



“Million Dollar Investment”

By Francille M. Firebaugh, Chairperson, Board of Trustees

“Invest in the beauty of our building as a ‘ministry of space’ and a vital religious and cultural asset for the wider community and future generations.”

In support of this important Long-Range Plan objective, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to make a million dollar investment in essential deferred maintenance of the Church’s building and grounds by withdrawing \$200,000 from the principal of the Legacy Fund each year for five years. The critical nature of the maintenance needs led us to make the difficult decision. From extensive pointing and masonry repairs, to stained glass and other windows that let in rain, to the roof and front steps, work is required to avoid even more costly subsequent damage. The commitment to address deferred maintenance excludes new projects, however appropriate and appealing.

Questions that may come to mind about the financial implications of this action:

1. What about other Church needs that are currently supported by the Legacy Fund earnings?

Trustee Treasurer Bill Johannes’ analyses indicate that the realized yearly income from the Legacy Fund should cover the regular on-going expenses.

2. What about the support of the Church’s Operating Budget from the Legacy Fund earnings that has amounted to \$40,000 per year for a number of years?


Support of the Church’s Operating Budget will be reduced by \$8,000 in 2016, \$16,000 in 2017, \$24,000 in 2018, \$32,000 in 2019 and the total \$40,000 in 2020. Each year the current and future membership and friend pledges and support will have to grow to cover the reductions as we make the commitment to maintain our building.

3. Who will decide the maintenance work to undertake each year?

The House and Grounds Commission in consultation with the Board of Trustees will choose and prioritize the work items.

During the years from 2016 through 2020, the span of the Long-Range Plan: 20/20 Vision, we will address much of the deferred maintenance of our building, as a “ministry of space.” However, additional catch-up work already identified exceeds the Trustees commitment by more than an estimated \$500,000. We strongly encourage church members and friends to contribute to:

- a) the maintenance needs that cannot be met by the Trustees’ initiative,
- b) the support of high priority maintenance projects of interest to you as a donor, and
- c) the restoration of the draw down from the Legacy Fund.



Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 31
Following Combined
Worship Service at 10 a.m.
– Youth Sunday

CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

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“It is Time to March – “1, 2 and 3””

By The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

As we approach The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s 87th birthday, I have been thinking about my time spent one-on-one with Congressman John Lewis on September 30. After working for over six months to set up our meeting, I flew into Washington D.C. on the last day of sabbatical to meet the iconic Civil Rights leader. Thanks to my friendship with Congressman Bobbie Rush, I was granted 30 minutes, one-on-one with one of my heroes. What a great gift. Thank you Bobbie. Thank you John.



We ended up speaking about many things. I asked him, “When you were beaten down on the Edmund Pettis Bridge in March 1965, how did you get up?” He answered, “Faith....I had faith in God that He would pull me through. Through all my beatings, imprisonments, and my work in Congress, it is faith that saves me, faith that moves me forward. Faith – it is always faith.”

We also talked about Congressman Lewis’ graphic novels – “*March 1, 2, 3.*” Do you know about these books? Let me ask the question another way: what *New York Times* best seller has more pictures than words?

If you know the answer, you must be aware of Congressman John Lewis’ *March 1*, *March 2* and soon to be released *March 3*. Using the powerful life story of John Lewis, author Andrew Aydin and illustrator Nate Powell bring the Civil Rights Movement to life in the March series. This unlikely trinity of storytellers has rejuvenated the powerful witness of John Lewis in his 75th year of life.

In *March 1*, we jump into John Lewis’ story with the beatings on Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965. The entire story is framed inside the first inauguration of Barack Obama and wrapped around that story as we step into John’s early life on the farm in Pike County, Alabama. We see John grow into his role as a Civil Rights leader at a very young age. We go all the way through the Nashville Sit-in Movement.

March 2 takes us from the Nashville to the Freedom Rides, the Birmingham Movement all the way through the March on Washington. The fast pace story and historic depth is tremendous.

There inside Congressman Lewis’ Cannon House Office Building in Washington D.C. I was honored to spend time with two of the three March authors - Andrew Aydin and John Lewis as this unlikely pair told me the back story of March. John Lewis became a U.S. congressman for Georgia’s 5th congressional district in 1987. While working on his 2008 reelection campaign, Lewis told his telecommunications and technology policy aide, Andrew Aydin, about The Montgomery Story and its influence. Now famous for reaching millions of children and youth during the 1960’s, The Montgomery Story told of the Montgomery bus boycott movement of 1955 and 1956. Andrew convinced Congressman Lewis to make a graphic novel about his life. John agreed but only if Andrew would write the story. When they found Nate Powell, the illustrator added “punch” to the powerful story line.

A growing body of evidence points to more and more children not reading in America today. The greatest non-readers are young boys. Graphic Novels and comic books have become one of the main sources of getting young boys to read. Once they are readers they will never stop. The evidence also points to that fact.

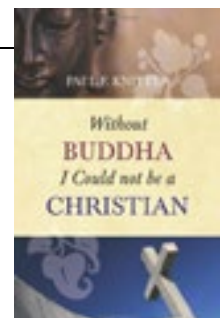
When I picked up *March 1* and *March 2*, I intended to simply have Congressman Lewis autograph the books and give them away as a gift. Once I started reading the books, I could not put them down. They are great reads. Congressman Lewis and Andrew told me that the books are now required freshmen reading at Georgia State University, Michigan State University and Marquette University. *March 1* was also ranked #2 on The Village Voice’s 2014 list “The 10 Most Subversive Comics at New York Comic Con.”

I encourage everyone who reads this to buy *March 1,2,3*. Read them. Become versed in the Civil Rights Movement – or refresh your memory. When you are done, give them away as gifts to your children and grandchildren as you honor the memory of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Holiday Weekend.

Speaking of Marching, I will be speaking at the Martin Luther King Center on Monday, January 18 as part of the Holiday Celebration of Dr. King. We will step off in our March late that afternoon. I hope you will join me as we march together.

Next Book Study Selection:
Without Buddha I Could Not Be Christian
by Paul F. Knitter

The Book Study Group will discuss this book on Wednesday, January 20 at 11 a.m. in the Parlor.



Heather Giffen to be Ordained into Christian Ministry

By The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

On January 17 at 3 p.m., the entire congregation is invited to the ordination of Ms. Heather Giffen into Christian Ministry. Heather grew up in our First Church family. She was baptized and confirmed in our church. Having completed her undergraduate degree at Muskingum University in New Concord, Ohio and then having completed her Master of Divinity degree at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Minnesota, and having received the call to Christian Ministry as an Associate Pastor of the Church of the Apostles United Church of Christ in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Heather is ready to be ordained.

The members and friends of First Church are proud of Heather! She has shown tremendous leadership in this church and other congregations in her early years of ministry. Now, we have the opportunity to stand with her on her special day as she steps forward as an ordained pastor of the United Church of Christ. We will be blessed all day with preachers of influence and distinction in Heather's life. In the morning, The Rev. Marlene Whiterabbit-Helgemo will preach at both the 9 and 11 a.m. services. Then at 3 p.m., our preacher will be The Rev. Deb Click.

Rev. Whiterabbit-Helgemo is the minister of All Nations Indian Church, UCC in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is a member of the Ho-Chunk nation. Ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, she has worked with their National American Indian organizations while serving All Nations. Since 2006, she has been the interim director and now interim co-director of the Council for American Indian Ministries of the UCC. She has been Heather's mentor for her ordination process.

Rev. Click is the minister and founder of The Oasis, UCC in Pickerington, Ohio. The Oasis has been part of the UCC for four years. Since 2000, she has served as a chaplain at Heartland Hospice. Before serving as a chaplain, she served in congregational settings as an ordained minister since 1988. Heather has shadowed Rev. Click in her role as chaplain and invited Heather to give presentations at The Oasis.

Stewardship 2016 – Getting Closer to our Goal

By Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Our 2016 Stewardship Campaign Stands at 78% of our goal! Thanks to the generosity and commitments of 205 households of faith, we have reached \$626,064 in pledge commitments. We are behind last year's pledging numbers by \$49,500. With the costs of staff benefits increasing and simply the "cost of doing business," we need at least 10-15% more income to present a balanced budget for 2016. In other words, we need every member to respond in love and thanksgiving for our church's ministries and missions. We need all of us to step up and pledge for the coming year.

If you have not pledged for 2016, click here <https://www.faithstreet.com/church/first-congregational-church-of-columbus-columbus-oh/giving> and go to the website. Pledge right now. You can also pledge by calling Sharon Leidheiser at 614-228-1741, ext. 11 or by emailing Sharon at Sleidheiser@first-church.org. Together we can reach our goal and grow forward in 2016. Thank you – everyone!

2016 Annual Congregational Meeting – January 31 following Worship at 10 a.m.

by Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

We will have ONE service of worship on January 31 at 10 a.m. and will follow the service with our 164th Annual Congregational Meeting at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary. In addition to receiving reports from the Boards, Commissions, Committees, Church Council leadership and staff, we will also vote on the annual budget and the slate of nominees who have stepped up to serve in 2016. We will also receive and vote on our Long Range Plan for 2016-2020 - "20/20 – A Vision for the Future."

Following the meeting, all are invited to Parish Hall for our Fourth Annual Chili Cook-off! Please mark your calendar and plan to attend our annual congregational meeting.

We are Congregationalists and this Congregational meeting is our way of being together and forming our life in community. It is what our forbearers called the "Congregational Way." We hope everyone comes and enjoys the worship, fellowship, and organizational sharing and votes, and food and table fellowship.

Mark your calendars.... The Congregational Meeting is always held on the last Sunday of January every year. If you don't believe me, check out your Constitution. See you at 10, 11 and 12 on 1/31/16.

Sermon Titles for January 2016

January 3 – Christmas II

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Ahrens

Communion Meditation: “To Begin Again”

Texts: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:1-18

January 10 – The Baptism of Our Lord

Preacher: Rev. Emily Corzine

Baptismal Meditation: “Claimed”

Texts: Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29, Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 17 – Second Sunday After Epiphany

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday

Preacher: Rev. Deb Click

Texts: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; I Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

January 24 – Third Sunday After Epiphany

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Ahrens

Sermon: “In Word and Deed”

Texts: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19, I Corinthians 12:21-31a; Luke 4:14-21

January 31 – Fourth Sunday After Epiphany – one service at 10am

164th Annual Congregational Meeting – Youth Sunday

Texts: Jeremiah 1:4-20; Psalm 71:1-6; I Corinthians 13; Luke 4:21-30

We Make the Road by Walking

Want to start your New Year off with something new? What about an short devotional each week where you can interact with others from the comfort of your own home? We've started a once a week devotional post on a Facebook page. Brian McLaren's book, *We Make the Road by Walking*, is a year long quest for spiritual formation. There are short chapters, followed by discussion questions. Each Monday a chapter's scripture will be posted. Read the scripture and engage in dialogue by posting back on Facebook. There are books available in the main office or Amazon.com or Kindle. Come and renew your spiritual journey in 2016.

Here's the link: <https://www.facebook.com/We-Make-the-Road-by-Walking-at-First-Church-UCC-915051775208678/>

Come and see how God is calling you into a deeper relationship this year. If you have questions getting started, please contact Emily Corzine at ecorzine@first-church.org

Grace and Peace,

Emily



Education

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



Adult Education Starts New Year!

The Adult Education classes on Sunday morning start the year with two new tracks which will entice many to attend. Rev. Mary Kay Beall Carter will lead the “Opening the Word” track with “The UCC Stillspeaking Bible Study.” This is a wonderful five-week study for those who are new to the UCC and those who would enjoy a refresher concerning our denomination. The “Life and Faith” track will begin with a series of classes on “Debating in Good Faith.” Chris Gelpi will lead us through the challenges of discourse as a people of faith.

Rev. Tim Ahrens will then facilitate a class on “Bread Initiatives” on January 10. The Long-Range Planning committee will also be hosting information sessions on the new proposed Long-Range Plan that will go before the congregation at the Annual Meeting. The Education Hour begins each Sunday at 10 a.m. on the first floor of the Education Wing.

Youth Groups Help With BOBS

Our middle and high school youth group members came bright and early on what for most was their first day of vacation to help wrap presents, decorate, cut celery and onions, pull bread and write messages of greetings for Bethlehem on Broad Street guests. Thank you, youth groups! What a blessing!

Attention Middle and High School Youth

The Youth Groups will be traveling to Snow Trails for a fun evening of snow tubing on Friday, January 15, 2016 if we have snow. The cost is only \$10 for each youth. We will meet in the parking lot of Costco in Polaris at 4:30 p.m. The deadline to register is January 13. More information will be posted throughout the church. For more information, contact Mark S. Williams.

Spring Retreat Set for April 15-19

This year’s spring retreat will be Friday evening, April 15, through Sunday morning, April 17, at Pilgrim Hills camp and retreat center. It is located about an hour northeast of Columbus off Route 62 at Brinkhaven. Please mark your calendars and plan to bring your whole family or just yourself. Brochures and registration forms will be in the church office and on the website after March 10. Deadline for registration is April 10. We have space for 90 people – let’s fill it! See Mark S. Williams for more information.

Youth Mission Trips Agreements

Agreement to Participate forms for the West Franklinton Youth Mission Trip and the UCC National Youth Event at Disney are now available in the church office and after each service in the Parish Hall. Brochures are also available with details about the trip. Make plans now and get your name on the list. There is a separate form for youth and one for adults for each event. The first deadline for deposit is January 17, 2016. We are asking a \$50 deposit for each participant. This West Franklinton trip will be June 5-10, 2016 and the UCC National Youth Event will be July 26-30. Please see Mark S. Williams for more details.

“And the Children will lead them....”

The children and youth of First Congregational Church invite you to join them in a year-long mission project called “Laundry Love.” “Laundry Love” is an initiative in partnership with individuals, groups and local Laundromats throughout the US. The initiative helps to wash the clothes and bedding of individuals and/or families living in poverty. From the infant to the aged, and across a broad spectrum of ethnicity, culture and personal story, Laundry Love seeks to nurture the well being of each person through intentional networking and friendship.

The Children and Youth will be collecting quarters and donations of laundry detergent and dryer sheets from the congregation. We would love for members and friends to join us the last Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7pm at WashLand Laundromat, 1469 West Broad Street in West Franklinton to serve those in need. Justice and Mercy Commission, Good Samaritan Fund and The Gladden House are also partnering with this important mission. This is the first step in connecting with the West Franklinton community as the youth prepare to serve the area on the 2016 Mission Trip. So start saving your quarters and donate to this worthy cause. The next Laundry Love day will be January 26th. Come join us in serving those in need.



From the Minister of Music

By Kevin Jones, Minister of Music

(kjones@first-church.org)



Choir News

Rehearsal/Liturgical Appearance Schedules

Treble Choir – Retreat Day January 9, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Rehearsals January 17, 25, 31 at 9 a.m.

No rehearsals January 3, January 10

Teen Choir – Rehearsals January 10, 17, 25, 31 at 9 a.m.

No rehearsals January 3

First Church Ringers – Rehearsal January 28

First Church Choir – Rehearsals January 7, 14, 28

Sing in Worship January 10, 17, 24, 31 (10 a.m. worship)

No rehearsals January 21

We do not sing in Worship on January 3

Special Twelfth Night Concerts



The Early Interval is returning to Europe for its annual celebration of Twelfth Night. The program will be presented in the neo-gothic splendor of First Congregational Church in downtown Columbus.

“A Twelfth Night Celebration: Cakes and All” will be presented on Saturday, January 9, at 8 p.m. (7:30 p.m. Pre-Concert Lecture); and Sunday, January 10, at 3:30 p.m. (3 p.m. Pre-Concert Lecture). Inspired by Shakespeare’s words, The Early Interval explores European Twelfth Night traditions at court and in the village, in chapels and taverns. The religious observances of Twelfth Night and the Feast of Epiphany also brought about secular celebrations with traditional food and drink. We offer a banquet of sounds and tastes to bring your holiday season to a memorable close.

The concerts will fill the resonant neo-gothic sanctuary of First Congregational Church with the sounds of voices, recorders, crumhorns, bagpipes, vielle, violas da gamba, violin, lute, vihuela, theorbo, Baroque guitar and early percussion instruments.

Single tickets are \$30 (regular price), \$25 (seniors ages 62+) and \$12 (students with current school ID). Order online through www.earlymusicincolumbus.org or call 614-861-4569. Tickets purchased after December 31 will be held at the door and may be picked up 75 minutes prior to concert time. Tickets may also be purchased at the door the evening/afternoon of the concert or in advance by calling the CAPA ticket office (614-469-0939) or Ticketmaster (800-745-3000).

Music News

Concert by The Rose Ensemble

Early Music in Columbus brings The Rose Ensemble to First Church on Friday, February 5, at 8:00 p.m. (7:30 p.m. Pre-Concert Lecture). Their program is titled *Il Poverello – Exploring the Life and Deeds of St. Francis of Assisi*. The Rose Ensemble takes us on a journey across the rustic countryside of Umbria and Tuscany to the spectacular churches of Florence and Rome. This joyful program features centuries of hymns, dances, and motets, as well as early Italian-language spiritual songs and lighthearted readings about and written by Francis himself.

Founded in 1996 by Artistic Director Jordan Šrámek, The Rose Ensemble has achieved an international reputation as a premier American early music ensemble. Each performance illuminates centuries of rarely heard repertoire, bringing to modern audiences research from the world's manuscript libraries and fresh perspectives on history, culture, politics and spirituality from around the globe. With 10 critically acclaimed recordings and a diverse selection of concert programs, the group has thrilled audiences across the United States and Europe with repertoire spanning 1,000 years and more than 25 languages.

Single tickets are \$30 (regular price), \$25 (seniors ages 62+) and \$12 (students with current school ID). Order online through www.earlymusicincolumbus.org or call 614-861-4569. Tickets may also be purchased at the door the evening/afternoon of the concert or in advance by calling the CAPA ticket office (614-469-0939) or Ticketmaster (800-745-3000).



First Tuesdays

Organist David Crean presents a recital on Tuesday, February 2 at 12:15 p.m. Please check the concerts website, www.concertsatfirstchurch, for more information.

Church News



New Members December 2015

We are excited to welcome seven new members into the life of First Congregational Church on Sunday December 13, 2015. We hope that you'll seek them out and introduce yourselves to them and help them connect to the many things in our life together. Our next new member class is planned for early 2016. If you are interested in membership, please contact Rev.

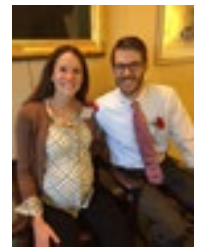
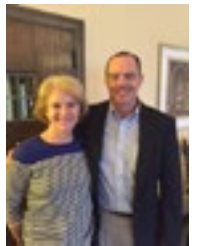
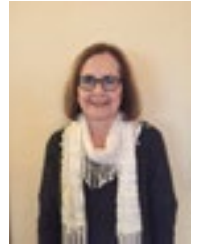
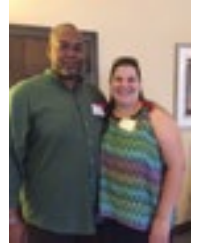
Emily Corzine at ecorzine@first-church.org or Amy Wagner in the church office at awagner@first-church.org.

Natalie and Scott Barker Natalie and Scott have been worshipping with us First Church since the summer. Natalie is a nanny during the week and on Sundays she works in our nursery providing childcare during services and education hour. Natalie grew up in a UCC church in Burton, Ohio. Scott is a native of Columbus, but lived many years in Miami, Florida. Scott is a courier for Premier Services. Natalie likes to bake and is the author of a children's book. Scott likes reading and writing and anything technical. They live in East Columbus.

Penny Casey Penny, a retired school nurse, is joining First Congregational Church as an Associate Member. She and her husband, Terry, have connections with North Broadway United Methodist Church. She has already engaged in the Wednesday book study. She loves reading and volunteering. They live in Clintonville.

Loretta and Joe Hoffman Loretta and Joe found First Church over the summer and were looking for a church they could call home. They are regular worship attendees at the 9am service, and love our Fair Trade coffee. Joe, a native of Boston, MA, is in business management and loves cycling. Loretta grew up in Northwest Iowa. They met at a wedding. Loretta enjoys bicycling, gardening and tutoring ESL.

Elizabeth Mitchell and Trenton (Trent) Rink Elizabeth and Trent were married here at First Church in 2012. Elizabeth grew up in the Cincinnati area. Trent, a native of Worthington, grew up attending a Lutheran church. They are both physicians and are in their medical residency fellowships this year. Trent is a Radiology Fellow at The Ohio State University. Elizabeth is a Cardiology Fellow at Nationwide Children's Hospital. They are expecting twin boys in February 2016.



Thank You – Cookie Mission Update

Thank you to everyone who baked, packaged and delivered cookies to shut-ins and other members of First Church. We delivered over 40 tins and visited with many people. Our Good Samaritan guests also received cookies and were very thankful for the holiday treat. Blessings to all of you for your help!



Church News

First Church Joys and Concerns

MEMBERS: Arlene Reynolds, Paul Flocken and family, on the death of their granddaughter and niece, Rebekah Salser-Hambor; Bob Davis, on the death of his mother; Joe Baszynski, on the death of his grandmother Loraine Hanson; Gerhard Wolff; Christina Holt; Martha Loy; Lucille Kropp; Grace Glaros; Bernie Martin; Van Barndt; Ray Pendell; Wib Smith; and for families and friends who continue to mourn the loss of loved ones.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY: Carolyn Spellman, mother of Loretta Hoffman; Jim Williams, brother of Mark Williams; Michael Harbin and Warren McPherson, on the death of Warren's father, Thomas; Alfred Castillo, uncle of Ed Solis; Nell Cole's brother; and Jill Ford, friend of Mark Williams.

In God's Hands: The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: This month in the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray with and for the following people and churches:

- *Week of January 3:* Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and the Occupied Palestine Territories
- *Week of January 10:* Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen, Iran and Iraq
- *Week of January 17:* Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey
- *Week of January 24:* Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia
- *Week of January 31:* Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden

If you have any prayer requests or joys to share, please contact the church office (awagner@first-church.org or 228-1741, ext. 10) or one of the ministers (ecorzine@first-church.org or 228-1741, ext. 21 or minister@first-church.org or 228-1741, ext. 13).

Address for Arlene Reynolds and Paul Flocken: 5643 Slater Ridge, Hilliard, Ohio 43026

Recent Celebration Gifts to First Church

By Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

Given to the G. Dene Barnard Music Fund in memory of Carol Hussey by Deborah Wood, Edward and Stephanie Thomas, Edward and Nicole O'Reilly, David and Nancy Prescott, Jones Middle School, John and Francille Firebaugh, Robert and Mary Knapp, John and Mary Kay Carter, Jim and Carol Gallagher, Drew and Lissa Wade, Bert and Bev Cook, Bob and Diane Kutschbach, HSC-Central Ohio, George and Joyce Regan, Carol Winans, William and Janet Boyd, Karen Myers, and Gerry and Marty Worth.

Given to the Missions Endowment Fund, the Knight-Perry Fund in memory of Rev. Keene Lebold, to the Gladden Lecture Fund in memory of Dr. Amos White, Jr., and to the Stained Glass Fund in celebration of Rick Sayre, a dedicated church volunteer by Tom Worley and Nancy Loy.

Support your favorite ministry by making a gift in honor or remembrance of a loved one by completing the Celebration Gift form found in the church pews or the Endowment Fund Giving Form on the church website at www.first-church.org/EndowmentFunds.aspx

Our 2015 Mission Offerings - With Gratitude!

With great appreciation, we send our thanks to members and visitors who contributed to the Mission Offerings each week in 2015. We collected \$48,240.54 for over 40 ministries and mission programs in our community, nation and world (from United Church of Christ ministries to Church World Service to Community Shelter Board to Good Samaritan Program and Faith Mission, among many others). These contributions go to support the work of vulnerable groups among us and help strengthen the care that those individuals receive. We are grateful for your generous support throughout the year to these mission offerings and the ongoing work of the ministries and mission of First Congregational Church. A full account of the 2015 Mission Offerings will be listed in the 2015 Annual Report.

Church News

Church Members Invited to Discuss Long-Range Plan

First Church's Long-Range Planning Committee invites members of the congregation to discuss the proposed long-range plan on Sunday, January 17, at 12:15 p.m. and Sunday, January 24, at 10 a.m. at the church. Members may attend either session. The agenda will be the same for both sessions.

Appointed by Church Council last February, the Long-Range Planning Committee worked eight months to prepare a plan for 2016 to 2020 that would replace a long-range plan adopted by the congregation in 2011. Church Council voted in November to recommend that the congregation adopt the proposed plan at the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 31.

The proposed plan is organized around six action words: worship, welcome, connect, engage, build, and communicate. The plan may be read on the church's website at:

<http://www.first-church.org/Downloads/LRP%20final%20draft%202011-17-15A.pdf>

The Long-Range Planning Committee also prepared a series of supplemental materials with additional information and research related to the plan. These addenda to the plan will not be presented for adoption, but they can be read on the church's website at: <http://www.first-church.org/Downloads/LRP%20addenda%2010-15-2015.pdf>

Church Council News

Council Report for November and December

Elaine Warren, Moderator

November and December were busy and productive months for Council.

Council took action to approve the mortgage proposal from the Committee to Refinance the West Lot, led by David Holt. A Special Congregational Meeting was called for December 6, 2015, following the 11 a.m. service. The proposal was presented by David Holt, and following some very pertinent questions, the vote was a unanimous 120 in favor of the proposal. We are looking forward to an anticipated closing date of December 30, 2015.

In a related matter, Council approved the establishment of the West Lot Fund (monies remaining from The Future's Broadening Way that will be invested with the trustees and used to help pay the mortgage each year until the debt is retired).

Council voted to recommend the Long-Range Plan 2015-2020: The 20/20 Vision to the congregation for adoption at our Annual Meeting on January 31, 2016. The committee responsible for the plan met for most of the past year under the leadership of The Rev. Dan Clark and Steve Sterrett.

The Rev. Emily Corzine's Member Ministry Advisory Group comprises of Mary Weaver, Bobby Carrington, Alec Dietz, Malini Gnanatheeban, and Tom Brownfield, was approved by Council.

Council moved that the "council elects" each year meet beginning in September to develop the goals in moving forward the Long-Range Plan.

The Justice and Mercy Commission's request for expenditures from the Mission Endowment Fund was approved: the Downtowners will receive \$250 and Church World Service will receive \$2,750 for their work with Syrian refugees.

The Board of Trustees reported to Council that the Trustees have voted to take \$200,000 for each of the next five years from the Legacy Fund to be used for needed deferred maintenance on our physical structure.

Deb Thompson reported to Council the work she is doing for us around social media. We are becoming better in this area. For example, there will be a Facebook discussion of the McLaren book, *We Make the Road by Walking*, led by Mark Williams and The Rev. Emily Corzine.

January Calendar of Church Events

Friday, January 1

Church Office Closed all day

Sunday, January 3

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Education Wing,
Rooms C and D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary

Monday, January 4

7 p.m. – Hebrew / Christian Scripture Study – Parish Hall

Tuesday, January 5

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
5:30 p.m. – Sacred Earth – Large Conference Room
6:30 pm – Christian Education Committee –
Education Wing Room D
7p.m. – Justice and Mercy – Large Conference Room

Wednesday, January 6

11 a.m. – Book Study: *Showdown* – Parlor

Thursday, January 7

7:30 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Saturday, January 9

7:30 p.m. – Early Music Concert

Sunday, January 10

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Teen/Treble Choirs – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Education Wing,
Rooms C and D
10 a.m. – BREAD Discussion – Large Conference Room
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary – New Members Join
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
6 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting – Parish Hall

Monday, January 11

9 a.m. – Good Samaritan Day
7 p.m. – Hebrew / Christian Scripture Study – Parish Hall
7 p.m. – Trustees – Large Conference Room
7 p.m. – Deacon's Meeting – Education Wing Room D

Tuesday, January 12

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
7 p.m. – Church Council and Budget and Finance
Special Meeting – Large Conference Room

Wednesday, January 13

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Large Conference Room
6 p.m. – Music Committee Meeting – Parlor

Thursday, January 14

7:30 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Friday, January 15

4:30 p.m. – Snow Tuning – meet at Costco Parking Lot at
Polaris

Saturday, January 16

9:30 a.m. – House and Grounds – Parish Family Room

Sunday, January 17

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Teen/Treble Choirs – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Education Wing,
Rooms C and D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
3 p.m. – Heather Giffen's Service of Ordination –
Sanctuary
6 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting – Parish Hall

Monday, January 18

Office Closed for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

Tuesday, January 19

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room

Wednesday, January 20

11 a.m. – Book Study: *Without Buddha I Could Not Be
Christian* – Parlor

Thursday, January 21

7:30 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Sunday, January 24

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Teen/Treble Choirs – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Education Wing,
Rooms C and D
10 a.m. – Long-Range Plan Discussion –
Large Conference Room
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary – New Members Join
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
6 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting – Parish Hall

Monday, January 25

7 p.m. – Hebrew / Christian Scripture Study – Parish Hall

Tuesday, January 26

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
6 p.m. – Laundry Love – WashLand Laundromat, 1469
West Broad Street

January Calendar Continued

Wednesday, January 27

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Large Conference Room
6 p.m. – Music Committee Meeting – Parlor

Thursday, January 28

6:15 p.m. – First Church Ringers Rehearsal –
Education Wing Room J
7:30 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Saturday, January 30

10 a.m. – Youth Sunday Rehearsal – Sanctuary
1 p.m. – Youth Fudge Making – Kitchen

Sunday, January 31 Youth Sunday

9 a.m. – Teen/Treble Choirs – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
11 a.m. – Annual Meeting – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
6 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting – Parish Hall

Member Birthdays in January

1/1 Priscilla Mondiek
1/2 Gerry Worth
Laurie Maynell
1/3 Rick Welch
Jonah Knueve
1/4 Sarah Giffen
Jorge Polo
William Kientz II
Mark Williams
Quinn Leidheiser
1/5 James Woodard
Tom Hadley II
1/6 Emily Cooke
1/7 Harry Guynn
Gary Gray
1/8 Michael Bishop
Brad Keely
1/9 Carl Gelfius
1/11 Ray Pendell
1/12 Linda Mumford
1/13 Jim Fewlass
Eddie Fleurant
Abby Cave
Kendra Worley
1/14 Katie Waller
Emily Bennett
1/15 Thom Smith
1/16 Pam Kallner
Lisa Warrick
Phil Atkins
Maggie Myers

1/17 Alyssa Batchelor
Caroline Zeiger
1/18 Joe Cheng
1/19 Jordan Cole
Cameron Wade
1/20 John Deliman
Mike Henderson
Catherine Baird
1/22 Sebby Kulwicki
1/24 Joyce Ward
Sarah Lange
Kevin Butler
Benjamin Hunter
1/25 Aryn Mason
Jack Koscher
Chase Washington
1/26 Gunter Garbe
Julie Stewart
1/27 Tanya Miller
1/28 Teresa Polo
Alec Deitz
Katie Kutschbach
1/29 Jane Ward
Amy Fulton
Wayne Henry
Sarah Mitchell
1/31 Hamish Baird
Laura Collins

Member Anniversaries in January

1/5 Malina Gnanatheeban and Pavan Peter
1/16 James and Carol Woodard
1/17 Andrea Rower and Nick Brukelmeyer

Please let us know...

if you have a new address, telephone number or email address, or if we've missed your birthday or anniversary. We strive to keep our database as accurate as possible, but we need your input to keep us up-to-date.

Thank you!

Amy Wagner, Office Manager (awagner@first-church.org)

January Fellowship Hour Schedule

January 3	Kings
January 10	Leviticus
January 17	Micah
January 24	Numbers
January 31	Proverbs

January Offering Schedule

January 3	Crossroads
January 10	Church World Services - Safe Water Project
January 17	BREAD
January 24	Columbus Coalition for the Homeless
January 31	Good Samaritan Fund

January Acolyte Schedule

January 3	Alex Palmer	Nick Boriin
January 10	Allysia Palmer	Finnegan Miller
January 17	Alyssa Batchelor	Courtney Batchelor
January 24	Alaina Thompson	Nina Zimmerman
January 31	Trenton Helmer	Nick Boriin

January Crucifer Schedule

January 10	Eddie Anderson
January 17	Adam Wade
January 24	Joe Spofforth
January 31	Cameron Wade



**Service of Ordination for
Heather Giffen
Sunday January 17, 2016 at
3 p.m.
Reception to follow**

FIRST CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Senior Minister Timothy C. Ahrens, D. Min.
Associate Minister Emily Krause Corzine, M. Div.
Minister of Music Kevin Jones, M. M.
Director of Christian Education Mark S. Williams, M. Ed.
Commissioned Minister for Social Justice Tom Brownfield
Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction Jacquelyn Dean
Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus G. Dene Barnard
Treble Choir Director Sandra Mathias, Ph.D.

DIACONATE

Senior Deacon Tom Kiesel
Deacons Kathryn Bamberger, Sandy Bennett, Kris Brant, Valerie Conlin-Losinski, Sue Cook, Jacquelyn Dean, Alec Dietz, Dean Hafey, Anne Hudson, Paul Leidheiser, Mary Lightbody, Jonathan Miller, Hugh Schultz, Lynn Wallich

CHURCH STAFF

Business Manager Sharon Leidheiser
Program Manager Martha Worth
Office Manager Amy Wagner
Building Manager Thomas Santiago
Custodian William Lee, Jimmy Sibrian, Onofre Franco-Chavez
Wedding Coordinators Janet Axt, Margaret Cipriani
Nursery Staff Evin Wimberly, Simone Ellerson, Natalie Barker, Taylre Arnold

CHURCH OFFICERS

Moderator Elaine Warren
Moderator-Elect Brian Cave
Treasurer Joe Baszynski
Assistant Treasurer Cindy Conn
Secretary Deana Armstrong
Assistant Secretary Nancy Braverman

COMMISSIONERS

Administration Kent Shimeall
Administration-Elect Allison Palmer
Church Growth Scott Jones
Church Growth-Elect Kim Hopcraft
Education Todd Jacobson
Education-Elect Jennifer Okezie-Watts
House & Grounds Gary Leidheiser
House & Ground-Elect Charlie Weaver
Justice & Mercy Alex Rodriguez
Justice & Mercy-Elect Tracy Ross
Music, Arts, Heritage Marti Baumer
Music, Arts, Heritage-Elect Al Waddell
Church Vitality Melissa Kulwicki
Church Vitality-Elect Denise Vogt
Nominating Chair Frank Cook
Trustees Francille Firebaugh
Member-at-large Matt Myers
Youth-at-large Merry Roach
Deacon Council Rep. Lynn Wallich



FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH

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

:01