



Holy Week Begins March 25

Easter is April 1 – no Joke...

...Let us Rejoice as God's Forgiven Ones to Meet the Risen Christ!

By Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ.

We are weak, but you are strong.

You are held in honor, but we in disrepute." – I Corinthians 4:10

Later this month, Holy Week arrives at First Church. On March 25, we will worship at 9 and 11 a.m. to celebrate Palm/Passion Sunday. This begins the walk to the cross and ultimately the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. On Thursday, March 29, we celebrate Maundy Thursday with dinner at 6 p.m. and the service of Tenebrae to follow at 7:30 p.m. On Good Friday, March 30, we worship at 7:30 p.m. with Victoria's "St. John Passion" presented by the choir. On April 1, we worship at 7 a.m., 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m. with breakfast for all at 10 a.m.

Easter Falls on April 1 – or April Fool's Day this year. This has not happened since 1956. We know that Easter has its origins with Resurrection of Christ. However, the origins of April Fool's Day are not as clear. But, we do know our connection to being fools for Christ. It comes from the Apostle Paul.

The Apostle Paul calls us "Fools for Christ" in I Corinthians 4:10. By this he means those who are "on fire for God" or those who demonstrate ways of loving and living which inspire others to follow by example. To show a burning passion for loving God and following Christ is a beautiful thing. To have such a fire for the Gospel or to be a "Fool for Christ" can take many different forms.

Recently, I heard a story of a woman on "Fire for God." My friend, our new member and my fellow Associate of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, Carol Bensing, shares her faith in a beautiful way. Carol goes to Mohun Health Care Center at the Dominican Motherhouse to meet weekly with sisters and other residents who suffer from Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease. She takes a basket each week with items they can talk about and projects they can work on together. It is beautiful and simple and opens them up to be together and to talk – something that is rare in their world which closes in on them a little more each day. The resurrected Christ comes alive when Carol arrives with her basket of love. Light shines on them through this woman On Fire for God.

So many of you are on fire for God – which is a true sign of resurrection faith. I have seen people on fire for God who change the world. Right now, the teens of America are rising and on fire for God. They want to be safe and unafraid in their own schools and communities. They are rising on behalf those whose lives were cut short through gun violence. This is manifestation of resurrection from the dead.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR ALL HOLY WEEK SERVICES

MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 29

6 p.m. Dinner and Holy Communion – Parish Hall

7:30 p.m. Tenebrae Service – Sanctuary

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 30

7:30 p.m. The Solemn Liturgy for Good Friday
featuring Victoria's "St. John Passion"

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 1

7 a.m. Sunrise Service – Broad Street entrance steps

8:45 and 11 a.m. Easter Services – Sanctuary

10 a.m. Congregational Brunch – Parish Hall

In this issue...

Lenten Sermon Series	page 2
Education News	page 3
Music News	page 7
House and Grounds News	page 9
Church News	page 10
Justice and Mercy News	page 11
Joys and Concerns	page 13
Calendar of Events	page 16
Birthdays and Anniversaries	page 17

I believe in the power of God's resurrection in Jesus Christ. I know Christ is raised because I see resurrection all around me all the time. I see resurrection in the faces, words, and lives of our children at church when they sing, dance, smile and share their lives with me and others. I see resurrection when the seemingly impossible odds we face when battling illnesses are overcome and we walk in the light of God's love once again. I see resurrection in the faces of those who battle through suffering and find their strength to stand and walk again. All of these resurrections are "physical" and all of them are spiritual as well. If Christ is not raised, then how do his people continue to rise and walk in the light of his faith, hope, and love?

I have been a witness of the Risen Christ alive and well at First Church! I have seen God's love and spirit bursting in our church! I see young leaders stepping up in wonderful new ways. I see young choirs leading us in worship. I see older members growing in delight as we grow and flourish in the heart of the city. I see a church that all ages love in a city they love – being and becoming a Resurrection Community! It has been a beautiful sight to behold. Thanks be to God!

No one person or group can make the church happen. No one preacher with words that reach great heights of oratory, no flaming enthusiasm from any one member can awaken and serve the church today. So, breathe in the Holy Spirit! Stop complaining about what isn't happening and start breathing deep, smiling, laughing, discovering the joy and the spirit alive at First Church and come join us on the exciting journey ahead.

Lent ends on March 30. Easter begins on April 1. Be a "fool for Christ." Be on fire for God. Easter is Around the Corner!

The Risen Christ is alive and well at First Church – thanks be to God! May He dwell in your heart as people of Resurrection Joy as you step into these early days of Spring and Easter 2018.

In the words of N.T. Wright, "let us colonize earth with the life of heaven." Let us Arise, meet the Risen Christ and be Resurrection People!

March 4 – Lent III

Sermon Title: *"Tearing Down: An Inventory for Forgiving Hearts"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, John 2:13-22

March 11 – Lent IV

Sermon Title: *"Building Up: Love Converts the Forgiving Heart"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Numbers 21:4-9, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21

March 18 – Lent V

Sermon Title: *"A Forgiving Life: Offered to God"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16, Hebrews 5:5-10, John 12:20-33

March 25 – Palm/Passion Sunday

Sermon Title: *"The Beginning of Forgiveness: Reconciled and Restored"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Isaiah 50: 4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Mark 14:1-15 or John 12:12-16

March 30 – Good Friday

Sermon Title: *"Father Forgive Us"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 7-9

April 1 – Easter Sunday

Sermon Title: *"Rising With the Forgiving One"* – The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

Texts: Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25: 6-9, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43, John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

The Nehemiah Action Assembly

Monday, May 7 – Celeste Center at the Ohio State Fairgrounds

by The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

On Monday night, May 7, more than 3,000 people from 48+ congregations of the BREAD Organization will gather at The Celeste Center on the Ohio State Fairgrounds to lift our voices for social justice. I hope you are there with us.

The First Congregational UCC Justice Ministry Network made up of 49 people has commitments from over 200 people. I hope you are in this mix. Let's celebrate our church's 165+ years of justice efforts in Columbus. We need to bring our friends, co-workers, family and neighbors. Let's make this happen.

I know you care about the problems facing our city and all Central Ohio. I know you want to be a part of the solution. Come to the BREAD Nehemiah Assembly on May 7. Come and make a difference in our work for Justice. More details will follow through emails, in the church office, through the BREAD Justice Ministry Network members contacting you. Let's make this a great celebration for justice action. Contact Robert Reber (robert.reber1@gmail.com, 614-353-8371) or Barbara Glover (bglover202@gmail.com, 614-393-6243) or one of these Justice Ministry Network members to sign-up.

Question: Co-Ed Softball Team?

Answer: *Not Unless we have a committed core and coach*

by The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

If you are interested in a softball team for the summer of 2018, please contact Rev. Ahrens ASAP. Last year we had inconsistent presence on Sunday afternoons. If we have a guaranteed core of 15 players and a coach, we can proceed. If not, there will be no team this summer. Your "yes" means "yes" to most of the 14-game schedule. We need real commitments. We also need to hear from you by March 14. This is the only announcement I will offer in the newsletter. We will also share this in the weekly Depart to Serve for the next few weeks.

You don't need to be a member to play! If you have a "friend of First" (read – your friend as you are a member of First Church), let us know. We would begin the season in late April if we field a team. All games are played at the Anhauser-Busch Fields just off S.R. 315 between Henderson and Bethel Roads. All games are played Sunday afternoons between 1 and 4 p.m. for start times. The games last one hour. Contact me at tahrens@first-church.org or call, 614-228-1741, ext. 13.

Writing in the Sand By Thomas Moore

Wednesday Book Group Begins a new Book on March 7

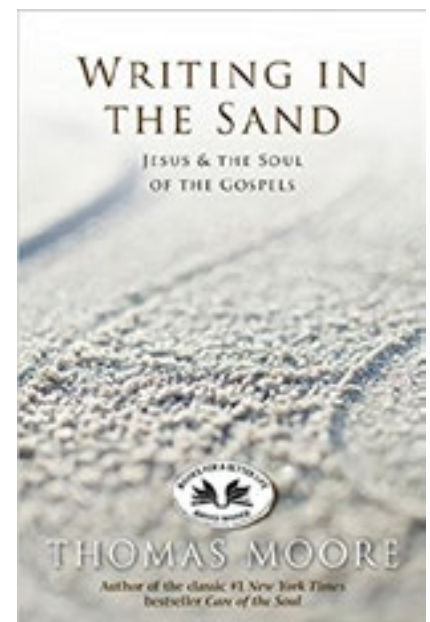
By The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens

The Wednesday Book Group will start a new book on March 7: *Writing in the Sand*, by Thomas Moore. We meet in the Church Parlor from 11a.m.-12 noon the first and third Wednesday of each month. Copies of the book can be purchased in the church office.

In *Writing in the Sand*, Moore finds striking new meaning in the rich stories and imagery of the Gospels, recasting Jesus not as a teacher of morals and beliefs but as a spiritual visionary with a radical vision for humanity. This highly original take on the Gospels offers a fresh, new way of imagining human life and society. It presents Jesus not as the founder of a religion but as a world reformer offering a spiritual path to everyone, from every background. It offers a personal spirituality fit for the twenty-first century, where the individual bears responsibility for meaning and for a creative, convivial way of life.

In his examination of the original Greek texts, Moore dismisses the cautionary voice of tradition and explores the deeper significance of language, stressing the origins of words and the many levels of meaning in stories and imagery. Through his study, Moore shows that the teachings of Jesus are challenging in a far different way than the moralism often associated with them. Based on being open to life, deepening your understanding, and giving up all defensiveness around your convictions, the Gospels can be the source of a new kind of certainty and stability that cannot be codified and enshrined in a list of rules. *Writing in the Sand* presents the essence of Jesus' teachings and offers a way of understanding them intelligently and devotedly in the twenty-first century.

Come join us. We have a great group. Your presence will make us even greater!



Education

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



March For Our Lives – Columbus – March 24 at 11 a.m. at the State Capital Join First Church Youth and UCC Ohio Conference Youth

Not one more. We cannot allow one more child to be shot at school. We cannot allow one more teacher to make a choice to jump in front of a firing assault rifle to save the lives of students. We cannot allow one more family to wait for a call or text that never comes. Our schools are unsafe. Our children and teachers are dying. We must make it our top priority to save these lives.

March For Our Lives is created by, inspired by, and led by students across the country who will no longer risk their lives waiting for someone else to take action to stop the epidemic of mass school shootings that has become all too familiar. In the tragic wake of the seventeen lives brutally cut short in Florida, politicians are telling us that now is not the time to talk about guns. March For Our Lives believes the time is now.

On March 24, the kids and families of March For Our Lives will take to the streets of Washington, DC to demand that their lives and safety become a priority. The collective voices of the March For Our Lives movement will be heard.

School safety is not a political issue. There cannot be two sides to doing everything in our power to ensure the lives and futures of children who are at risk of dying when they should be learning, playing, and growing. The mission and focus of March For Our Lives is to demand that a comprehensive and effective bill be immediately brought before Congress to address these gun issues. No special interest group, no political agenda is more critical than timely passage of legislation to effectively address the gun violence issues that are rampant in our country.

Every kid in this country now goes to school wondering if this day might be their last. We live in fear.

It doesn't have to be this way. Change is coming. And it starts now, inspired by and led by the kids who are our hope for the future. Their young voices will be heard. Stand with us on March 24. Refuse to allow one more needless death.

First Church will meet at the church at 10 a.m. and will walk to the State House. Watch for more details on the church website, FacebBook page, and email.





“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 7 p.m. 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. So, start saving your quarters and donate to this worthy cause. **The next Laundry Love day will be March 27.** Come join us in serving those in need. Laundry Love needs donations of trash bags, detergent, and dryer sheets.

Youth to Attend COSI March 3, 2018

The Youth of First Church, grades 6-12, have been invited to visit COSI on March 3 free of charge. This generous gift was given in appreciation for the past and future youth mission trips to West Franklinton. The group will meet at First Church at 9:30 a.m. and then will carpool to COSI. We will be there from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Lunch will be provided free of charge. Youth and parents should register with Mr. Mark as soon as possible.



It's Time for Camp Registration!

The Outdoor Ministries summer camp tentative schedule has been posted, so can spring be far behind? Everyone is ready to plan some fun in the sun and that's just what camp is. There are camps for kindergarten children and first graders with a grandparent. Week-long camps are for children who have completed second grade and older. There are camps for teens and camps with themes. There are camps for adults and even one for families. All summer camp programs are happening at Temple Hills. Forms will be available in the church office March 1.

Registration will begin soon!! Camp weeks fill up fast!!! Don't wait too long!!! Camp schedule and descriptions are available online at: <http://www.journeythehills.org>. Once you've decided on a camp, just click one of the "Register Online" buttons to complete your registration and make your payment.

First Congregational Church has always been a strong supporter of the Outdoor Ministries Summer Camp Program by encouraging participation and by offering scholarships for campers. Thanks to the generosity of longtime member Alma Keeler, we are able to offer a 50% camp scholarship on the registration fee (after the \$75 deposit) to any First Church child or youth who wants to go to camp.

A request for these funds must be made by the parent /guardian. This is not automatic as in the past.

To take advantage of this scholarship you must do several things:

- 1.) Decide which camp you want to attend.
- 2.) Send in your \$75 deposit as soon as possible with the 2018 camp registration form.
- 3.) Send the remaining amount owed to the Ohio Conference at least two weeks prior to your camp;
- 4.) Have a wonderful time!

First Church also will offer additional scholarships for those families who need extra help. Any child who wants to go to camp should not be stopped due to financial concerns of the family. For more information about camp, please contact Mark S. Williams at mwilliams@first-church.org. Deadline for early registration and First Church campership request is March 31.



Walking the Labyrinth Holy Week – March 25 – March 31 – A New Location



A labyrinth is not a maze that gets you lost. It is a way to find yourself, your soul, the Spirit and God.

A Labyrinth has one pathway.....

Beginning after both Palm/Passion Sunday services and the rest of Holy Week, a Labyrinth will be available in **Room B** for our community of faith to walk and meditate. A brochure will be provided at the entrance of each worship space starting March 25 on the church website and in the church office. The Labyrinth will be open for all to walk during regular church office hours during the week and on Holy Saturday. Due to the location of the Labyrinth in Room B, we ask those walking through the first floor education wing to observe the area as a “quiet zone.”

Walking With Children

Since this may be a new experience for many of our children and youth, we have put together a detailed colorful section about Labyrinths in our “Children’s Resources for Holy Week” folder. The “Children’s Resources for Holy Week” folders are available at each entrance to worship, Children’s Library and in the church office.

Please read this resource with your child/children ahead of time so that they will understand the process before walking the Labyrinth. Explanation should not take place once you enter the room to walk.

Please stress the importance of silence to your young ones that when walking the Labyrinth.

Remind your child that this is not a race and to take their time during the walk. Give them plenty of time in the center to think. Also plan an undistracted time to discuss what it was like for your child to walk the Labyrinth. Once you have had your discussion, return to the “Children’s Resource Folder” to help review Holy Week activities.

Butterflies Teach About Resurrection

The Christian Education Ministry uses the life cycle of the Painted Lady butterfly to illustrate the concept of resurrection. This lesson has been used for many years with great enjoyment.

The “baby butterflies” arrive as larvae. They must quickly be put into individual cups with food to last them through this part of their life cycle. We watch them grow until the worms look too big for their cups.

Within two weeks, the worm attaches itself to the lid of the cup and forms a chrysalis. They hang there for another week looking dead. There is no movement or visible change. The children have compared the chrysalis to a cave. If we’re really lucky, we will be able to observe the butterflies emerging from their chrysalis. It takes about two hours for the butterflies to pump fluid to their wings and for them to dry and harden. At this point they can fly and go looking for something to eat. We feed them with sugar water placed on flowers inside their net pavilion. They can live for 2-4 weeks.



Easter, if everything has gone as it should, all of the butterflies will have hatched and are ready for release. The release of Painted Lady butterflies is environmentally friendly because they will pollinate our flowers. We release the butterflies after the 11 a.m. service (if the weather permits). The children and the entire congregation are invited to the front steps of the church to release the butterflies. Upon release, the children often find the butterflies will land on them.

Safe Church Policy Team Plans Presentation and Drill

The Safe Church Policy Team has been working for over a year on updating and improving safety procedures for First Church. A presentation will be given after each worship service on April 15. The Team will review Fire, Severe Weather and Interruption of Worship procedures. At the end of the presentation, the congregation will practice a Severe Weather drill.

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH
UCC - COLUMBUS, OHIO



RETURN

Come Join the Fun
as we
RETURN
to Templed Hills



Spring Retreat



Templed Hills
April 20 - 22, 2018

Registration Deadline is April 10th



Registration Materials are in the Church Office and Web site
Contact Mark S. Williams for more information at
mwilliams@first-church.org



Flower/Vegetable Sale for Youth Ongoing!

The youth groups of First Church will be taking orders for their spring flower sale **now through April 15**. You may place your order with any youth member. You may view the order form online on the church website. There are many varieties of flowers and hanging baskets to choose from. The groups also are selling several varieties of tomatoes, vegetables and peppers. They come in small plants for your garden or in planters for your patio or deck.

The flowers and vegetables are supplied by Strader's Greenhouse of Columbus. Payment is due at the time of ordering. The flowers will be available for pick up on **May 12-13**.



Order
NOW!

Plus
**Great Variety of Tomatoes
and Vegetables**

Taking orders
through April 15th

~

Pick up is May
12th & 13th

See a Youth member or
contact

Mark S. Williams
for more information



From the Minister of Music

By Kevin Jones, Minister of Music

(kjones@first-church.org)



Choir News

Liturgical Appearance Schedules

Jubilate Choir – Rehearsals March, 11, 18, 25 at 9 a.m.

Sing in Worship March 18 at 11 a.m.

Exultate Choir – Rehearsals March 4, 11, 18, 25 at 9 a.m.

Sing in Worship March 18 at 11 a.m.

First Church Ringers – March 1, 8 at 6:00 p.m.

Ring in Worship March 11 at 11 a.m.

First Church Choir – Rehearsals March 1, 8, 15, 22 at 7:15 p.m.

Holy Week/Easter Rehearsal March 28 @ 7:15 p.m.

Sing in Worship March 4, 11, 25 at 11 a.m.

Sing Choral Evensong March 18 at 4 p.m.

Sing Maundy Thursday, March 29 at 6 p.m.

Congregational Concert Sunday, March 4

On Sunday, March 4, at 4 p.m., organist Dexter Kennedy will play a recital on the Beckerath and Kimball organs in the First Church Nave. As the winner of the *Grand Prix d'Interprétation* at the 24^{ème} *Concours International d'Orgue de Chartres*, Kennedy has established himself internationally as “one of the greatest organists of our times” (Iceland Monitor). Praised for his “prodigious technique and grand style musicality” in *The American Organist*, his concert programs present performances that are fiery and historically informed, exciting both music connoisseurs as well as people who have never experienced the organ in concert setting. In addition to concertizing, Dexter Kennedy currently serves on the music faculty of the College of Wooster as Instructor of Organ and Harpsichord. Kennedy is an active recitalist throughout both Europe and North America, having performed in great cathedrals, churches, and concert halls including: Washington National Cathedral; St. Thomas Church 5th Avenue, New York; Old West Church, Boston; St. Joseph Cathedral, Columbus; the University of Calgary; Berliner Dom; Chartres Cathedral; Slovak Philharmonic Hall, Bratislava; Chichester Cathedral; Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavik; Basilica of St. Nazaire, Carcassone, France; Auditorio Manuel de Falla, Granada; Santa Rita da Cascia, Turin; St. Willibrordus Basilika, Echternach, Luxembourg; and St. Andreas Kyrka, Malmö, Sweden; His performances have been heard recently at two regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Aosta Valley Organ Festival, the Calgary Organ Festival, and the 51st Bratislava Music Festival. In 2015 he joined the Boston Symphony Orchestra for two subscription concerts at Tanglewood with maestros Bramwell Tovey and Ludovic Morlot. His playing has been broadcast nationally on the American Public Media's *Pipedreams* program. Highlights of Kennedy's busy 2016–17 season included recitals at Strasbourg Cathedral; the Abbey of St. Etienne, Caen; the Canadian International Organ Competition Festival (Montreal); the 2017 Conference of Roman Catholic Cathedral Musicians in Toledo; the St. Albans International Organ Festival; as well as recitals in Phoenix, Los Angeles, Louisville, and Florida. Kennedy holds the Artist Diploma from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he was a pupil of James David Christie. He holds a Master of Music Degree from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, where he was a recipient of the Robert Baker Award, as well as the Mary Baker Prize for Excellence in Organ Accompaniment. Kennedy will offer us music of Bach, Heiller, Karg-Elert, Litzaize, Muffat and Reubke.



First Tuesdays

Minister of Music Kevin Jones plays his annual Johann Sebastian Bach harpsichord concert on Tuesday, March 6, at 12:15 p.m. This year, Kevin will play the Partita No. 4 in D Major. The month of March is the elder Bach's birth month. Lunch is available immediately following the concert in the Parish Hall for a donation of \$5.

First Church Choir Pasta Supper and Silent Auction in March

By Sarah Lange

Looking for a fun way to spend a Sunday evening with friends and family? Come to First Church Choir's Pasta Dinner and Silent Auction Sunday, March 18 following evensong, and enjoy a wonderful Italian meal with great entertainment and bid on some enticing items. The event is a fundraiser to support the Choir's pilgrimage this summer to Lincoln and Norwich cathedrals. The ticket price of only \$15 per person includes salad, Italian bread, meat and meatless pasta, up to two glasses of wine (other beverages available) and homemade desserts. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are available from any choir member or the church office (614-228-1741). Come to Evensong at 4 p.m. then join the choir in the Parish Hall at approximately 5:30 p.m. to survey a fantastic collection of silent auction items and make your initial bids, 6pm for dinner, 6:30 p.m. for a cabaret, and the silent auction concludes at 7 p.m. Auction winners will be announced at 7:10 p.m. You will end the evening fully fed, wonderfully entertained, and loaded down with some great silent auction goodies!

You are cordially invited to a

Pasta Supper & Silent Auction
Choir Fundraisers

on

Sunday, March 18, 2018
following the 4 p.m. Choral Evensong

First Congregational Church Parish Hall

to benefit the

2018 First Church Choir Pilgrimage to Lincoln & Norwich Cathedrals

Tickets may be purchased **in advance** from any Choir member, the main office, or via telephone at 614.228.1741

Tickets are only \$15 per person!

*Great selection of Silent Auction items to bid on and win!
Dinner includes Salad, Italian Bread, Italian Pasta,
Homemade Desserts & Beverages.*

Live cabaret entertainment by Choir members during dinner including

<i>5:30 Silent Auction Viewing & Initial Bids</i>
<i>6:00 Dinner is served!</i>
<i>6:30 Short Cabaret</i>
<i>6:45 Final Bidding</i>
<i>7:00 General Shenanigans</i>
<i>7:10 Auction Winners Announced</i>

Items Sought for Silent Auction

The First Church Choir is seeking items or services to offer at its silent auction on March 18. Proceeds from the auction will support the choir's pilgrimage to Lincoln and Norwich cathedrals this July. If you, your company, your neighbor, your community, your committee or your friends have a large item, a collection of small items or a service to donate, please reach out to SallyJane Mathias (614-735-7975; sjmath72@gmail.com) or Justin Meyer (214-532-3327; justinmeyer553@googlemail.com). Then plan to attend the cabaret (see separate article) and spur the bidding! Your support is appreciated.

Choral Evensong

Please join us for the beautifully meditative service of Choral Evensong on Sunday, March 18, at 4 p.m. Set for the Fifth Sunday in Lent, the First Church Choir will offer music of Tchaikovsky, Kenneth Leighton, Herbert Howells, and Paul Halley. Especially in this season of Lent, please join us for this service of meditative prayer. The Choir will be accompanied by organist Tyler Robertson.

CONCERTS

AT FIRST CHURCH

2017-2018

First Congregational Church • United Church of Christ
444 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.concertsatfirstchurch.org

Choral Evensong for Lent 5



4 pm



The First Church Choir sings Choral Evensong
with organist Tyler W. Robertson
Responses: Kenneth Leighton
Psalm 145, chant: Barnby
Canticles: Howells, *Service in B Minor*
Anthem: Tchaikovsky, "The Crown of Roses"



Church News

Attention All Book Lovers!

Read something lately that has you bursting to talk about? Well if you love books the The First Church Book Club may be for you. The focus will be on fiction with an occasional non-fiction thrown in at the group's discretion. Meet Jackie Dean and Elaine Warren for a brief organizational meeting in the Parlor following the 11 a.m. service on April 9. Can't make the meeting? Contact Mary Anne Jacobson (marytoddj@gmail.com) with ideas, suggestions, requests and she will get you hooked up.

Lenten Small Groups

The theme this year is Forgiveness. In addition to our traditional neighborhood groups, Rev. Tim Ahrens will lead a group in the Parlor at church on Wednesdays at 12:15-1:45 p.m., and Rev. Emily Corzine will host a web-based gathering, an evening time from the comfort of your own home – great for working families. Interested? Email Marty Worth mworth@first-church.org if you want to participate or would like to host and / or lead a group in your neighborhood. Remaining neighborhood groups meeting are Wednesdays at 7 p.m. on March 7, 14 and 21.

- Meet at Church – Rev. Tim Ahrens Wednesdays 12:15-1:45 p.m. tahrens@first-church.org
- Web-based meet online (group to determine time) – Rev. Emily Corzine ecorzine@first-church.org

Neighborhood Groups

- Elaine Warren – Gahanna 614-337-9935 melainewarren232@gmail.com
- Janet Newcity – Victorian Village jnewcity@gmail.com
- Marty Worth – Upper Arlington 614-228-1741 ext. 14 mworth@first-church.org

Please contact the group most convenient to you to say you will be attending.

Women's Retreat: Save the Date: "One Thousand and One Gifts"

Most of us spend a great deal of time each day doing things that we think will give us the life we want. Instead, we find ourselves overwhelmed, stretched thin, out of time, frustrated and then just wanting more. One Thousand and One Gifts is a "way of seeing that opens your eyes to gratitude" - the very act of just expressing thanks for the things you already have in your life.

Please come on Saturday, March 17 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and experience God's presence in your everyday life. Meet in the Ralph Fanning Room; please bring a brunch item to share. Coffee and tea will be provided. Call Jackie Dean at 614-868-0485 for more information.

Free books! Check the mezzanine in Parish Hall – help yourself!



Justice and Mercy

Justice and Mercy

Each month, Justice and Mercy will update the previous month's mission offering and highlight the upcoming mission offerings so you can know in advance. Check the newsletter for this information. *Please note that we will post the most current giving totals deadline for the newsletter. We often have more offering that comes in up to a month after the mission offering day. A yearly account of the mission offerings can be found in the annual report.

MISSION OFFERINGS				
February	Mission Offering	Amount	March	Mission
4	STAR House	\$711.10	4	Deep Griha
11	Back Bay Mission	\$733.10	11	Kaleidoscope
18	Deep Griha Scholarships	\$845.01	18	Youth Mission Trip
25	Faith in Public Life	\$368.00	25	Good Samaritan Fund
			30 (Good Friday)	Amethyst House

B.R.E.A.D. is Rising!

First Church is working with 38 other congregations in the B.R.E.A.D. Organization to address the issues of unemployment and underemployment, the challenges of keeping kids out of jail and in school, and the inability of many city residents to obtain official photo identification.

B.R.E.A.D.'s newest campaign will tackle youth and family problems. Did you know that over 54,000 families in Franklin County cannot afford housing? Are you aware that Franklin County lacks adequate services for all of its youth and adults who struggle with mental illnesses? And isn't it shocking to hear that a grandparent taking care of three of their grandchildren through "kinship care" receives about \$1500 LESS per month than would a foster parent taking care of the same three children?! The "Youth and Family Concerns" research committee was launched in December. If you're interested in representing First Church on this committee, please call the B.R.E.A.D. office at 614-220-9363.



Our First Church B.R.E.A.D. network has a goal of turning out 200 of our members to the Nehemiah Action on May 7 at the Celeste Center at 7 p.m. We will join with 2,800 others to demonstrate our solidarity and support action on all the above issues. Please circle May 7 on your calendars and be prepared to say "yes" to the First church network member who calls you with an invitation to attend the Nehemiah Action!!

Look for the large Justice Ministry Network charts posted in Parish Hall. Currently listing our 49 B.R.E.A.D. Network members, the charts will be constantly updated with the names of each person who has agreed to attend the Nehemiah Action. Feel free to contact any network member for information about B.R.E.A.D. or or the Nehemiah Action, or with questions about how to join our network.

Ohio Conference UCC News

Rally To End Racism April 3-4, 2018 in Washington D.C.

Be part of the Ohio Conference UCC presence at the Rally to End Racism.

The National Council of Churches calls all faith groups to prayer and action on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The work he valiantly led during his lifetime must continue - as current events remind us every hour!

Dr. King once said, "A time comes when silence is betrayal." We must no longer remain silent at a time like this in the life of our nation.



The Ohio Council of Churches and the Ohio Conference UCC are providing touring buses to meet rally partners in Toledo, Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati.

Use this link (<https://ohcouncilchs.org/calendar-of-events>) to access registration information. Exact locations for bus departures in each area will be distributed soon. The group will travel overnight April 3, to participate in the Interfaith Service of Prayer and Preparation at Lincoln Memorial at 7:30 a.m. on April 4. There will be time for a leisurely walk of 1.3 miles from the Memorial to the National Mall where the rally begins at noon. Participants may bring fold up chairs and snacks. Buses will return to Ohio during the night of April 4.

Bus fare is \$75.00 per person, plus your cost for meals and incidentals enroute. The Ohio Conference UCC will assist each UCC participant with \$30 toward additional expenses. These grants from the Racial/Ethnic Empowerment Fund will be distributed on each bus at the time of departure. First Church Council has approved 20 \$75 scholarships for anyone who wants to attend the march. A copy of the registration is needed for reimbursement from First Church. The registration deadline is March 1. Sign up now to reserve your seat on the bus!

Let's fill the buses with UCC members who are ready to

ACT Now! Unite to End Racism

A - Awaken

C - Confront

T - Transform

First Church Joys and Concerns

MEMBERS Don Streibig; Bev Cook; Lindy Miller; Carl Miller; Virginia O'Neill; and families and friends who mourn the loss of loved ones, including Gail Johannes, Emily Johannes, and Barb Clapham, on the death of their husband, father and brother, Bill Johannes; Joan Lebold, on the death of her son-in-law, Jay Stoerker; and Pavan Peter, on the death of his aunt.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY Brooke Chute, cousin of Amy Wagner; Bob Murdock, father of Melissa Weygandt; the Bice Family; Ben Brewer, friend of Melva Fisher; Ruth Smith, sister of Judy Smith; Lois Mitchell and John Mitchell, mother and brother of Melissa Mitchell; Chelsea Donelson, friend of Valerie Conlin-Losinski; Ward Porch; Joyce Marcum, sister of Betty Conn; and families and friends who continue to mourn the loss of loved ones.

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD We pray for those who are victims of sexual harassment or sexual assault. We pray for all who struggle with mental illness. We pray for the victims of the school shooting in Parkland Florida. We pray for all students and educators.

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 March 4:* Ireland; United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales
- *Week of March 11:* Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden
- *Week of March 18:* Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- *Week of March 25:* Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia

MISSIONARIES This month we pray the following missionaries:

- *Week of March 4:* Karen Campbell Nelson serving in Indonesia
- *Week of March 11:* Ricardo Mayol serving in Guatemala
- *Week of March 18:* Monica Liddle serving in East Timor
- *Week of March 25:* Victor Makari serving in Israel/Palestine

If you have any prayer requests or joys to share, please contact the church office (awagner@first-church.org or 614-228-1741, ext. 10) or one of the ministers (ecorzine@first-church.org or 614-228-1741, ext. 21 or minister@first-church.org or 614-228-1741, ext. 13).

March Calendar

Thursday, March 1

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

Saturday, March 3

9 a.m. – Hymnal Supplement Committee – Choir Room
9:30 a.m. – Youth Trip to COSI – Meet in
Church North Parking Lot

Sunday, March 4 – Lent III

9 a.m. – Worship: Morning Prayer and Holy Communion
– Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Exultate Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
9 a.m. – Jubilate Choir – Music Activities Room
10 a.m. – First Church Choir Warm Up – Choir Room
10 a.m. – New Members Class – Parlor
10 a.m. – Faith Formation Time – Education Wing
Room D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
12:30 p.m. – Confirmation – Education Wing Room D
4 p.m. – Organ Recital: Dexter Kennedy – Sanctuary

Monday, March 5

Noon – Care Ministry – Ralph Fanning Room

Tuesday, March 6

12:15 p.m. – First Tuesdays Concert – Sanctuary
12:45 p.m. – Lunch following Concert – Parish Hall
2:30 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
5:30 p.m. – Sacred Earth – Ralph Fanning Room
7 p.m. – Justice and Mercy – Ralph Fanning Room
7 p.m. – Senior Minister/Member Advisory Board –
Rev. Ahrens' Office

Wednesday, March 7

11 a.m. – Book Study: *Writing in the Sand* – Parlor
12:15 p.m. – Lenten Small Group – Ralph Fanning Room
4 p.m. – Building and Office Close

Thursday, March 8

3 p.m. – Park Planning Committee – Ralph Fanning
Room
6 p.m. – First Church Ringers Rehearsal –
Education Wing Room J
7:15 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Saturday, March 10

8:30 a.m. – House and Grounds – Ralph Fanning Room
10 a.m. – First Church Quilters – Parish Family Room

Sunday, March 11: Lent IV

9 a.m. – Worship: Morning Prayer and Holy Communion
– Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Exultate Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
9 a.m. – Jubilate Choir – Music Activities Room
10 a.m. – First Church Choir Warm Up – Choir Room
10 a.m. – New Members Class – Parlor
10 a.m. – Faith Formation Time – Education Wing
Room D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
6 p.m. – High School Youth Group – Parish Hall

Monday, March 12

9 a.m. – Good Samaritan Day – Sanctuary,
Ralph Fanning Room, Parlor
6:30 p.m. – Christian Education Committee –
Virtual Meeting
7 p.m. – Trustees – Ralph Fanning Room

Tuesday, March 13

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
7 p.m. – Executive Committee – Ralph Fanning Room

Wednesday, March 14

10 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Ralph Fanning Room
12:15 p.m. – Lenten Small Group – Ralph Fanning Room
4 p.m. – Building and Office Close

Thursday, March 15

7:15 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Saturday, March 17

9 a.m. – Women's Retreat – Parlor

Sunday, March 18: Lent V

New Members Join

9 a.m. – Worship: Morning Prayer and Holy Communion
– Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Exultate Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
9 a.m. – Jubilate Choir – Music Activities Room
10 a.m. – Faith Formation Time – Education Wing
Room D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
12:30 p.m. – Confirmation Trip to Noor Islamic Cultural
Center
4 p.m. – Choral Evensong – Sanctuary
6 p.m. – Pasta Dinner – Parish Hall

Monday, March 19

6 p.m. – Budget and Finance – Ralph Fanning Room
7 p.m. – Personnel Committee – Parish Family Room
7 p.m. – Deacons Meeting – Education Wing Room D
7:30 p.m. – Hymnal Supplement Committee –
Choir Room

March Calendar (continued)

Tuesday, March 20

Deadline for Newsletter

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room
7 p.m. – Council Meeting – Ralph Fanning Room

Wednesday, March 21

11 a.m. – Book Study: *Writing in the Sand* – Parlor
12:15 p.m. – Lenten Small Group – Ralph Fanning Room
4 p.m. – Building and Office Close

Thursday, March 22

7:15 p.m. – First Church Choir – Parish Hall

Friday, March 23

1 p.m. – Faith Mission Meal Preparation – Kitchen

Saturday, March 24

10 a.m. – March for Our Lives – Meet at church

Sunday, March 25: Palm/Passion Sunday

9 a.m. – Worship: Morning Prayer and Holy Communion
– Parish Hall
9 a.m. – Exultate Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
9 a.m. – Jubilate Choir – Music Activities Room
10 a.m. – First Church Choir Warm Up – Choir Room
10 a.m. – Faith Formation Time – Education Wing,
Room D
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall
6 p.m. – High School Youth Group – Parish Hall

Monday, March 26

7 p.m. – Budget and Finance – Ralph Fanning Room
7 p.m. – Deacon's Meeting – Education Wing Room D

Tuesday, March 27

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

Wednesday, March 28

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Ralph Fanning Room
7:15 p.m. 7:15 p.m. – First Church Choir Rehearsal – Choir
Room

Thursday, March 29

6 p.m. – Maundy Thursday Dinner and Service – Parish
Hall and Sanctuary

Friday, March 30

7:30 p.m. – Good Friday Service – Sanctuary

Saturday, March 31

8:30 a.m. – House and Grounds – Ralph Fanning Room
10 a.m. – First Church Quilters – Parish Family Room



March Crucifer Schedule

March 4	Erin Murray
March 11	Dylan Hopcraft
March 18	Alex Palmer
March 25	Dylan Hopcraft

March Acolyte Schedule

March 4	Grae Glaros	Lincoln Glaros
March 11	Sebby Kulwicki	AnnaSofia Severson
March 18	Finnegan Miller	Jack Patterson
March 25	Samantha Myers	Maggie Myers

March Offering Schedule

March 4	STAR House
March 11	Back Bay Mission
March 18	Deep Griha
March 25	Kaleidoscope

March Fellowship Hour Schedule

March 4	Ephesians
March 11	Church Growth and Vitality
March 18	Hosea
March 25	Romans

Member Birthdays in March

3/1 Emily Kutschbach-Schmidt
3/2 Hudson Cave
Sheldon Taft
3/3 Bruce Panek
Mitchell Gelpi
3/4 Andrea Bruckelmeyer
Helen Ninos
Julie Roth-Alexander
3/5 Kullen Carrico
Tyler Cave
Phil Stichter
3/6 Shirley Calhoun
George West
3/7 Scott Barker
Christina Kirker
Bob Monahan
Andrew Smith
3/8 Gretchen Atkinson
Madison Fulton
3/9 Heather Giffin
3/11 Candace Cummings
Allison Lange
Sue Salak
3/12 Lincoln Glaros
Jenny Provenzano
3/13 Ella Koscher
3/15 Jacob Holton
Jennifer Mrozek
3/16 Trai Blanks
Robert O'Leary
Luke Zimmerman
Will Zimmerman
3/17 Amy Brooks
3/18 Myles Sholl
3/19 Greg Kellison
Tom Leighton
3/20 Brett Bachman
David Mailer
Tom Worley
3/21 Eric Ewing
James Gaugh
Rezi Haghiri
Dorothy Horn
3/22 Debbie Kelly
James Powell
3/24 Amy Wagner
3/26 Cassidy Hopcraft
Catherine Kennedy
3/27 Julie DeVennish
John Firebaugh
3/28 Margene Whittenburg
3/29 Herb Cook, Jr.
Will Kennedy
Thomas Mitchell
3/30 Ruth Allred
Mary Anne Jacobson
3/31 Katie Gies
Malini Gnanatheeban
Jennifer Newhous

Member Anniversaries in March

3/1 Ellen and Peter Boriin
3/3 Debbie Yontz and Keith White
3/14 Christy Carlson and Jim Curry
Janet Stoneking and Eric Boyd
Jon and Sarah Frank
3/13 Carol and Andy Bensing
3/18 Tammy Alexander and Julie Roth-Alexander
Andrea and Michael Gonzalez
James Weygandt and Melissa Murdock-Weygandt
3/20 Janice and Mariner Taft
3/26 Anne and Rick Bennett
3/28 Diane Cole and John Rau

You have a Mailbox...if you want one

Upon being received into membership, First Church members are assigned a mailbox. The mailboxes are located on the First Floor in the entryway by the elevator. Many members use the mailboxes to store their nametags or to leave correspondence for other members. The office uses the mailboxes to distribute statements of giving. With the addition of 42 new members in 2017, we are beginning to run out of available mailboxes. If you do not use your mailbox, please let us know and we will utilize your space for someone else. Please contact Office Manager Amy Wagner at 614-228-1741 ext. 10 or awagner@first-church.org. Thank you to those of you who have already contacted us.



CHURCH STAFF

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
Jubilate and Exultate Choir Director	Sandra Mathias, Ph.D.
Business Manager	Sharon Leidheiser
Program Manager	Martha Worth
Office Manager	Amy Wagner
Building & Grounds Superintendent	Mark Dahnke
Custodians	William Lee, Jimy Sibrian
Wedding Coordinators	Janet Axt, Margaret Cipriani, Diana Chandler, Amy Wagner, Katie Wagner
Nursery Staff	Taylre Arnold, Natalie Barker, Miranda Brooks, Simone Ellerson

DIACONATE

Senior Deacon	Janet Newcity
Deacons	Anthony Brown, Valerie Conlin-Losinski, Bert Cook, Martha Fulleman, Shelly Gies, Todd Jacobson, Dayna McCrary, Karen Mozingo, David Nassau, Cori Page, Allison Lowery Palmer, Jorge Polo, Alex Rodriguez, James Velo

CHURCH COUNCIL

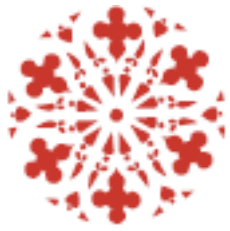
Moderator	Joe Baszynski
Moderator-Elect	Lynn Wallich
Treasurer	Joe Hoffman
Assistant Treasurer	Matt Myers
Secretary	Nancy Loy
Assistant Secretary	TBD

COMMISSIONERS

Administration	Chris Glaros, Elect - Greg Kellison
Church Growth/Vitality	Tom Kiesel and Mary Anne Jacobson, co-chairs; Elect - Maria Brown and Lisa Fravel-Dean
Education	Chris Gelpi, Elect - Jennifer Provenzano
House & Grounds	Gary Leidheiser, Elect - Mark Brown
Justice & Mercy	Dawn George, Elect - Nicole Moss
Music, Arts, & Heritage	Joel Mathias, Elect - Drew Wade
Nominating Chair	Kent Shimeall
Member-at-large	Pavan Peter
Youth-at-large	Miriam Myers
Deacon Council Representative	Todd Jacobson

TRUSTEES

Chairperson	Chris Farquhar
Treasurer	
Trustees	Brian Cave, Tom Hadley, John Martin, Sheldon Taft, Keith White, Gerry Worth



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