009 program year for all our ministries. The GLOW theme is based on Psalm 119:105, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*

GLOW (God Lights Our Way) is the foundation for all our programs, so mark your calendars for an illuminating year. Worship hours return to 9 and 11 a.m., and church school begins at 10 a.m. with classes for all ages. A new curriculum is being offered as well as new young adult classes. In addition, adult education programs will provide in-depth discussions on numerous topics throughout the year. Children will soon be starting Treble Choir, and the First Church Choir will sing in the 11 a.m. service.

On September 7, both services will observe the rededication of the Alma Keeler Library in memory of Commissioned Minister Dorinda White; dedication of our church's schoolteachers; our church's sixth anniversary of being open and affirming and the recognition and information of our commissioned areas. See you then.

Congregation Moves Ahead on 414

First Church members attending the special congregational meeting on August 10 gave enthusiastic support to move ahead to try to purchase the 414 E. Broad St. property.

The 1.7-acre property located on the northeast corner of E. Broad St. and Cleveland Ave. is a valuable downtown space with unlimited possibilities. Though most recently used as the Byers used car lot, it once was the Platt family home, one of Columbus' leading families in the late 1800s.

Before the vote to begin negotiating for the purchase of the property and to conduct a capital campaign, Russ Kelm introduced members of the committee that prepared a report assessing the proposed purchase. He also gave a presentation on the property's background and potential uses. After discussion, the motion to proceed was approved by a show of hands. If a contract to purchase the site is reached, it will be contingent upon getting final approval in a subsequent congregational meeting.

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Nurture Your Life With Love

by Reverend Barbara R. Cunningham, Minister for Pastoral Care

Wings of Faith by Debra Drummond

I am shoreless
Set adrift by my insecurities
Caught in an updraft of doubt and fear
Until I am so firmly in midair
That I have nothing to hold onto but faith.
In God, in myself, and in my abilities.
Only then am I able to feel
The wings that were always there
Waiting for my faith
To enable me to soar.



When we are children, we create in our minds' eye the view of a charmed life. We picture what we are to have to make our lives the best they can be. As we get older and the charms fall off the picture of our charmed life, we begin to get the message that we must nurture our life with love and the "things" either follow or become unimportant. In the process of that growth, our insecurities to try something new and risky keep us teetering on the edge of flying, making us unable to soar. Many of us surround ourselves with a negativity that keeps our fears alive, enshrined in a bubble too hard to break.

The most powerful tool we can use to burst the bubble of fear and doubt is imaging love and nurturing ourselves and others with it. **Blessings come from oozing love from all our cells.** Peace comes from believing that you can burst that bubble of fear and fill the space with love. Does that sound too simplistic?

Try this exercise. Close your eyes and think of something that is really bothering you or something you dislike intensely. Think about that for a few minutes. Check your body and feel where you are tense. Now think of something you love to do, or someone you love and what makes you love that person. Keep those thoughts for a few minutes. Check your body and identify the feeling. It is proof positive that you have some control over letting love or fear control you.

Last week, a man hit my car on the driver's side door. The first thing he asked about was whether I was hurt or not. Then he said, "I'm so sorry," and we exchanged information. After a while, he came over to me and said, "Thank you for not getting out and swearing at me, and for being so nice." What could I have accomplished with this man except hostility if I had given him hostility. Yes, it is an inconvenience, and I didn't want to deal with it, but it happened. So I did, and it will only be a "blip" in the life I have been given.

Life is too short to let fear or hate or insecurities take control of us. No one wants war, and when we recognize that working for the common good means working for the common good of all human beings, love is more appropriate than revenge. We never, as individuals, see the whole picture, but nurturing ourselves is a beginning to loving and nurturing the whole world.

Conflicting Schedules

by Reverend Laura Tisher,
Youth & Young Adult Minister

It's that time of the year when many of our summer schedules begin to shift into the more regimented schedules that come with the start of school. The sports calendars, band and choir schedules and lists for all the other potential extra curricular activities have all arrived in the mail or have been posted online. Now the trick is to balance all of that with work schedules, times for homework, family time, time for the basics like eating and sleeping ... and, of course, all the opportunities at church. Whew, what an overscheduled, overworked world we live in today!



As you line up all of these schedules next to each other and wonder how it will ever be possible to do it all, I encourage you to prayerfully reflect on your involvement in First Church. Sometimes when we prioritize what activities, meetings, and events we will be involved in, it may be easy to weigh one more heavily than another.

Yet there is something unique about what we do here at First Church. We don't just do programming; we do ministry. As your Minister of Youth and Young Adults, you have called me to make sure that, together, we remember the importance of ministry in all that we do. What we do and teach at First Church (spirituality, mission, education and fellowship) is unique and different from programming organized in any other setting or by any other director or program coordinator. It is rooted in the prophetic and life-transforming presence of God in our midst.

Youth Chaperones: Do you like amusement parks, hiking, labyrinths, movies or hands-on mission projects? Would you like to develop a deeper relationship with the youth of First Church? If so, become a youth chaperone! You can help with one activity or 15! If you would like more information, please contact Rev. Lori. (*Chaperones must have been a member of First Church for at least 6 months and must be 21 years old.*)

Board of Trustees: Giving to Endowments (Part 4)

by Phil Stichter, Trustee Chair

In the last article I wrote for the newsletter, I described several of the long-standing endowment funds of the church. The purpose of this article is to describe some of the more recently-established endowment funds. **Remember:** An endowment fund is one in which the donor instructs that only the income of the gift is to be used and that the principal (or any additional gifts to the endowment fund) remain in perpetuity.

McElroy-Wright Fund: In 1991, Ann McElroy-Wright made an endowment gift of \$42,000. She provided that "the principal and all capital gains attributable thereto were to be preserved," with dividend and interest income to be used to support the church's operating budget.

Jackie Owen Fund: In 1984, Elizabeth Bohannon gave an endowment gift of \$1,000 in honor of her friend, Jackie Owen, who had been an active and loyal member of the church and its choir. She stated that the "income from this fund must be expended for special music events of the church in the discretion of the church's music director. Such special music events may be a part of a religious service, but they are not required to be." Many people have made contributions to this endowment and the principal amount has grown.

Barnard Music Fund: In 1994, Dr. Robert and Clara Harsh made an endowment gift of \$25,000 to support and enhance the church's music program. They provided that "no funds may be expended if the value of the fund falls below the total value of all contributions to the fund, until such time as the value of the fund again equals the total of such contributions." They further provided that, "The income from the fund, including dividends, interest and capital gains, may be used . . . as follows: (1) Fees for instrumental musicians; (2) Support for the Congregational Concert series; (3) Fees for additional vocalists upon special occasions; and (4) Other special programs that fall within the purpose . . ., however, under no circumstances shall the income from the fund be used for non-classical music."

The endowment funds outlined reflect donor variations that differ on what constitutes "income" for determining how much can be spent for their respective restricted purposes. In addition, what constitutes the principal of the gift that is to be maintained in perpetuity can vary as specified by the donors. The church trustees encourage our members to consider making gifts to the many endowment funds. More funds will be described in the next article.



Annual Church Picnic: August 24

Mark your calendars for this year's Annual Church Picnic on Sun., Aug. 24, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the church lawn. Come and reconnect with individuals from your church membership class and many others. The theme is *Membership Through the Decades* and it will be a day of fun, games, food and fellowship filled with music provided by the Soul To Soul band. Last names beginning A-M: Bring a side dish. Last names beginning with N-Z: Bring a dessert. All: Please bring a cake to share for the Cake Walk.

CCAD Saturday Class Discount: For the last six years, The Columbus College of Art and Design (CCAD) has offered art scholarships to our member's children who would like to participate in the Saturday Art School for 1 - 12 grades. In the past, the amount has been \$75 for each semester, or \$150 for the year. This is at least half the cost!

The classes start in late September, so call 614.222.3248 or signup online noting that you are a "First Church member." If you have further questions, contact Mark S. Williams at 614.228.1741, ext. 15, or mwilliams@first-church.org.

Keep It Current: Keeping the First Church office updated on your latest contact information is important so that we can better communicate with you. Please call the office at 614.228.1741 or email us at home@first-church.org to let us know when your home address, phone numbers or email addresses change so that we can get the information into our records. Your cooperation is appreciated.



Wednesday Morning Book Study: Rev. Tim Ahrens' Wednesday Morning Book Study will resume Wed., Sept. 17 with a look at author Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking*.

The book study meets the first and third Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. to noon in the church parlor. Books will be available in the church office prior to the first session at a cost of \$13. Didion's book recounts a year in her life in which her husband died suddenly and she cared for her seriously ill daughter. Her daughter died shortly after the book was completed. Didion was honored with a National Book Award and was named a 2005 Pulitzer Prize finalist for her work.

For more information, contact Denny Mahoney at 614.228.1741, ext. 17, or dmahoney@first-church.org.

Senior Minister Earns National Recognition

First Church is proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of our very own Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens as he continues to earn national recognition for his work in the area of social justice. Living up to First Congregational's historical precedent in this area, Tim keeps our name at the forefront of social justice leadership.

On September 21, Tim will be speaking in Brooklyn, NY, at St. Paul Community Baptist Church as the opening preacher for the Maafa commemoration. "Maafa" is a Kiswahili term that refers to the catastrophic transatlantic slave trade that resulted in the kidnap, torture and enslavement of millions of Africans over hundreds of years.

The annual weeklong event at St. Paul honors the passage of the African slaves to freedom in this country. Tim was invited to be the opening preacher by the Rev. Johnny Ray Youngblood, who spoke at First Church as our Gladden Lecturer in 2004. Tim has the honor of being the last guest preacher in Rev. Youngblood's pulpit before he retires later this year.

Tim also is joining the prestigious board of directors for Faith in Public Life, a national resource center for social justice and the common good that serves all people of faith in America. He will be one of 12 board members for the organization, which is based in Washington, D.C.

This summer, Tim had the honor of being a guest preacher/lecturer at the Chautauqua Institution in New York, where over 6,000 people heard his message throughout six days. He continued his outreach by preaching another six days to over 2,000 people at Lakeside, OH, the chautauqua on Lake Erie.

Finally, Tim has been selected to receive Yale Divinity School's William Sloane Coffin Peace and Justice Award. He will return to Yale to receive this honor on October 14. He was nominated and selected by the school's alumni, and is the only pastor who has ever received this prestigious award.

Let us all rejoice in Tim's faithful work and congratulate him on these accomplishments. We are so proud to have him as a leader of our church family!

Submitted by the Member Minister Relations Advisory Group: Jenny Provenzano, David Loy, Matt Myers, Carol Hussey, Greg Halbe and Jackie Dean.

Choral Festival Concert

by Sheena Phillips

On Friday, June 6, 150 singers from five Columbus area choirs came together in concert at First Congregational Church during the Arts Festival, and raised a \$1006 for Doctors Without Borders. Doctors Without Borders is an international medical aid agency providing medical relief all over the world to victims of conflict, natural disaster or endemic disease. Nearly 90% of its income is spent on program activities, and in 1999 it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. An additional \$574 in donations to Doctors Without Borders was raised through collections from the other Festival-tide concerts here at First Church and from the Chair-a-Tea sales.



Gardeners Extraordinaire: The beauty of First Church is framed by its colorful, summer gardens. A green thumbs up to all the House & Ground volunteers who purchased, planted and maintained our colorful garden beds this summer. Special thanks to Cheryl Hoskinson for her countless hours of deadheading, weeding and sharing the beauty of flowers with the staff. Thanks also to Carol and Jim Gallagher for their expert pruning of the parking lot hedges.

An Archival Thanks: A big thanks to Carol Gallagher and Kay Metz for cleaning and reorganizing First Church archives. They spent a day in the church's archive room sorting through and properly storing old books, Bibles, memorabilia, photos, artwork, brochures, church records and various other stored church information.



Summer Sermon Cross-Cultural Focus

During the summer, First Church honored the world church by highlighting a different culture each week.

Aug. 24: *Basket Case* - Rev. Ahrens
(Recognizing Appalachia)

Aug. 31: *Where Will You Stand?* - Rev. Ahrens
(Recognizing Russia)

September Sermon Titles

September 7: *GLOW* - Rev. Ahrens

September 14: *Walk in the Sea on Dry Land*
Rev. Ahrens

September 21: *Tensions - Then & Now*
Rev. Cunningham

September 28: *Is the Lord Among Us or Not*
Rev. Ahrens

Recent Celebration Gifts, by Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

Given to First Church in celebration of the life of *Dorinda K. White Endowment Fund* by:

Martha Huey

Your gifts, payable to the First Congregational Church, are very much appreciated. Celebration Gifts may be designated to the Remembrance Fund or an Endowment Fund and given in honor of a particular moment in the life of friend or family member. The gold-colored celebration gift folders can be found in the church pews and the church office.

First Church News

Music Notes

by Marti Rideout, Interim Minister of Music



A Special Thanks: The **Summer Choir** sang three times and offered music from several cultures.

Our thanks and sincere appreciation to ~ Wally Giffen, Ron Hodge, Bobby Carrington, Fran Panek, Nan Kreimer, Mary Fewlass, James Fewlass, Greg Halbe, Jim Roehm, Binky Griffin, Pam and Andrew Welsh-Huggins, Sarah Welsh-Huggins, Janette Hoffman, Justin DeWolfe, Candy Cummings, Jane Leidheiser, Kelley Gilbert, Rachel Axt, Janet Axt, Jan Wade, Neal Brower, Jane Weddle, Bill Boden, Brianna Burkett, Julie Delong, Allison Ellenberger, Sarah Garbe, Cheryl Hoskinson, Carol Hussey, Nancy Loy, Sharon Walquist, Marty Worth, Mark Williams, Bill Wirsching, Kevin Cubick, Marcy Essig, Bev Cook and all others inadvertently omitted from this list.

Thanks for your contribution to our worship. Our deep appreciation also goes to Dene Barnard (organist) and soloists Katelyn Hoffman (soprano), Alex Weaver (French horn), Kelley Gilbert (saxophone), Pam Welsh-Huggins (soprano), Marally Vedaie (violin), Kevin Cubick (tenor) and Janet and Rachel Axt (mezzo-sopranos), Randall Hester (flute) for offering their gifts to us this summer thus far.

Choir Rehearsals: Summer is nearly over and soon choir rehearsals will begin. Please mark your calendars with choir information. Contact Marti Rideout at 614.228.1741, ext. 14, or mriderout@first-church.org with your questions and comments.

First Church Choir (Adults): Thurs., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m.

Treble Choir (Grades 1-8): Sun., Sept. 14, 9 a.m.

Gallery Handbells: Thurs., Sept. 4, 6:15 p.m.

COMPLINE



The evening service of Compline will be sung by the men of the First Church Choir on September 21. The women will sing on October 19, and the men will sing again on November 16. The church is illuminated by candlelight and the choir sings unaccompanied plainsong chant. The 30-minute service concludes with a quiet organ improvisation.

Recently a woman, neither a member nor a Sunday attendee, wrote to tell me how meaningful Compline is for her and that she never misses the service. Compline is a special way to end the day and begin the week. If you have not experienced this beautiful and peaceful service, plan to attend and invite some friends.

Congregational Concerts 2008 ~ 35th Concert Season

Mark your calendars for an exciting season of concerts at First Church. For a schedule of the entire 2008 - 2009, visit the First Church Web site at www.first-church.org and click on concerts.

September 21, 4 p.m. MAINSTREET BRASS

This quintet of performers and educators from the Philadelphia area will present a spirited program of brass music from florid 17th c. canzons and Bach transcriptions to memorable show tunes and blues classics.

October 19, 4 p.m. THOMAS TROTTER, ORGAN

Organist at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey, Thomas Trotter, will dazzle us with music by Handel, Bach, and Litaize on the von Beckerath Organ, Best, Thalben-Ball, Morandi, and Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture on the Kimball organ.

November 9, 4 p.m. THREE CHOIRS CONCERT

Glorious music of Vaughan Williams, Howells, Stanford, Holst, Ireland, and Argento will be sung by the choirs of Broad Street Presbyterian, First Church and St. Josephs Cathedral at Broad Street Presbyterian Church.

December 14, 4 p.m. G. DENE BARNARD, ORGAN

Honoring the 100th birthday of Olivier Messiaen (Dec. 10, 1908), First Church's Organist Choirmaster Emeritus, G. Dene Barnard, will perform *La Nativité du Seigneur* (The Nativity of Our Lord) on the von Beckerath Organ.

December 21, 4 p.m. FESTIVAL OF LESSONS and CAROLS

The First Church Choir, Treble Choir, Gallery Handbell Choir, the Kimball and von Beckerath organs will be heard in this service of scripture readings, seasonal anthems and familiar carols sung by all to proclaim the birth of Christ.



TUESDAYS AT FIRST FALL CONCERT SERIES

Tuesdays at First is a traditional at First Church. It is a free, 30-minute lunchtime concert beginning at 12:15 p.m. After the concert, a homemade lunch is served in the parish hall for a donation of \$7. Please join us for this delightful break in the week's busy schedule.

Fall Concerts

October 21: Marti Rideout, First Church's interim minister of music, will kick off the series.

October 28: Dr. George Weckman, Ohio University faculty member.

November 4: Dr. Stephen D. Jacoby, Bluffton University emeritus faculty member.

November 11: Benjamin Wiant, Columbus Symphony piano technician.

Christian Education & YAYA Ministry

Notes From Christian Education

by Mark S. Williams, Director of Christian Education

Monday Night Lights: It's time to pull out your calendars and mark off the first Monday of each month (except December) for a great night of programming at First Church. There will be many opportunities for all ages. The program begins at 7 p.m. with a short worship service and then breaks into different interest and program offerings. Offerings will include a movie series, discussion groups and presentations. A mini-vacation Bible school will be available for the children and childcare will be provided for infants and toddlers. More details will be posted on the church Web site and in next month's newsletter.

Monday Night Lights

A monthly gathering for enlightenment & fellowship.

Dates to Remember

September 8, 7 p.m.

October 6, 7 p.m.

November 3, 7 p.m.

January 5, 7 p.m.

February 2, 7 p.m.

March 2, 7 p.m.

April 6, 7 p.m.

Schedule

7 - 7:15 p.m. - Brief Worship

7:15 - 7:30 p.m. - Fellowship

7:30 - 8:30 p.m. - Programs



CALENDAR TIME: We don't go anywhere without our calendar, so pull out those calendars and mark down the following dates for some great future programming. You will not want to miss these opportunities!!

♦**Women's Retreat Set:** Ladies of First Church... clear your schedules so you can attend the Annual Women's Retreat at Templd Hills camp Nov. 7 - 9. This time away from family and work renews and refreshes just before the craziness of the holiday season begins. More details will be coming in the next few months, but what's most important is the date - so plan now.

♦**Family Spring Retreat:** Join the First Church family as they head toward the hills, Templd Hills that is. The Spring Retreat will begin Friday evening, April 24 through Sunday morning, April 26, 2009. Bring your whole family or just yourself. The weekend will include hiking, nature talks and activities, devotions, basketball, fishing, folk dancing for all ages, a campfire with s'mores, crafts, singing and Sunday morning worship. All First Church youth are able to attend at no cost thanks to an Alma Keeler Grant requested by the Parish Life Committee. All confirmands will be attending and their mentors are encouraged to attend as well.

Youth & Young Adult Ministry

by Rev. Lori A. Tisher, Minister of Youth & Young Adults

Young Adult Announcements...

♦**Dinner Group:** Meet at the Taj Mahal restaurant, 2247 N. High St. on Sept. 6, 6:30 p.m.

♦**Parents for Others:** Parents for Others meets in the toddler room of the education wing once a month from 3:45 - 4:45 p.m. All parents are welcome with their young children. The service project for September & October is the "Shower in a Box." For information, contact Catherine Kennedy at cskennedy1981@yahoo.com or 614.578.6762. Upcoming fall meetings are Fri., Sept 19, Oct. 10, Nov. 7 and Dec. 12.

♦**Welcome Party for Neighborhood Students:** First Church will provide a party in the church parking lot for CCAD students and other students in the neighborhood on Sat., Aug. 23 and Sun., Aug. 24, from 11a.m. - 2 p.m. Hot dogs, chips and other snacks will be provided. If you are interested in helping with this event, contact Rev. Lori.

*For information or registration
Contact Rev. Lori at 614.228.1741, ext 21 or
ltisher@first-church.org.*

Youth Announcements...

♦**Youth Volunteers:** Needed to help with the activities for the all-church picnic on Sun., Aug 24. Contact Rev. Lori.

♦ **2008-2009 Confirmation Class Scheduled:** This class will begin meeting in September for ages 14 and older. Classes are held on Sunday after the 11 a.m. worship. The new confirmands will be welcomed into the church on Sun., May 17, 2009.

♦**Youth Fall Picnic, Sept. 14:** First Church youth and their families are invited to the Youth Picnic on Sun., Sept. 14, at 5:30 p.m. on the church lawn. This is the kick-off event for the 2008 - 2009 First Church Youth Ministry. Share in good food (bring a side dish or dessert to share as well as table services for your family), play fun games and connect with others in the youth ministry at First Church. RSVP to Rev. Lori by Sept. 9.

A special discussion about youth room renovations is on the agenda. Cori Benner will present amazing ideas she designed. Don't miss this HGTV-style discussion - your input is essential!

♦High School Lock-In

Sept. 27 - 28 (Sat. 2:30 p.m. to Sunday 9 a.m.)
Begins with an afternoon hike at a Columbus Metro Park followed by a night of games and fellowship at the church.

♦Middle School Hocking Hills Zip Line

Sept. 28, 12:30 - 5 p.m.
An exhilarating 3-hour adventure offers participants an opportunity to ZIP through the treetops on a network of cables in the beautiful Hocking Hills.

The 2008 - 09 Middle and High School Youth schedules can be viewed at <http://www.first-church.org>YouthMinistry.aspx>.

From the Congregation

How I Became Aware

by Jerome Dailey



How do you make a foolhardy, carefree guy green? First, you attack his budget. With increased gasoline cost, I have reduced my speed on I-270 to 60 m.p.h. On road trips, I am at 65 m.p.h. At home, Scot and I have added a tankless water heater and a programmable thermostat.

thermostat.

Second, you send Dawn George and Marilyn Minter across my path. You invite me to a Sacred Earth meeting at Wendy's. (I'll go almost anywhere for food) and you tell by example. Allow opportunity for me to see green in action and let me participate – it is the best buy-in. Give me articles to read simple duties to complete and let me discuss what the process should be for greening the church. After all, throwing things in landfills has been my lifelong activity, so let me hang around long enough to realize that **it is my turn to act.**

And don't forget God in all of this. We all know that most nerds listen to NPR. Let God place me in the car when the report on the church's involvement in changing the behavior of its congregants is discussed. Let God provide the Web address after I have parked the car.

The secret for me was the power of association. I got involved on a personal level, starting small and expanding. A little commitment is very easy to manage. Then somehow it blossoms. I started by recycling Coke cans and now I recycle all the cans we use. I bought canvas bags for my groceries, and I am committed to walk to church two Sundays a month. From Coke cans to car-free Sunday! What a transition! Green is now my new favorite color.

My prayer is that all of you can get just a little involved. Trust me. Once you start to care for this Sacred Earth, it will grow into a full-blown commitment. Below are some of our members' commitments they listed on the "greening" bulletin board.

Tim Ahrens: Recycle more; bike and walk more; write our political leaders about the environment and global warming.

Bev Cook: Turn up the thermostat when using the air conditioner; never use plastic bags.

Nancy Burba: Mow the yard after 6 p.m.; recycle all products.

Dorcas Matowe: Eat more natural foods, which helps cut trash.

Alex Rodriguez: Turn off lights when not needed.

Sacred Earth Committee: Reduce/eliminate church mailings.

Dawn George: Stop using toxic cleaning products and pesticides.

Gleva Stephens: Recycle plastic bags and take my own bags to stores.

Jane Carter & Bob Monahan: Recycle paper, plastic. Unplug computers.

Explore hybrid cars; native garden plants, deep watering garden.

John & Betsy Zahn: Recycle and encourage others to do the same.

Adjust water heater, furnace and air conditioner.

Nancy Braverman: Reduce amount of grain-fed meat my family eats; car trips; and ramp up recycling

Koscher Family: Help achieve the 2012 goal.

(Continued in next column.)

Stewardship Committee Reconvenes

by Judith Hunter



While many of us were enjoying the last days of summer, the First Church Stewardship Committee

had already met several times and is still hard at work establishing goals and preparing for an important church mission.

First Church is OUR church. It didn't build itself years ago, and it certainly doesn't maintain itself today. Windows need to be repaired, heating bills must be paid, maintenance must be handled and our outstanding staff must be paid for their devoted service to us.

Perhaps you were baptized in First Church, or were married here and raised your children in its sheltering arms. Maybe you or a loved one were attended by one of our ministers during a time of illness, loss or transition. Perhaps you are a new member or just needed some type of faith and solace when you joined. Some have even joined because they liked the music that expressed their spiritual joy. In one way or another, First Church has and/or will serve you. The question is: How can you serve?

It's that time of the year when you are asked to think about what you have gained from your church, your blessings and what is expected of you as a member. In order for First Church to provide its continued services, please consider your stewardship commitment.

What is expected of you? Simply a commitment to help First Church continue its services, fulfill its missions locally and worldwide and to help glorify God for his blessings in your life. While plans are being made for the Stewardship Committee's 2008 - 2009 campaign, it is time for you to consider how First Church fits into your support.

(How I Became Aware continued.)

Anne & Gerry Hudson: Investigate heating hot water using solar panels.

Provenzano Family: Continue recycling, use less gas, walk, hike more.

Fran & Bruce Panek: Continue recycling everything possible and encourage others to do the same.

Ahrens/Sitler: Be part of a home solar rental program.

Neal Bower: Eat less red meat; water garden with water collected from dehumidifier.

Have Fun Tutoring With Us

by Valerie Stichter

Over the past two years, a group of us (both men and women) from First Church have been tutoring children at Siebert Elementary School near German Village. We go one morning each week and help with the students in one teacher's classroom for about two hours. This coming year, we could use more tutors and I encourage you to join us.

Siebert has a very welcoming staff, delightful atmosphere and the children will steal your hearts. It is so rewarding to help these less advantaged students experience the joy of learning that comes with success at an early age. Unfortunately, too many students do not have all the support they need. If they do not learn to read well in kindergarten through 2nd grade, the chances of them falling behind their classmates and eventually dropping out of school greatly increases.

It is absolutely critical that they learn the basics **early**. Success keeps them **wanting** to come to school! The boost in self-esteem when they master reading in the early grades is so evident in their smiling faces and self-confidence.

If you enjoy working with children, have your own transportation, would like to join us or just have questions, please email or call Valerie Stichter at stichter@columbus.rr.com or 614.885.0730 so we can get started soon.

Good Samaritan Report

by Marty Worth, Program Manager and Good Sam Director

First Church's last Good Samaritan Day on Monday, August 11, was another success! We were able to help over 50 people with pressing needs receive financial assistance.

Because a total of 120 people have been served this last July and August, the Good Samaritan checking account was nearly out of funds. Though the cash offerings and designated checks given on Sun., August 3, were being held for use in September, I was questioning if we would be able to offer Good Samaritan in September. Then on August 13, prayers were answered in the form of a \$1,000 grant from two members of First Church. We now have the funds for another Good Samaritan Day in September.

The generosity of our congregation in their giving to this valuable mission ministry is greatly appreciated. The Good Samaritan Fund could not function every month without the congregation answering First Church's historic and ongoing call to mission. Thank you is not adequate to describe our gratitude.

Contributions are accepted at the church on a continual basis. If you wish to send a contribution, please mark your check "Good Samaritan Fund." Every little bit helps.

Marty Worth can be reached at 614.228.1714, ext. 12 or marty@first-church.org.

Mission Offerings Schedule

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

August 24: *Neighbors in Need* - A UCC commitment to ministries of justice and compassion in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

August 31: *SARA* - A non-profit organization of the UCC that fosters good health-care procedures in several nations with poor health services.

September 7: First Church Christian Education.

September 14: Kairos (prison ministry)

September 21: United Church Homes

September 28: Gladden Community House - A nonprofit organization providing neighborhood social services. Named in honor of Rev. Washington Gladden.

Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales are available on Sun., September 7 & 21 (the 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, call Nancy Burba on Wednesdays in the First Church office at 614.228.1741, ext. 28.
Submitted by Nancy Burba.



UCC Events Planned: The Ohio Conference of the UCC has several events scheduled for the fall where all are welcome. The weekend of Sept. 19 - 21 the *Lantern Fellowship* retreat for adult women will be held at Pilgrim Hills Camp near Brinkhaven, Ohio. It is a weekend of quiet inspiration.

A workday will be held at Pilgrim Hills on Sept. 20, and at nearby Temple Hills on Oct. 4. The day is spent sprucing up both sites and normally is held 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Volunteers are asked to bring tools. Lunch will be provided. For details, visit the conference Web site at www.ocucc.org.

First Church Quilters: The next meeting of the First Church quilters is scheduled for Sat., Sept. 13, at 10 a.m. at the church. All stitchers are welcome. For more information, contact: Marilyn Minter at 614.855.7945, mlminter@insight.rr.com, or Gleva Stephens at 614.258.5940, gleva@copper.net.

Save the Date: Columbus CROP WALK: Walk for hunger relief on Sun., Oct. 12, after church. Look for walkers to sponsor during Fellowship Hour each Sunday. The walk begins and ends in the Riverfront Amphitheater in Genoa Park. For more information, visit <http://Columbuscropwalk.blogspot.com>, or call 614.481.4416. "We walk because they walk miles for water and food." *Submitted by Anne Hudson*

A Global Mission Event: All friends and members of the United Church of Christ are invited to the fourth biennial MissionWorks event, which blends global culture, learning and fun for growing mission awareness.

When: October 2 - 5

Where: Downtown Cleveland Hilton Garden Inn

Registration Deadline: August 29

Information: Visit www.globalministries.org

Bucks & Does Dance Group: Bucks & Does is a Western square dance group that meets and dances at First Church during the year. Bucks & Does extends an invitation to First Church members interested in learning modern Western square dancing. Singles and couples can join them on Tuesdays from 6:45 - 8:45 p.m. in the lower level of the church on Sept. 16, 23 & 30. For questions and costs, call Velma Doyle at 614.837.6974.

Member Happy Birthdays

9/5:	Elisa Batchelor	9/19:	Thomas Daniels
9/6:	Dorcas Campbell	9/19:	Caroline Sanders
9/6:	Kathleen Kreimer	9/20:	Jim Gallagher
9/6:	Alice Panek	9/20:	David Mondiek
9/7:	Dave Proctor	9/20:	Jonathan Hoffman
9/7:	Vince Papsidero	9/21:	Shannon Washington
9/8:	Sallie Danneberger	9/22:	Bill Kutschbach
9/9:	Steven Ferris	9/22:	Janette Hoffman
9/9:	Kosby Carrico	9/22:	Katherine Double
9/10:	Amy Nicholson	9/22:	Alex Weaver
9/11:	Julie Parsons	9/23:	Victor John
9/12:	Robert Fowler	9/23:	Stan Lange
9/12:	Linda Reiger	9/25:	Barb Cunningham
9/12:	Matthew Lazar	9/24:	Wayne Piper
9/13:	Lucille Kropp	9/26:	Elizabeth Allen
9/13:	Marie Coffing	9/26:	Gerry Hudson
9/14:	Doug Zimmerman	9/26:	Daniel Ahrens
9/14:	Meredith Knueve	9/27:	Betty Hughes
9/15:	Charles Grieser	9/27:	Bernard Bouman
9/15:	Lynn Crevling	9/27:	Ron Reiger
9/16:	Candace Schneider	9/27:	Pavan Peter
9/18:	Christopher Washington	9/28:	Thomas Kuhn
9/18:	Deena Bowers	9/29:	Betsy Zahn
9/19:	John Bachman	9/29:	Cassandra Reid
		9/30:	Cami Curren

Happy Belated Birthdays to ~

Darla Luebbe, March 19
Elaine Stewart, June 8
Richard Mason, June 20
Sarah Moore Trace, June 24
Steven Kennedy, August 25
Catherine Stewart Kennedy, March 26
William Kennedy, March 29

Member Happy Anniversaries

9/12: Lisa & Scott Warrick
9/13: Dayna & Michael McCrary
9/13: Melissa & Thomas Ellis
9/14: Susan & Robert Saari
9/16: Bev & Bert Cook
9/16: Lisa & Andrew Thomas
9/18: Peggy & Doug Buck
9/19: Marilyn & Edwin Koetz
9/20: Queenie & Anthony Lee
9/21: Susan & Bill Rhoads
9/23: Toni Carroll & Ron Botts
9/24: Leslie & David Fulford

Happy Belated Anniversary to ~

Darla Luebbe & Elaine Stewart, May 11
Catherine & Steve Kennedy, August 7

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

Church Calendar

Sunday, August 24 (Focus on Appalachia)

9 am: Confirmation Class Meeting - PR
10 am: Worship Service - San (New Members Join)
11 am: Church Picnic & Member Reunion- PH & Outside

Monday, August 25

10:15 am: CCAD Convocation - San
7 pm: Budget & Finance - LC

Tuesday, August 26

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7 pm: Personnel Comm - LC
7 pm: Deacon's Meeting - PR

Wednesday, August 27

9 am: Staff Meeting - LC
11 am - 4 pm: Staff Retreat - Off-site (Office Closed)

Sunday, August 31 (Focus on Russia)

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

Monday, September 1 (Labor Day)

Office and Building Closed

Tuesday, September 2 (Ramadan)

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
6:30 pm: Children's Ed. - Ed Wg Rm C
7 pm: Evangelism & Church Growth - PR
7 pm: Exec. Comm - PFR

Wednesday, September 3

9 am: Staff Meeting - LC
7 pm: Deacon's Meeting - PR

Thursday, September 4

6:15 pm: First Church Handbells - Bell Rm
7:30 pm: First Church Choir: Choir Rm

Sunday, September 7 (Rally Day- GLOW)

9 am: Early Worship Service - PH
10 am: Education Hour
11 am: Worship Service - San
12 pm: Fellowship Hour - PH
12:15 pm: Parish Life - PR
12:30 pm: Youth Group Orientation - LC

Monday, September 8

9 am: Good Sam Day - San
7 pm: Monday Night Lights - PH
7 pm: Trustees - PR

Tuesday, September 9

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
6 pm: Music Comm - PR
6:30 pm: Youth Ministry Team - Ed Wg Rm C
7 pm: Mission Comm - PR

Wednesday, September 10

9 am: Staff Meeting - LC
5:30 pm: Tisher MMAG - PFR

Thursday, September 11

6:15 pm: First Church Handbells - Bell Rm
7:30 pm: First Church Choir - Choir Rm

Saturday, September 13

9 am: Mission Comm Meeting - LC
10 am: Quilters of First Church - LC

Sunday, September 14

9 am: Early Worship Service - PH
9 am: Treble Choir - Choir Rm
10 am: Education Hour
11 am: Worship Service - San
12 pm: Fellowship Hour - PH
5:30 pm: Fall Youth Picnic - Church Lawn

Monday, September 15

6:30 pm" Stephen Ministers - Adult Lib
7 pm: Budget & Finance - LC

Tuesday, September 16

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7 pm: Church Council - LC

Wednesday, September 17

9 am: Newsletter Folding - LC
9 am: Staff Meeting - PR
11 pm: Book Study - PR

Thursday, September 18

6:15 pm: First Church Handbells - Bell Rm
7:30 pm: First Church Choir - Choir Rm

Friday, September 19

3:45 pm: Parents for Others - Toddler Rm

Saturday, September 20

9 am: House & Grounds - LC
11:30 am: Building Staff Meeting & Lunch - LC

Sunday, September 21 (4th Grade Bible Day)

9 am: Early Worship Service - PH
9 am: Treble Choir - Choir Rm
10 am: Education Hour
11 am: Worship Service - San
12 pm: Fellowship Hour - PH
12:15 pm: Confirmation Meeting - PR
4 pm: Congregational Concert - San
5:15 pm: Concert Reception - PH
9 pm: Compline - San

Tuesday, September 23

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR
7 pm: Personnel Comm - LC

Wednesday, September 24

9 am: Staff Meeting - LC

Thursday, September 25

6:15 pm: First Church Handbells - Bell Rm
7:30 pm: First Church Choir - Choir Rm

Friday, September 26

6 pm: Faith Mission Men's Shelter Meals

Saturday, September 27

2:30 pm: Youth Group Hike - Metro Parks (TBA)
6:30 pm: Youth Lock-In - PH

Sunday, September 28 (Stewardship Kick-Off)

9 am: Early Worship Service - PH
9 am: Treble Choir - Choir Rm
10 am: Education Hour
11 am: Worship Service - San
12 pm: Fellowship Hour - PH
12:30 pm: Youth Group - Hocking Hills Zip Line

Tuesday, September 30

12 noon: First Church Care Ministry Team - PR

Need A Room ~ Phone Ahead: If you need to reserve a room for a meeting, please contact Sharon Leidheiser as far in advance as possible at 614.228.1741, ext. 11, or shar@first-church.org. We need to know when you will be here in order to plan for staffing, routine cleaning and maintenance that needs to be done each day. Your cooperation is appreciated!

Prayers

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. 22, 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.

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.



Worship CDs Available: We are now able to provide you with copies of worship services on CDs. The CDs will be available in the literature rack outside the church office after the worship service is finished. A \$1 donation for the CD is greatly appreciated and can be left in a container on the church office counter.

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

September Fellowship Hour

September 7: Amos - Judy Smith
September 14: Colossians - Tom Brownfield
September 21: Corinthians - Nancy Burba
September 28: Daniel - Bev Cooke

August & September Acolyte Schedule

August 24: Reel Chaudhri & Katie Wagner
August 31: Thomas Welsh-Huggins & Meg Rhoads
September 7: Sarah Ahrens & Katie Gies
September 14: Anna Rhoads & Cameron Wade
September 21: Allison Lange & Mikayla Knerr
September 28: Carly Kutschbach & Katie Kutschbach

Next Newsletter Deadline

Articles Due: Monday, September 8, by noon
Email: bjenks@first-church.org
Folding Team: Wed., September 17 at 9 a.m.

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
Chinyere Newsum.....Custodian
Eric Trepkoski.....Custodian
Caroline Sansbury.....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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Columbus, Ohio 43215-3885

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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

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