



## “Violent Crime” Top Issue As

### The Nehemiah Action Assembly Meets Monday, May 4

By Rev. Tim Ahrens

On Monday Night, May 4, I invite you to join me and 4,000 people from 54 congregations of the BREAD Organization as we gather at The Celeste Center at the State of Ohio Fairgrounds to lift our voices for social justice.

Registration begins at 6:15 p.m. I encourage you to Carpool. We have carpools leaving from the church parking lot at 5:45 p.m. Let the church office know if you are joining the carpool. You can also go directly to the meeting. Parking is \$5 but we have passes which will get you in for FREE. Please call the church office 228-1741 and sign-up or email me at [tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@first-church.org).

The First Congregational UCC Justice Ministry Network has commitments from 50 people to join in this exciting assembly. Our goal for turn-out is 163. We have set this goal to match the number of years we have been a social justice congregation in the heart of Columbus. We need EVERYONE WHO READS THIS to come if we are to reach our goal. Please bring your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and children. There is child care for those 4 years or younger.

On April 20, Greg Halbe, wrote these words to the core leaders of our BREAD Justice Ministry Team:

“I make no claim to being a veteran of BREAD, but I know its history pretty well. This year’s Nehemiah Action promises to be our most momentous ever. It will be historic, and it will be what all of Columbus will be talking about on May 5. Don’t let any of your friends wake up on May 5, wishing they had known what a big deal this is.

We have confirmations from three of the six public figures we’re inviting, and fully expect the others to confirm and show up. We are very close to getting “yeses to ALL THREE ISSUES!!

- David Royer of ADAMH has told us publicly that we have “changed his thinking” about the Clubhouse International model, and its value in our community.
- Dr. Boyd and Mr. Ragland have committed to attend, and Mr. Ragland has declared publicly that he is “working with BREAD” on acceptance of the Matricula Consular or creation of a municipal ID ( [https://youtu.be/jSm\\_7XAjzY](https://youtu.be/jSm_7XAjzY) ).
- Gerald Speakes, Columbus’ Safety Director, had a very positive, constructive meeting with our Crime and Violence research committee, and has all but committed to attend the Action.

We brought well over 100 of our Latino brothers and sisters to Council Chambers last night. We grabbed a quick picnic dinner of PBJ sandwiches and empanadas, and it’s a good thing we did. Council slogged through a two and a half hour agenda, with families and kids from toddlers on up filling Chambers to its capacity. Father Schalk of Christ the King Catholic Church gave the most passionate testimony I have ever witnessed in person, and Salvadore, a high school senior, was even more eloquent and powerful as he shared how important valid ID is to him and his family. And three members of the Central Ohio Workers Center stood with us to call for creation of a municipal ID available to all residents.

But it was the joy I saw in the faces of those families that moved me most. They stood up to power. They were heard. They were not alone. And they were not hassled, bothered, or intimidated by law enforcement or public officials. Last night, we got a glimpse of what a truly welcoming community looks like.

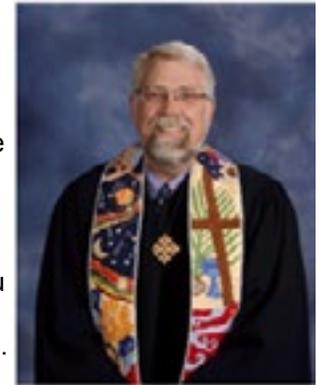
Do your friends a favor. Let them know how historic this Action will be. It will be an experience they will not want to miss. It will be the closest thing to heaven on earth that any of us will see this year.”

BREAD will unveil our action plan for our new issue - “Violent Crime.”

Recently, the pastors of BREAD received this Crime and Violence information sheet from the Research Committee working on this issue. I share it with you now.

#### **The violence must stop!**

Ben is a member of a BREAD Congregation. He has been in and out of both jail and prison. He is one of 10,000 Ohio felons that cycle through a costly revolving door of the criminal justice system. According to the Council of Governments Justice Center, 72% of prison inmates like Ben, who are the greatest risk, return to their community without any supervision.



***Pentecost Sunday is  
May 24: Wear Red***

***Pentecost is a time of red,  
a color of fire and zeal and  
passion and heat. The  
Spirit is incendiary within  
us.***

Many, like Ben, form relationships with other offenders creating social criminal networks. According to the Director of the Columbus Criminal investigations unit, 1 of every 4 murders in Columbus can be connected to 100 such “gangs”. A large number of violent crimes are committed by a very small portion of the Columbus population. The results are costly to everyone. While businesses flee, people living in high crime neighborhoods such as South Linden, the Near East Side, and Franklinton live in fear -- prisoners in their own homes. The Violence must stop! Continuing practices aimed at “Getting Tough on Crime” that seek vengeance rather than rehabilitation are costly to our neighborhoods and have made little impact on violent crime in Columbus. We can be “Smart on Crime.”

### **Crime Facts**

- There were 6,216 violent crimes reported in 2013 averaging 7.56 incidents per 1,000 residents. This is nearly twice the national average. [www.neighborhoodscout.com](http://www.neighborhoodscout.com)
- Between 2010 and 2011, 25% of all gun-related incidents in Ohio occurred in Franklin County. (Gun Violence in Ohio, March 2013)
- While crime has been declining nationally, there are neighborhoods in Columbus with consistently high rates of violent crime each year. *Columbus Dispatch: “How safe are you in your neighborhood?” September 7, 2014.*
- Less than .001 percent of the Columbus population is involved in gang activity. (*Chantay Boxill, Director of the CPD Criminal Investigations Unit*)
- One of every 4 homicides in Columbus can be connected to approximately 100 known gangs. *Columbus Dispatch: “Gangs at the core of City problems, Thursday April 11, 2013.*

### **A Possible Solution**

Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)

The Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) is a proven “deterrence-focused” initiative to quickly and dramatically reduce gun violence and associated homicides. The initiative evolved from an initial project (Ceasefire) led by David Kennedy in Boston during the 1990’s. Although the details of implementation may vary, the basic structure involves a collaborative effort of law enforcement, social service agencies and community leaders. Together they deliver a clear message to violent street groups that violence must stop. Every initiative begins with an initial mapping of relationships of known violent offenders. Once established all partners come together to address violent groups with a unified voice through call-ins, direct contact, community outreach and media outlets delivering a message that the violence must stop. The message is followed with the promise, (the carrot) of a broad range of social services aimed at changing the behavior of criminal activity for those who opt to participate. When violence occurs, however, the response is swift and strong (the stick).

### **CIRV HAS 20 YEARS OF SUCCESS**

- **42%** reduction in gun homicide through Stockton Operation Peacekeeper, 1997-2002, *Stockton*
- **55%** reduction in drug offenses, *Nashville*
- **4-74%** reduction in drug offenses in all 4 neighborhoods, *High Point*
- **37%** reduction in homicides through Project Safe Neighborhoods, *Chicago*
- **4-74%** reduction in drug offenses in all 4 neighborhoods, *High Point*
- **41%** reduction in gang-member involved homicide, *Cincinnati*
- **34%** reduction in homicides, *Indianapolis*
- **42%** reduction in gun homicide through Stockton Operation Peacekeeper, 1997-2002, *Stockton*
- **44%** reduction in gun assaults through Project Safe Neighborhoods, *Lowell*
- **22%** reduction in non-violent offenses *Rockford*

Source: *National Network for Save Communities, [www.nnscommunities.org](http://www.nnscommunities.org)*

BREAD will continue to tackle Mental Health issues in our community, Welcome Columbus (our initiative responding to discrimination against immigrants), small business initiative for job development and restorative justice for juvenile criminals at this critical meeting.

## Confirmation Sunday – May 10

By Rev. Tim Ahrens

The class of 2015 is a great group of young people in our congregation who are growing in their faith among us. On May 10 at the 11 a.m. worship service, they will affirm their baptismal vows before God and our congregation. They will also lead worship at 9 a.m. Come celebrate! These are services you do not want to miss!

Since February, members of the 2015 Confirmation class have been introduced to you in worship. You have been offering them beautiful blessings. Together with Jackie Dean, nine mentors and wonderfully supportive parents, it has been my joy and honor to teach and learn from this amazing group of young men and women. Our church is blessed with them as current and future leaders of our congregation. Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 10.

Currently, they are in the process of finishing their class work, having just come off a weekend at Pilgrim Hills where they bonded in the natural settings of the camp. Now, they are making final decisions about confirming their faith as they meet one-on-one with me.

The members of 2015 Confirmation are: Emma Rau, mentor Cheryl Hoskinson; Emma Gonzalez, mentor Shelley Geis; Artie Washington, mentor Peter Murray; Charisma Jones, mentor Allison Palmer; Eddie Anderson III, mentor Bruce Panek; Dylan Hopcraft, mentor Matt Meyers; Jack Koscher, mentor Pete Boriin; Anna Rhoads, mentor Julia Meyers; Courtney Batchelor, mentor Janet Newcity.

Each of these young men and women comes from supportive families, and our church is blessed by each one of them! Come celebrate their big day!



## Rev. Ahrens' Doctoral Studies Complete in May – Graduation May 17 in Chicago

By Rev. Tim Ahrens



On April 20, 2015, Drs. Scott Haldeman and John Thomas served as my examining team and approved my doctoral thesis – “Young and Growing Stronger: Creating a Model of 21st Century Prophetic Witness Leaders with a New Generation.” I passed with “No stipulations.” This means I do not have to write any more – after 11 drafts! Thanks be to God! While you are reading this, I am putting the final touches on my doctoral thesis and my final class paper on leadership. Both papers will be submitted by May 5.

On Sunday, May 17 at 3:00pm Central Standard Time, I will graduate from Chicago Theological Seminary. Our graduation ceremony will be held at K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Synagogue in the Hyde Park section of Chicago, Illinois – located directly across the street from the Obama’s Chicago home. If you are planning on coming, I must submit your name for clearance with the Secret Service. If you would like to watch graduation, you can live stream the broadcast on the Chicago Theological Seminary website.

In the acknowledgment at the close of my paper, I write:

*“I am thankful for my church family. For 15 ½ years I have been blessed to serve The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio as Senior Minister. My church has supported me with words of encouragement, prayers, moral support, time and financial assistance. Truthfully, I could never have undertaken this Doctor of Ministry degree without the love and support of First Church.”*

I could not have done this without you. I started in February 2012 with seven people in the class on 2015. I finished with only one of them. This degree is demanding of time and energy. I trust and pray, in their time, my five colleagues will make it as well.

On May 19, I will be back at work. In a very real sense, nothing has changed and everything has changed. Thank you for sticking with me. I am so blessed by all of you. I am especially blessed by my wife Susan Sitler and my children, Luke (Kirsten), Daniel, Thalia and Sarah. Soon, the blessing of family will increase as Luke and Kirsten welcome our first grandchild in July.

## Making Connections

By Rev. Emily Krause Corzine



It is hard to believe that Jeff, Camryn and I have been part of First Congregational Church for three months now. It has been fast paced, exciting, and filled with laughter and joy. I am so proud to be in ministry with you.

Already, there are connections being made with commissions and committees. There are connections with staff and volunteers. There are connections with members, future members and visitors who return again and again to worship and this community of faith.

It is the nature of the church to enable and encourage the connectional nature of a community. This doesn't always come easy to folks. Getting to know new people and engaging them in the mission and ministry of the church can be scary. Getting to know others means that you yourself are being known. That is scary. That means being vulnerable and that's not easy.

I heard a TED talk by social worker, Dr. Brene Brown, who said this, "vulnerability is the birthplace of INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, and CHANGE." If you haven't heard her speak, check her out on a TED talk ([www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)).

We have so many ways for individuals to connect and engage others and a life of faith. We had really great Lenten small groups, educational classes, and meaningful worship. People connect through the choir's preparation for Gloucester in August, delicious dinners, a great Easter brunch and the latest has been the faithful fun group that began their work the concessions at the Columbus Clipper games for this summer.

All connections made in the last months continue to strengthen the work of the body of Christ. Called for the purpose of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, we continually find ways to connect in order to get to know one another and to be known. This element of connection does not come without some vulnerability. That's not an easy thing to lean into, but we must, as we continue to understand who God has created us to be and how we are known by others. Hard to think that we need to lean into these things at church, but we do.

As we envision the future God has in store for First Congregational Church and for our neighbors in the Discovery District and throughout Columbus, let's find ways to continue to connect. Let's find ways to share in mission and ministry with one another. Let's find ways to engage with those who we don't know, so that we can lean into a vulnerability that leads to innovation, creativity and change.

Watch future communications about how we can connect.

Peace,

*Emily*

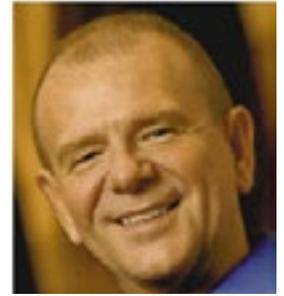


## Building Manager Search Update

The search committee has been working to identify qualified candidates. We needed to re-open our search beginning in April and have now narrowed the pool of candidates to two. Our thanks to House and Grounds members, our custodians and Sharon Leidheiser for helping complete various projects, collect bids and keep the operational side of this church functional during this transition. We will be finalizing our decision soon and hope to present our new building manager to you, the congregation, very soon. If you have questions, please direct them to Rev. Emily Corzine.

# Education

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



## Teacher/Connections Breakfast May 3

The Christian Education Department will host a Teacher and Worship Connections appreciation breakfast on Sunday, May 3, in the Children's Library. All teachers and Worship Connection leaders will be recognized in both services that day.

## Calling All Graduates!



If you or a family member is graduating from high school or college this year, send us some information including name, school the person is graduating from, degree and possible future plans. We will be recognizing our graduates on Sunday, June 7. Send the information to awagner@first-church.org. You also may include a photo (electronic image only).

## Flower/Vegetable for Sale for on May 17!

The youth groups of First Church have extra flowers and plants for sale on Sunday, May 17 for those who did not have a chance to order in April. 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 17.

## Cross-Generational Mission Trip to Back Bay Mission!

Space is still available to participate in the Mission Trip to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi June 20-27. The cost for First Church participants is only \$450.00 and that includes everything except your spending money. Check out the church website where all the detailed information is available. For more information, contact Mark Williams, mwilliams@first-church.org.

# Church News

## Free Perennials

First Church Member Leslie Schaab has some perennials, including hostas, penstamen, asters, orange daylilies and peonies that need to be split, and she has graciously offered them to other members.

Regarding plant types, Leslie has: asters (deep pink); orange daylilies; green hostas; purple coneflowers; penstamen (both white and pink); and blue salvia. She lives in the Arlington area, near Kenny/Henderson intersection. Contact Leslie at 614-459-9123 to make arrangements to get the plants.



# From the Minister of Music

By Kevin Jones, Minister of Music

(kjones@first-church.org)



## Liturgical Musings

Easter tide (Time of Easter) is upon us. The Great 50 Days of Easter began on Easter Day and continues until the Day of Pentecost, Sunday, May 24. It is a period of rejoicing in the church – one long celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. Lectionary texts focus on the events following the Resurrection, moving the first reading from the Hebrew Scripture to the New Testament Book of Acts. Traditionally, clergy stoles and altar hangings remain white for the season, and the hanging cross in the Chancel continues to be draped in white.

The Second Sunday of Easter, now long past, is, in some traditions, referred to as “Low Sunday” or “Quasi Modo” Sunday. “Low Sunday” because after the celebratory liturgies of Easter, anything that followed felt less solemn. The term Quasi modo is from the Latin, and is the first two words of the Gregorian Introit specified for the first Sunday after Easter. The text comes from the First Book of Peter, Chapter 2, verse 2: “Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation.” The Introit in the Roman rite would function very similarly to our opening or processional hymn.

(And for your trivia knowledge: Victor Hugo, in his novel, Notre-Dame de Paris, or more commonly known to us as “The Hunchback of Notre Dame,” named his protagonist “Quasimodo” because he was abandoned as a baby at the Church of Notre Dame on the Second Sunday of Easter – the day that that monks would have sung Quasi modo geniti infantes...)

## Choir News

### Liturgical Appearance Schedules

#### *Treble Choir*

- Rehearsals May 3 and 10 at 9 a.m.; Sing in Worship May 10 at 11 a.m.

#### *Teen Choir*

- Rehearsals May 3 and 10 at 9 a.m.; Sing in Worship May 10 at 11 a.m.

#### *First Church Choir*

- Rehearsals May 2nd at 9 am; May 7, 14, 21 at 7:30 pm; Sing in Worship May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Sing Evensong May 3 at 4 p.m.



## Save the Date – Thursday, July 23, at 7:30 p.m.

Please plan now to attend Choral Evensong on Thursday, July 23, at 7:30 p.m. to wish the First Church Choir Bon voyage and Godspeed on their travel to and residency at Gloucester Cathedral. The Choir and travelers will depart on Friday, July 31st.

## Congratulations!

On April 24, The Early Interval presented an outstanding performance of 13th-century music from Spain as the last concert of the 2014-15 season of Early Music in Columbus. First Church members Ron and Janice Cook, founders of this group 38 years ago, have planned, rehearsed and performed with them all this time. They have been a leading force in early music in the City of Columbus and beyond. The April 24 concert was their retirement concert. Following the concert, Ron and Janice Cook were presented with a citation from Mayor Michael Coleman of Columbus recognizing their musical achievements and contributions to the arts in Columbus. Congratulations and best wishes to two extraordinary and wonderful people, and many thanks for all of the great music over the past four decades.

# Music News

## Choral Evensong on Sunday, May 3 at 4 p.m.

The First Church Choir will sing Choral Evensong on Sunday, May 3, at 4 p.m. Featured music at this Evensong will be the Preces by Herbert Sumsion, Canticles in D Major by the "Dean of American Church Music" Leo Sowerby, and the Jubilate Deo by Herbert Howells.

Immediately following the liturgy, the Choir will sing the Messe Solennelle by 20th century French composer Jean Langlais. The work is scored for choir and two organs.

Jamie Bobb returns to accompany the Evensong and play the "Grand Orgue" part on the Kimball organ. Scott Hayes will play the "Petit Orgue" part on the von Beckerath.

# Church News

## June 7 Worship Services: Recognizing, Honoring, and Celebrating Our Staff

by Elaine Warren, Moderator

At both services on on June 7, we will recognize our dedicated, outstanding, and hardworking staff. We ask that all staff members attend one of the services. Each staff member will be recognized during the service that they attend. A special Coffee Hour will follow each service giving us the opportunity to visit with them and express our appreciation for all that they do for our church.

## Join First Church

Come and be a part of the exciting mission and ministry of First Congregational Church. A new member class will be held Monday, June 8, 2015 at 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Parlor. New Members will be received during worship services on June 14. Come to that informational meeting and learn more about the rich history of social justice and our commitment to engaging each other and the community (our neighbors). If you are interested in membership, please contact Rev. Emily Corzine as soon as possible at [ecorzine@first-church.org](mailto:ecorzine@first-church.org) or 228-1741 x21.

## Support Church Growth

The Church Growth Commission is seeking a few individuals who will provide hospitality to new members who join our church. Come and meet new members, share your experiences of First Church, Greet them on Sundays. This time commitment would be 3 hours a few times a year. Contact Emily Corzine, [ecorzine@first-church.org](mailto:ecorzine@first-church.org), or Commissioner Scott Jones at [jones.4371@osu.edu](mailto:jones.4371@osu.edu).



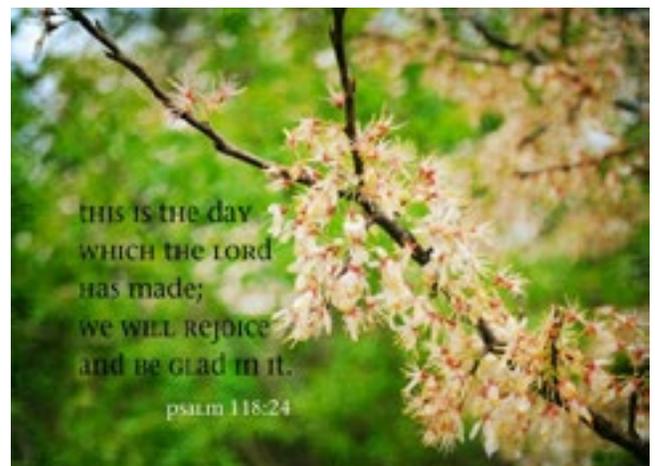
Concerts at First Church  
2014-2015

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
444 East Broad Street Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.228.1741  
[concertsatfirstchurch.org](http://concertsatfirstchurch.org)

Choral Evensong and Concert

SUN MAY 3 4 PM Freewill Offering

Choral Evensong includes Preces and Responses by Herbert Sumsion; D Major Canticles by Leo Sowerby; *Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale) by Herbert Howells. The concert features Jean Langlais' *Messe Solennelle* for choir and two organs.



# Church Council News

## Church Council

by Elaine Warren, Moderator

All boards, commissions and committees are in full swing, bustling with activity on behalf of the church. I would like to share highlights of the past few months from Council.

The Imagine Even More campaign contributions came to \$25,250. With help from the Board of Trustees, some monies from Major Projects being allocated for sabbatical coverage, and an added fundraising goal of \$10,000, the budget was balanced in March. In addition, Council and the Justice and Mercy Commission decided to have two or three mission offerings during the year for certain programs of the church such as camp scholarships for youth that ordinarily appear as line items in the budget. These programs will be part of the budget next year.

David Holt and Tom Worley reported to Council on the status of the Capital Campaign and the Property Planning Group. They are also looking into the possibility of refinancing the West Lot now before the interest rates begin to rise rather than wait until 2017 when our current mortgage ends. Tom Worley has been instrumental in obtaining a tax exemption for the West Lot which will save us several thousands of dollars each year.

The Fund Raising Ministry Group, co-chaired by Todd Jacobson and John Matchett, with help from others, have recruited 62 people so far to work the concession stands at half of the Clippers' home games. Money earned will go toward the \$10,000 fund raising goal of the church.

A Purchase Order process is being gradually introduced as a method of internal fiscal control by Joe Baszynski, Treasurer, and Sharon Leidheiser, Business Administrator.

The Major Projects fund, in addition to sabbatical coverage will be used for the following:

1. attendance at a church administrator convention for Sharon Leidheiser;
2. church website design and maintenance; and
3. financial support for General Synod, June 26-30, in Cleveland.

We are looking forward to General Synod, and, since it is being held in the Ohio Conference, we are expected to provide financial support as well as volunteer support. We are giving \$4000 total with monies from the Social Concerns Fund, the Mission Endowment Fund, and Major Projects. We have also approved \$500 from the Sanctorum Fund to support the Pride Festival, June 19-21, at Goodale Park. Justice and Mercy Commission has provided \$4,000 from their Mission Endowment Fund to support the Mission Trip (June 20-27) to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Two major installation/repair projects are in the works. The gallery railing will be replaced as the present one is unsafe. At the request of Kevin Jones, the Trustees have approved expenses to hire an expert organ maintenance consultant to evaluate our Kimball Organ and the space that surrounds it.

The Council approved the Eagle Scout Project of Adam Wade. Working with Mark Williams and Rick Sayre, Adam will clean and organize the attic space in the Education Wing and replace and relight the Wall of Honor in the Narthex.

A long-range planning process is in place. The committee, led by Dan Clark and Steve Sterrett, are soliciting views from as many members as possible, reading provocative books, and studying churches that are successful in order to prepare a vision for our church that will take us to 2020.

We are very pleased to have The Rev. Emily Corzine with us at our Council meetings along with the Rev. Tim Ahrens.



# Church Council News

## First Church Committees

by Deana Armstrong, Secretary of Council

"Many hands make light work." Or so the saying goes. First Congregational Church has many ways to serve. There are always things to do around the church. The church council is made up of members serving a variety of ministry areas. These commissioners have one or more committees and task groups which they are responsible for representing to the Council. Each commission and its subcommittees coordinate the tasks assigned to their area.

Below are a list of the names of commissions and their subcommittees as well as the people who have gifted a portion of their time and talent to the ministry of First Church. If you see one of these people take a moment to give them a big thank you for all their hard work and generous gift of their time.

If you'd like to know more about what a commission or committee does, please ask one of the members of that commission. We've noted a couple of groups that could use some more help in their tasks, but all the committees and commissions would be happy to welcome you to fellowship and shared service.

MUSIC, ARTS AND HERITAGE: Marti Baumer, Commissioner; Al Waddell, Commissioner-Elect

*Music:* Nancy Braverman, Ron Cook, Kevin Cubick, John Deliman, Mary Day Fewlass, Jim Gallagher, Michael Hopcraft, Cathy Redenbarger, Wayne Redenbarger, Judy Smith, Kevin Jones - Ex Officio

*Celebration and Remembrance:* Bev Cook, John Firebaugh, Sarah Garbe, Rick Sayre, Hugh Schultz, Gleva Stephens, Lynn Wallich. Celebration and Remembrance would like more people. Meet as needed, and follow up by email. Please let Marti Baumer know of any interest.

*Art:* Deb Anderson, Allen Baker, Earl Fritz, Anne Hudson, Martha Huey, Cori Rowley, Rick Sayre, Gleva Stephens, Becky Taft

CHURCH GROWTH: Scott Jones, Commissioner; Kim Hopcraft, Commission-Elect; Catherine Hope-Cunningham

The commission is looking for interested people to join them for their meetings and also for three or four people to serve as hosts to each of our four Adult new member classes throughout the year. If you are interested in either role please see Scott Jones, or Rev. Emily.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Todd Jacobson, Commissioner; Jennifer Okezie-Watts, Commissioner-Elect

*Adult Education:* Deana Armstrong, Jackie Lowery, Lynn Wallich, Tanya Miller, Todd Jacobson

*Children's Education:* Amy Wagner, Bobby Carrington, Jen Provenzano, Julia Myers, Melissa Kulwicki

*Youth Ministry:* Susan Rhoads, Abby Salak, Ellen Boriin, Mary Anne Jacobson

CHURCH VIATILITY: Melissa Kulwicki-Commissioner, Denise Vogt-Commissioner-Elect; Alec Dietz; Melissa Prendergast; Abby Salak; Amy Wagner; Jim Griffin

HOUSE AND GROUNDS: Gary Leidheiser, Commissioner; Charlie Weaver, Commissioner-Elect; Wally Giffen; Rick Sayre; Bill Wirsching; Cheryl Hoskinson; Gerry Worth; Jim Griffin; Bruce Panek; Mark Brown; Eric Klintworth; Jim Kyle; Staff support: Emily Corzine, Sharon Leidheiser

JUSTICE AND MERCY: Alex Rodriquez, Commissioner; Tracy Ross, Commissioner-Elect; Tom Brownfield; Bev Cook; Melva Fisher; Lou Flocken; Dawn George; Al Glover; Greg Halbe; Anne Hudson; Kopano Marumo; Bruce Panek

Still forthcoming Administration Commission's committees of Budget and Finance; Stewardship; Personnel; and the Nominations committee.



## Long-Range Planning Committee – Listening for the Congregation’s Advice

First Church’s Long-Range Planning (LRP) Committee will devote most of May to gathering suggestions and comments from the congregation’s committees and members on the direction that the church should take over the next five years.

Church Council in February charged the LRP Committee with developing “a long-range plan to 2020 that projects a vision for the congregation’s growth and vitality in all its ministries and missions.” Council asked that it receive a draft long-range plan by September 2015. Once approved by council, the plan is likely to be brought to a congregational meeting for adoption.

The LRP Committee has scheduled **three listening sessions** in May for any church member to learn more about the planning process, to offer advice, and to raise questions. The sessions will be:

- **Saturday, May 9, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at the church.**
- **Sunday, May 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. at the church.**
- **Wednesday, May 20, from noon to 1 p.m. at the church and from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at a location to be announced.**

In addition, LRP Committee members are meeting with church committees, commissions, boards, and staff members to discuss the long-range plan.

The 15-member LRP Committee has met monthly since February. Steve Sterrett and Dan Clark are the committee’s co-chairs. In their early discussions, the LRP Committee members generally agreed the new plan likely will:

- Affirm that the congregation has grown consistently in membership since 2000, conducted its largest capital campaign, built on the strengths of its heritage and members, and is well-prepared to move forward in service to God and the community.
- Be aspirational and project a vision for what the life of the congregation could be in 2020.
- Consider potential changes in ministries, programs and organizational structures to welcome and retain younger generations of members and to nurture the spiritual life of older members.
- Reinforce the words above the front doors, “Enter to worship; depart to serve,” through excellence in worship experience and a deep commitment to justice and mercy.
- Proclaim the Gospel through an extravagant welcome to all those who would join us on our spiritual journey in which we walk humbly with God and with those of other faiths.

The LRP Committee has established three subcommittees: Attracting Gen X and Millennials, Successful Mainline Congregations, and Psychology of Change. Each subcommittee is reading timely books and articles and deliberating ideas and actions that could enhance congregational life at First Church.

As examples, First Church has the highest percentage of young people in the Millennial generation of any UCC church in Ohio. The congregation is located in a downtown and a region that is growing in population. Members are living longer and remaining active far into retirement. How do these facts affect outreach, ministries, church structure, and the ability to engage young and old and those in-between?



# First Congregational Church Budget and Finance Committee

## Major Project Fund Grant Request: Motion for Approval

### Title: Sabbatical Support for Church Coverage

From: Rev. Ahrens

Time Period: July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015

Description: To provide pastoral support and coverage to FCCUCC during the sabbatical of the Senior Minister.

- Pastoral support at \$20/hr, 20hrs/week for 12 weeks = \$4,800.00
- Guest Preachers at \$250/week for 7 weeks = \$1,750.00

*\*adjustment may be needed based on cost for workers comp, travel, etc.*

Total Request: \$6,550.00

### Title: Convention-Business Administrator-Additional Funds to Attend

From: Rev. Ahrens (for Sharon Leidheiser)

Time Period: July 12, 2015 – July 17, 2015

Description: Additional funds needed to attend national church administrator's convention.

- Hotel: \$848.00
- Food: \$35/day for 6 days = \$210.00
- Flight: \$250.00
- Conference Cost: \$735 (after \$300 scholarship)

Total Request: \$2,043.00

### Title: United Church of Christ, General Synod Support

From: Rev. Corzine

Time Period: May 1, 2015

Description: Funds will go to support the 2015 General Synod of the UCC. To be combined with \$400.00 from Social Concerns Fund and \$2,000 from Mission Endowment Grant for a total First Church contribution of \$4,000.00.

Total Request: \$1,600.00

### Title: Direct Support for Senior Minister Sabbatical

From: Rev. Ahrens

Time Period: July 1, 2015 - September 30, 2015

Description: This grant would provide support for research and travel as our Senior Minister follows the path of Washington Gladden. The result will be a book on Dr. Gladden to be published by 2017.

- Travel: \$1,000.00
- Book, Paper, Research Material: \$450.00

Total Request: \$1,450.00

### Title: Church Website Design and Maintenance

From: Rev. Corzine

Time Period: April 2015 - December 2015

Description: Funding would go to help update and reevaluate the church website as it has been identified as one of the most common places new members learn about First Church.

- Assessment of Website: \$400.00
- Update and Maintenance: \$800.00
- Staff Training: \$100.00

Total Request: \$1,300.00

Total Current Requests	
Sabbatical Support for Church Coverage	\$6,550.00
Convention-Business Administrator-Additional Funds to Attend	\$2,043.00
United Church of Christ, General Synod Support	\$1,600.00
Direct Support for Sr. Minister Sabbatical	\$1,450.00
Church Website Design and Maintenance	\$1,300.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,343.00</b>

Additional requests received for review at 4/27 B&FC Meeting: \$100.00, \$367.74

## First Church Joys and Concerns

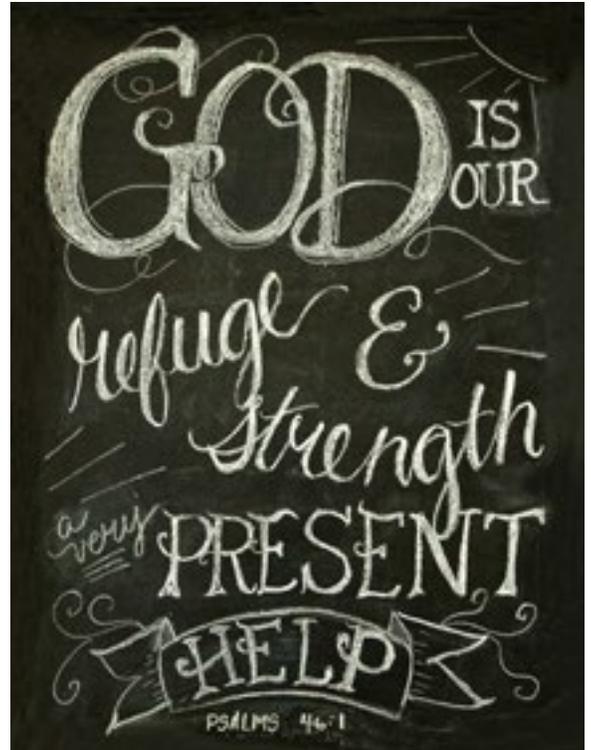
Keep these members and friends in your prayers during the week.

**MEMBERS:** Lola Edwards, on the death of her husband Bill; Matt Stevens, on the death of his grandfather; Carrie Wise, on the death of her aunt, Mimi; Maddie Helmer; Deana Armstrong; Larry Walquist; Jane Carter; Grace Glaros; Keene Lebold; Bernie Martin; Van Barndt; Ray Pendell; Wib Smith; Amos White; and for families and friends who continue to mourn the loss of loved ones.

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY:** Jay Rambo, father of Kent Rambo; Lerato Moabelo, mother of Kopano Marumo; Patricia Halbe, aunt of Greg Halbe; Taryl McGinnis, friend of Pat Patterson; Jay Firebaugh, brother of John Firebaugh; Shirley Graf, sister of Lynn Wallich; Lorene and Herman Ahrens, parents of Rev. Tim Ahrens; Jill Ford, friend of Mark Williams; Jim and Nancy Williams, brother and sister-in-law of Mark Williams, as they face health challenges; and Rev. Floyd Starr.

**THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:** We pray for the citizens of Baltimore, and all those affected by the earthquake in Nepal. We pray for all those who work in the recovery efforts.

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



## Recent Celebration Gifts to First Church By Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

***Given to the Remembrance Fund in celebration of the life of Gunter Garbe by:***

Myron Simkins, Bob and Diana Kutschbach, John and Francille Firebaugh, Dawn George, Joanne Morse, Bert and Bev Cook, and Gleva Stephens

***Given to the Remembrance Fund in honor of Fraylee Williams baptism by:***

Bob and Diana Kutschbach

***Given to the Building Endowment Fund in celebration of the life of Gunter Garbe by:***

Bill and Gail Johannes

***Given to the Jackie Owen Memorial Music Fund in celebration of her life by Col. William Owen***

Support your favorite ministry by making a gift in honor or remembrance of a loved one by completing the gold Celebration Gift form found in the church pews. And like many who have gone before us, please consider giving a specific amount, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder of your estate to a First Church endowment. For more information, contact Rev. Ahrens, your financial advisor, and the Church website at [www.first-church.org/EndowmentFunds.aspx](http://www.first-church.org/EndowmentFunds.aspx)

## Cookies for General Synod

Central Southeast Ohio Association member churches are asked to bake cookies for General Synod. Our assigned cookie is the Snickerdoodle. We are asking each baker make at least two batches of Snickerdoodle cookies. In case you don't have a recipe, the one below by Trisha Yearwood looks pretty easy. It is not necessary to use this recipe: feel free to use your favorite! You may bake the cookies in advance and freeze if they would like; please put wax paper between layers of cookies. We will arrange to have our "stash" of cookies delivered on Monday, June 22 to Westerville UCC.



This is a great way to have fun with others in your church and to participate in making this year's UCC Synod, a fun event that includes your own special participation! Thanks again for participating in this ministry to our Synod delegates – this is a tradition they look forward to and greatly enjoy!

### Trisha Yearwood's Snickerdoodle Cookie Recipe

- 1/2 cup salted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
- 1 1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 medium eggs
- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon



### Directions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

In a large bowl, combine the butter, shortening, 1 1/2 cups sugar and the eggs and mix thoroughly with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy and well combined, 1 to 2 minutes. Sift together the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt, and stir into the shortening mixture.

In a small bowl, stir together the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar with the cinnamon.

Shape the dough into 1 1/2-inch balls (1 tablespoon per ball), and roll each ball in the cinnamon-sugar. Arrange the dough balls 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake two sheets at a time until the edges of the cookies are set but the centers are still soft, 8 to 10 minutes, rotating the sheets halfway through. Transfer the cookies to wire racks for cooling. Repeat with the remaining dough balls. Store in an airtight container.



*(From Food Network Kitchens: After further testing and to ensure the best results, this recipe has been altered from what was in the actual episode. Recipe adapted from Georgia Cooking in an Oklahoma Kitchen by Trisha Yearwood (c) Clarkson Potter 2008)*

# Justice and Mercy

## Image...

by Greg Halbe, Justice Team member

Were you in church on Easter Sunday? Did you feel the power of our Risen Lord as we packed the sanctuary and sang praises to God, accompanied by brass and the mighty Kimball organ? The Holy Spirit's presence was indeed palpable, wasn't it?

Imagine what it will be like when 4,000 of our sisters and brothers gather with us at the Celeste Center on May 4, bringing God's power into the streets? Imagine the rafters shaking with our cries of "BREAD ... rises," "Care ...not crisis," "Welcome ... Columbus," and "The violence must ...stop!" With 4,000 of us there, inviting our public officials to endorse and adopt the evidence-based solutions we have been discussing with them for weeks and months and years, can you imagine what would happen?

How about law-abiding immigrants no longer fearful of police and city officials because of their status and lack of recognized ID? How about our friends and family with mental illness, belonging to a clubhouse that welcomes them as members, not patients, and surrounds them with the rehabilitative care and support they can't find anywhere else? How about gang members turning in their weapons in order to get the counseling, mentoring and training they need to turn their lives around?

Sound far-fetched? It isn't, really. All we need to do is bring the same numbers to the Celeste Center on May 4, and all 50 of our sister congregations to bring their high holy day attendance as well. Can we do it? Of course! Will we? Ah, there's the rub. We've been doing Easter, Rosh Hashanah, and Eid for centuries. We plan our lives around those holidays. When we got our 2015 calendars, one of the first things we did was look for those dates.

Starting a new tradition, building a new culture takes time, effort, and commitment. Perhaps if we just let it evolve, we would realize our dream in a few hundred years. But we can't afford to do that. Our brothers and sisters are suffering and dying, and our lives are broken. We need healing now, and we crave the joy of God's love reflected in our daily lives right now.

Monday, May 4, at 6:30 p.m., we will gather at the Celeste Center on the Ohio Expo Fairgrounds for our new high holy day, our festival of justice, the Nehemiah Action. Realizing our dream, building our new culture, begins with bringing at least three friends and family with you. It doesn't end there, not by a long shot. But imagine what would happen if we all took that first step together!

## May Fellowship Hour Schedule

May 3	Samuel
May 10	Zechariah
May 17	Acts
May 24	Amos
May 31	Colossians

## May Offering Schedule

May 3	BREAD
May 10	Huckleberry House
May 17	Disaster Relief Nepal
May 24	UCC – Strengthen the Church
May 31	Back Bay Mission Trip

## May Acolyte Schedule

May 3	Cassidy Hopcraft	Dylan Hopcraft
May 10	Alex Palmer	Alyssia Palmer
May 17	Chutney Anderson	Eddie Anderson
May 24	Nick Boriin	Finnegan Miller
May 31	Alyssa Batchelor	Courtney Batchelor

# May Calendar of Church Events

## Sunday, May 3

9 a.m. – Teacher and Worship Connections Appreciation  
Breakfast – Children’s Library  
9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall  
9 a.m. – Teen and Treble Choirs – Choir Room  
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Ed Wing, Rooms C / D  
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary  
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall  
12:30 p.m. – Confirmation Class – Ed Wing Room C  
6 p.m. – Middle and High School Youth – Parish Hall

## Monday, May 4

7 p.m. – BREAD Nehemiah Action – Celeste Center on the Ohio State Fairgrounds

## Tuesday, May 5

1 p.m. – Celebration and Remembrance Committee Meeting – Large Conference Room  
2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room  
5:30 p.m. – Sacred Earth Meeting – Large Conference Room  
6:30 p.m. – Christian Education Committee – Education Wing Room C  
7 p.m. – Justice and Mercy Committee – Parish Family Room

## Wednesday, May 6

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Large Conference Room  
11 a.m. – Book Study – Parlor – Chapter 6: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

## Thursday, May 7

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

## Saturday, May 9

9 a.m. – Long Range Planning Listening Session – Ed Wing Room D  
10 a.m. – First Church Quilters – Large Conference Room  
10 a.m. – Confirmation Practice – Sanctuary  
11:30 a.m. – Confirmand Luncheon – Parish Hall

## Sunday, May 10 – Confirmation and Schumacher Awards

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall  
9 a.m. – Teen and Treble Choirs – Choir Room  
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Ed Wing, Rooms C / D  
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary  
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall

## Monday, May 11

9 a.m. – Good Samaritan – Parlor and Large Conference Room  
7 p.m. – Trustees Meeting – Parlor

## Tuesday, May 12

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

## Wednesday, May 13

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting – Large Conference Room  
10 a.m. – Thursday Fellowship – Parlor

## Thursday, May 14

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

## Saturday, May 16

8:30 a.m. – House and Grounds Committee – Parish Family Room

## Sunday, May 17

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall  
10 a.m. – First Church Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
10 a.m. – Christian Education – Ed Wing, Rooms C / D  
10 a.m. – Long Range Planning Listening Session – Ed Wing, Room D  
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary  
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall  
6 p.m. – Middle and High School Youth – Parish Hall

## Monday, May 18

7 p.m. – Personnel Committee – Large Conference Room

## Tuesday, May 19

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room  
7 p.m. – Church Council – Parish Hall

## Wednesday, May 20

1 p.m. – Deadline for Newsletter submissions  
11 a.m. – Book Study – Parlor – Chapter 7: The Laborers in the Vineyard  
2 p.m. – Art Committee – Parlor

## Thursday, May 21

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

## Friday, May 22

1 p.m. – Cooking for Faith Mission – Kitchen

## Sunday, May 24

9 a.m. – Worship – Parish Hall  
10 a.m. – First Church Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
11 a.m. – Worship – Sanctuary  
Noon – Fellowship Hour – Parish Hall  
6 p.m. – Middle and High School Youth – Parish Hall

## Monday, May 25

Office Closed – Memorial Day

## Tuesday, May 26

2 p.m. – Worship Planning – Parish Family Room  
7 p.m. – Long Range Planning Committee – Education Wing Room D  
7 p.m. – Deacons Meeting – Parish Hall  
7 p.m. – Budget and Finance Committee – Large Conference Room

## Wednesday, May 27

10 a.m. – Staff Planning Retreat

## Thursday, May 28

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

## Member Birthdays in May

5/2 Allen Baker  
5/3 Christopher Brooks  
5/3 Mala Ghose  
Matt Stevens  
5/4 Sharon Ferguson  
5/5 Marc Danneberger  
Mike Underwood  
Rick Sayre  
5/6 Nick Boriin  
Robyn Petras  
5/7 Cameron Mailer  
Morgan Shaw  
5/8 Steven Deliman  
Reese Magaw  
Steve Secan  
Ivan Vore  
5/9 Cheryl Hoskinson  
5/10 Anne Hudson  
5/11 Paul Fishel Jr.  
Kathy Young  
5/13 Bill Wirsching  
5/14 Kris Brant  
Carol Woodard  
5/15 Andrew MacGregor  
Allyson Wharton  
5/16 Greer Aeschbury  
Elias Ewing  
5/18 Nancy Burba  
Kyle Danneberger  
Emma Gonzalez  
5/19 Gabrielle Collins  
Bob Lortz  
Betty Powell  
Traci Shaw  
Dave Wharton  
5/20 Kim Crabtree  
Todd Cunningham  
Tom Kiesel  
Matt Myers  
Mike Weddle  
5/21 Leslie Boltz  
Martha Loy  
Carol Gallagher  
5/22 Nick Bruckelmeyer  
Val Stichter  
5/23 Guy Cole  
Alex Heer  
Melissa Murdock-Weygandt  
5/24 Justin DeWolfe  
Dorothy Vish  
Chase Wagner  
5/25 Dominick Blanks  
Tim Brownlee  
Brian Cave  
Jude Clark

5/26 Luke Ahrens  
Adam Ghose  
Bill Heer  
5/27 Sandy Bennett  
Charlie Roach  
Caroline Thompson  
5/28 Bill Johannes  
Rachel Lithgo  
5/29 Arlene Reynolds  
Nancy Williams  
5/30 Karla Lortz  
Mike Petras  
Peter Worley  
5/31 Lou Flocken  
Ann Hunt  
Judith Purdy

## Member Anniversaries in May

5/2 Lois and John Littler  
Lisa and Anthony Riley  
5/3 Fran and Bruce Panek  
5/4 Whitney and Kirk Marker  
5/5 Bill and Natalie Wright  
5/8 Nancy and Larry Braverman  
Laura and Lance Collins  
5/11 Lori and Ben Horne  
Darla Luebbe and Elaine Stewart  
5/12 Morgan and Christiana Bonito  
Bill and Sarah Lange  
5/13 Joe and Beth Iannarino  
5/15 Katherine and Chris Koeneman  
5/16 Beth and Andy Cooke  
Shane and Lauren McDonald  
Kara and Drew Warren  
5/18 Sue and Ken Salak  
Debbie and Colin Thompson  
Kyle and Cassie Zalipski;  
Jean and Lee Wetmore  
5/19 Ralph and Linda Mumford  
Tom Worley and Nancy Loy  
5/22 Mario and Jessica Catenacci  
Jeff and Brynn Steckman  
5/23 Betsy Hubbard and Sam Spofforth  
5/27 Phil and Candy Schneider  
5/28 Bill and Lola Edwards  
5/30 Jerod and Christina Swinehart  
5/31 Sylvia and Mitch Slivo

## FIRST CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Senior Minister	Timothy C. Ahrens, M. Div.
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
Nursery Staff	Rosemary Pawandiwa-Priore, Evin Wimberly, Sara Kapp, Simone Ellerson
Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus	G. Dene Barnard

## 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
Custodians	William Lee, Lena Brown, Tony Brown
Wedding Coordinators	Janet Axt, Tori Stucke

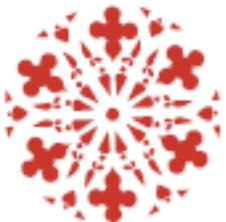
## CHURCH OFFICERS

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
Senior Deacon	Tom Kiesel
Deacon Council Rep.	Lynn Wallich

**TO:**



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](mailto:home@first-church.org)

Web site: [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org)

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Closed Major Holidays

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

**SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS**

Worship at 9 a.m. ~ Parish Hall

Worship at 11 a.m. ~ Sanctuary