



## Practicing Summer at First Church

By the Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson, Associate Minister

How familiar are you with the term “Christian practices?” They are ways of living out our faith that intentionally draw us together through Christ in response to God’s grace to us. They direct our attention to essential needs of humanity and all creation. Through them, we create deliberate openings and opportunities for God’s presence, mercy and power to be made known in us and even through us. They build up our lives as travelers in faith. They provide avenues for us to experience and reflect God’s love and grace.

Christian practices connect us to the past and lead us toward God’s future. We discover, learn and engage in them as part of the wider community as well as individuals. Across the centuries, different practices have been highlighted. The ones I am exploring and look forward to teaching include: hospitality; saying yes and saying no; honoring the body; household economics (personal household and God’s household); discernment; faith stories; healing; forgiveness; shaping communities; dying well; singing of the soul; and Sabbath keeping. Rev. Ahrens’ sabbatical draws our attention first to the Sabbath.

Sabbaticals for clergy, who are always on call internally and externally, are one way of providing Sabbath renewal. However, Rev. Ahrens’ sabbatical is not only for him, it is for us as well. Sabbath keeping is much more than “time to stop everything,” as my Dad once told me. Instead, it is a combination of giving and receiving. God challenges us to, “Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.” (Exodus 20:8) This is more than words on the top 10 list God calls us to honor. It is possible it has another distinction. It’s been said that it is the commandment to which we pay the least attention. Sabbath is a gift waiting for our response. God knows what we need better than we know for ourselves.

Sabbath keeping calls us to rediscover our center is God’s love. We stay so busy doing or avoiding doing things, it is easy to forget to whom we belong. Sabbath calls our attention to God’s work in creation and the lessons provided – take time to breathe, give thanks, worship and step back from whatever enslaves us. This summer, I invite you to make a difference in your life and in all of ours. Set Sunday aside for renewal and refreshment; come listen to preachers from different faiths and perspectives; come, laugh, pray, be with friends and discover new ones. Come experience and reflect God’s love and grace at First Congregational.

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## Capital Campaign Gets Rolling

By Neal Brower, Capital Campaign Chair

Our journey along *The Future’s Broadening Way* is off to a very promising start following the congregational vote January 31 and the official launch of the capital campaign May 16.

Early campaign results are encouraging, as three lead donors have already pledged a combined total of more than \$1 million toward the \$6 million goal.

Our volunteer corps is now 70 members strong, as 28 lead gift callers have joined the campaign since the original 42 campaign volunteers were introduced on Easter Sunday. These 28 members of First Church, led by Lead Gifts Committee co-chairs Russ Kelm and Sheldon Taft, have begun their visits with fellow members. **(Continued on Page 6)**



THE FUTURE’S BROADENING WAY

# From the Senior Minister

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## Reflections at the Mid-Point

*By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister*

On a hot summer day, June 23, 1985, in the un-air-conditioned sanctuary of my home church, St. John's United Church of Christ, Lansdale, Pa., 55 Protestant and Catholic men and women religious laid their hands upon me, called forth the Holy Spirit and ordained me into Christian ministry. My first memory of that moment was how heavy the weight of all their hands felt upon my head. As a 27-year-old man about to head off to a "foreign" land named Ohio and begin my ministry on the west side of Cleveland, I felt weighed down by the steps ahead to which God was calling me. But I felt empowered and filled with the Holy Spirit alive in my life!



I was reminded of that moment when Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson spoke in church recently and lifted up the challenges and joys of "carrying the title of religious leader" for 25 years. Images of people I have served - married, buried, confirmed, welcomed, and cared for unto death - flooded my mind as she spoke.

Truthfully, I feel like I stand at the mid-point of my calling to ministry. It's a calling in which I daily serve God and God's beloved ones. My calling is about you.

There are nights I do not sleep well. I often sit in the green chair in my living room and late into the night I sit and pray for you. In my mind's eye, I see you in the hospital or recovering from surgery. You are facing difficult days with your children or spouses. You have been diagnosed with cancer or received news that you are being laid off or your company is closing. You are waiting for your firstborn or you have lost a pregnancy. You have lost your beloved to death or separation. You have been experiencing loneliness. You are struggling in some way, in some place, for some time.

My eyes are drawn to the cross of Christ and I think, and pray, and reflect on you. You may not receive a phone call on this, but, my heart calls to you and appeals to God to bring you healing, peace of mind or rest. And in the dark of the night, it is you I hold in prayer. Sleepless, perhaps. But my hearts goes to you. None of this will change while I am half a world away from you. No matter where I go, you will go with me.

On May 30, Janine asked three questions in her sermon for Trinity Sunday. She presented them as questions for living together in peace and hope as the family of

God. "Is it true? Is it kind? Does it build up the body of Christ?"

May these questions guide the church of Jesus Christ at First Church and each one of your lives this summer and for years to come. I know they have taken root in my heart and soul. I will carry them to the children of Abraham in Spain, Morocco, Israel and Egypt. Moreover, they will guide my late night prayer time and my early morning heart in the green chair of my living room as I begin the next 25 years of serving Christ in ordained ministry.

We now stand at the mid-point of 2010. I am encouraged by what I see. Worship attendance is strong and growing. The early service has never had more folks in worship. We have had 30 new members join this year, topping our total for all of 2009. We had a super class of 11 confirmands join May 23. We have doubled the baptisms from 2009. In addition, we have babies on the way to add to our baby boom!

Church leaders and committed members have joined together to put to rest the \$35,000 budget deficit. In addition, we have voted to increase staff salaries by the 1.5% called for by the congregation in January. The Capital Campaign committee has garnered over \$1.2 million in commitments toward our goal of \$6 million. As of June 28, we will be in possession of the Byer's Lot!

Jamie Bobb has continued to strengthen our music ministry. Bill Beckett and Janine have joined our staff and we have been amazed by the great gifts they have brought us. With Mark Williams on medical leave, Jackie Dean has stepped in and will add tremendous support to our educational ministry and spiritual care this summer.

I am impressed by the members and friends of First Church. You are leaders in sports, theatre, the arts, the media, the law, in government, in religion, in medicine, in business, finance and education. You are leaders of compassion and vision for Columbus and the world.

I quote the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.. In one of his sermons I posted on my door as teen-ager and carry with me to this day, Dr. King said, "I am not yet where I want to be, but I am not where I was . . . and I thank God that he is not finished with me yet."

May God bless you and keep you while we are apart from one another. Here at the mid-point, remember, no matter where you are on this journey of life and faith, God is not finished with you yet! Remember to pray and live these three questions: Is it true? Is it kind? Does it build up the body of Christ?



The 2010 First Church Confirmation Class: (Front row, left to right) Anna Rhoads, Katie Geis, Reel Chaudhri, James Knerr, Betsy Trace and Morgan Shaw; (Second row, left to right) Allison Lange, Steven Deliman, Thomas Trace, Sarah Ahrens and Alex Heer; (third row, left to right) the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, senior minister, and Thom Smith.

## First Church Welcomes New Members On Confirmation Sunday

Meet this year's confirmands, who joined First Church on May 23. These were written by their mentors.

### Betsy Trace – Kay Metz, mentor

Betsy has a sunny personality and is a dedicated athlete. She is the daughter of Sarah and Tom Trace the granddaughter of Frank and Carol Hussey and the great-granddaughter of Otilia and Fred Helm. Betsy is finishing 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Jones Middle School in Upper Arlington, where she has had the unique experience of having both her parents as her teachers. Betsy's favorite subject is math and she competes in soccer, track and swimming. Betsy is a member of the UA Swim Club and will continue to compete in sports at Upper Arlington High School. When asked about her goals for next year, with characteristic modesty, Betsy said she wants to contribute to the proud tradition of the high school winning the state championship in swimming. Congratulations and blessings to you, Betsy, on your confirmation.

### Katie Geis – Kelly Dodd, mentor

Katie is a great young lady and has done a fantastic job of juggling confirmation with all the other activities in her life. Katie has a cat, a little brother (Jordan) and great parents (Tom and Shelly). Katie also had a role in her school production of *Footloose* this winter. Katie has been a member of First Church for several years and is a wonderful representation of our youth!

### Allison Lange – Gayle Henderson, mentor

Allison Lange is an 8th grader at McCord Middle School in Worthington. She is an excellent student who also knows how and when to have fun. She surprises her teachers and friends with the depth of her thinking. She loves music and has been very involved with the vocal group Con Brio. She is in the Vivace choir and the smaller group Bella Canto, a very exclusive group of voices. It is obvious that singing is a passion for her; when she talks about this vocal group, her face lights up. This is one of her many God-given talents. Allison has some very strong convictions about her faith and is very mature in her beliefs. She continually impressed me with her interpretations and insight as we traveled along her faith journey. I am glad to have traveled with her and I look forward to watching her the rest of the way.

### Reel Chadhuri – Matt Myers, mentor

Reel is a compassionate and aware young man who is finishing up his eighth and final year at Clintonville Academy. In the fall he will be attending either St. Charles or Bishop Watterson. Reel is a big movie buff and watches three to four a week. He also likes to read and is currently reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Basketball is Reel's sport and he has the athleticism and skills of a young Evan Turner. I have really enjoyed getting to know Reel this year and I look forward to watching him grow.

### Sarah Ahrens – Jenny Provenzano, mentor

Sarah Ahrens will be attending Worthington Killbourne High School in the fall. She is quite an athlete, competing on her school's track team and also on the soccer field. She also enjoys hip hop dancing and singing in her school choir. Sarah is a wonderful young woman with a deep spirituality that is a real strength for her. Her faith is very strong and inspirational, and we were so glad to welcome her into our church membership as a confirmand.

### Morgan Shaw - Sallie Danneberger, mentor

It was my pleasure to work with Morgan. She was very conscientious in our studies and had a wonderful interest in the Confirmation process. Morgan is a very dedicated student.

### Steven Deliman - Karl Danneberger, mentor

Steven was an enthusiastic and enjoyable student to work with. Steven is very involved in school activities including athletics and band. Steven is part of a strong family that has strong Christian values.

**(Continued on Page 4)**

# First Church News

## (CONFIRMANDS, Concluded from Page 3)

### **Anna Rhodes – Cori Rowley, mentor**

Anna is an exceptional young lady. I am so blessed to have had the opportunity to get to know her over the past several months. She is energetic, witty, honest and endearing. She isn't afraid to ask questions and she digs deeper than the standard answer. Anna is also well grounded, wears her faith proudly and does what is right. She admirably put up with my terrible cooking and my long winded answers – Thank you Anna for being such a wonderful confirmand and friend!

### **Alex Heer – John Deliman, mentor**

Alex Heer and his family are long standing members of First Church. The son of Bill and Holly Herr, Alex also has an older sister, Susie. Alex is an honors student at Indianola Alternative School, where he enjoys math and sports, especially basketball and soccer. Alex is an avid fan of the Ohio State Buckeyes. He will attend Columbus Alternative High School in the fall.

### **Thomas Trace – Ben Rowley, mentor**

Thomas is an outstanding young man. I am grateful for the time I spent with Thomas during Confirmation. I am proud of the steps he has taken in faith. He is a great student athlete and a passionate leader. His natural leadership skills will carry him far, not only in school, but in our faith community.

### **James Knerr – Pavan Peter, mentor**

It was at a church picnic two years ago, when I first met James. We both discovered we had one thing in common, our love for photography. Also turned out James had an insightful eye for finding great photos. As I've gotten to know James better, I've discovered he brings that same insight to the way he looks at life. He's also smart, loves all things technical but with a cool factor that makes sure he's not a geek. James has a very steady head that keeps him focused on his current priority in life, which is doing well in school. James is a freshman at Worthington Kilbourne High School. His favorite subject is engineering. He loves sports, his favorite being baseball.

He's not afraid to ask the difficult questions of life, and he doesn't shy away from thinking deeply about the things that matter. Who are we? Why are we here? Why am I part of this church? I know that James isn't here because his parents come to First Church, but because he thought about it and made a decision to be here. I think that makes him a valuable addition to our fellowship. I take great pleasure in introducing him to our fellowship.

## Summer Sermon Schedule

June 20 - Rev. Dr. Alton Fennell (9 a.m.)  
Rev. Elaine Fennell (11 a.m.)  
June 27 – Maxine Shonk, O.P.



July 4 – Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson  
July 11 – Rev. Dale Ann Gray  
July 18 – Carol Ann Spencer, O.P.  
July 25 – Rabbi Michael Ungar

August 1 – Gemma Doll, O.P.  
August 8 – Rev. John Aeschbury  
August 15 – Janice Bachman, O.P.  
August 22 – Imam Hany Saqr  
August 29 – Noreen Malone, O.P.

September 5 – Rev. Earl Fritz  
September 13 – Rev. Mary Ann Goetz  
September 19 – Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson  
September 26 – Rev. Tim returns!!

### **Dear Friends of First Church,**

Thank you so much for your prayers and support during my recent cancer surgery. The cards, notes, emails and food truly nourished my soul and body. Please continue to keep me and my family in your prayers as we take on the next part of the journey for treatment.

To keep you up to date on my health condition, I created a CaringBridge Web site. You can follow my progress and show your support.

### **Visit my Web site in two easy ways:**

1. Visit my CaringBridge website by clicking the link below.  
<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/markswilliams>
2. Enter my Web site name, markswilliams, at [www.CaringBridge.org](http://www.CaringBridge.org).

### **Show your support**

- Visit and keep up to date.
- Leave a message in my guestbook.
- Receive e-mail notifications when my journal is updated.

**- Mark Williams**

## Young Children in Worship

By Mark S. Williams, Christian Education Director

**What a joy it is to see the smiling faces at children's time** during the 11 a.m. worship service! They are a delight and a source of continuing amazement. Their faith is so pure and fresh that they can inspire anyone who comes in contact with them.



Perhaps that is why Jesus admonished his disciples to, "Let the children come unto me." Maybe Jesus had a deeper message than would apply to just that one instance. At their baptism the church promises to help parents raise the child in the Christian faith within this church community. At

confirmation, the church accepts into full membership these same children.

How can the church honor the promise made at baptism and lived out during the journey to confirmation? The Children's Education Committee considers this question constantly. Providing educational opportunities, biblically sound curriculum and caring teachers are part of the answer. But a larger picture exists - how does every member welcome these children and their families in to the church? How do we assist the parents?

**Welcome:** Families visiting us need to meet other families with children; to have their child(ren) recognized and greeted; to be given any special assistance they may need – crayons and an activity sheet, a nod and a smile from someone without children at their side.

**Inclusion:** Families worshipping with young children have a different focus in worship. They usually don't get to sit quietly and contemplate the gothic beauty of our sanctuary because they are engaged in forming a new Christian. This is an awesome responsibility. One that needs the support of every parishioner in worship. Parents are very sensitive to the reactions around them to their children's behavior in church. Your response as a fellow Christian can truly be a determining factor in how faith is perceived by a young child and by their parent. Is it one of love and acceptance or judgment and scorn?

**Learning:** By attending worship children learn that they belong to this faith community. They learn that worship is the time when God speaks to them in stories from the Bible, in preaching and in prayer. God's love is in full view through baptism and communion. They learn traditions, hymns and prayers. They feel valued by God and by their congregation.

**Opportunity:** Church activities need to be child-friendly. ALL activities - committee meetings, Fellowship Hour, worship, Church School, Youth Group, Choir, and Adult Education need to think of how the activity will affect the children, youth or their parents. A single parent may be excluded from committee work if there are no childcare arrangements offered.

Fellowship Hour organizers need to remember that little hands can't reach very high on the table, that little bottoms don't fit well in big chairs, and that they have sat still just as long as they can possibly stand. Worship services need to welcome and incorporate the faith of the youngest believers, whether that is through a smile and hug or by incorporating them into serving communion.



Children and youth, by the very virtue of their baptism, belong to this community of faith. It is our joy and calling to see that the path of their faith journey is as free of obstacles as possible and as safe, welcoming and positive as we can make it.

## From the Music Office

By Jamie Bobb, Minister of Music

### Summer Choir and More

On the second and fourth Sundays of the summer months, you are invited to join us for summer choir. If you sing with a choir year-round and want to keep singing through the summer, or if you love to sing but can't make the year-long commitment, or if you just want to "test the waters," summer choir is for you. We will meet in the organ gallery at 10 a.m. to prepare engaging but not-too-difficult music for 11 a.m. worship on June 27, July 11, July 18, August 8 and August 22.



**Mark your calendars for the incredible concert of Columbus Symphony Orchestra musicians Friday, June 18, 8 p.m.** It is free, but donations will be doubled, thanks to an anonymous donor. The concert will feature:

\* The **Columbus Symphony Woodwind Quintet\*** and Columbus Symphony violinist **Tatiana Hanna**, with special guest pianist **Ahlin Min**.

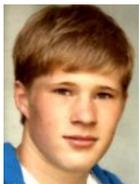
\* **Claude Debussy, Premiere Rhapsodie** for clarinet and piano, a dreamy, free spirited piece with the same magical style of Debussy's Afternoon of a Faun.  
*(Continued on Page 6)*

# First Church News

*Congratulations!*

## First Church Honors Its Graduates

**Alex Weaver** graduated this month from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., with a bachelor of music degree. He majored in horn performance. Future plans include attending graduate school at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in the fall to continue his studies in horn performance.



**Stan Lange** is a 2010 graduate of Worthington Kilbourne High School, where he lettered in cross country, wrestling and track and field. Stan has been accepted in the living-learning community for science scholars at Kent State University, where he will major in clinical laboratory science.

**Peter Worley** is a graduate of Worthington Kilbourne High School and plans to attend the Ohio State University to pursue a career in engineering. He is a recipient of an OSU Maximus Merit Scholarship, a Dean's Award Scholarship from the College of Engineering, and a Kilbourne Quarterback Club Scholarship. Peter served as co-captain of the football team and was a member of the lacrosse team (state champions in 2009).



**Kim Kutschbach** graduated this month from Westerville North High School. She was involved in student council and yearbook staff, where she has been the editor for the past two years. She has volunteered in elementary schools, teaching American sign language to students. She was on the homecoming court her junior and senior years, and prom court this year. Kim is a lifelong member of First Church, where she has served on Council, participated in Treble Choir, Youth Group, five mission trips and the Schumacher Committee. She will attend Otterbein College in the fall, where she plans to study chemistry and then go on to medical school.

**Ellen Braverman**, the daughter of Nancy and Larry Braverman, graduated this year from Oberlin College with a bachelor of arts degree.

**Aaron Daniel Morton-Wilson**, son of Revs. Janine and Matthew Wilson, graduated from Rutherford B. Hayes High School in Delaware.

## *(MUSIC, Concluded from Page 5)*

\* **Igor Stravinsky, L'Histoire du Soldat** in a version for clarinet, violin and piano. Stravinsky's angular tale of a soldier tricked by the Devil and a possessed violin! A wild ride with tango, waltz and ragtime dance music!

\* **Francis Poulenc, Sextet**, for woodwind quintet and piano, vaudevillian burlesque alternately with hauntingly seductive and dreamy melodies.

**On Sunday, July 4**, I will be playing a short program of national hymns and patriotic songs, including Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever* on the Kimball organ at 10 a.m. and noon.

**Compline** will not be offered in the summer months but will resume September 19 at 9 p.m. The summer is also a good time to think and pray about your commitments of time and talent for the fall. Participation in the children's choir program is an important responsibility and a life-shaping opportunity that benefits mind, body and spirit.

**The First Church Choir** will resume its rehearsal schedule on Thursday, September 9, at 7:30 p.m. Contact me this summer if you are interested. The current schedule pattern for the **Treble Choir** resumes with rehearsal at 9 a.m. Sunday, September 12.

I would love to hear from parents who are considering this for their children or teens. My goal is to develop a program that has an ensemble for each age group. This a wonderful way to enhance intergenerational participation in worship, provide a powerful means of stewardship and spiritual practice for all ages groups, and build life-long habits of church attendance.

## *(CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, Concluded from Page 1)*

Their mission is to personally communicate the goals of the campaign and invite each of us to invest in the future of First Church through our pledges and gifts to *The Future's Broadening Way*.

As we progress along our campaign journey, we will take time to pause and celebrate at milestones along the way. We will reach the first of these milestones later this month, when we close on the purchase of 414 E. Broad Street property and First Church becomes the owner of the Byers lot.

Please plan to attend an extra special fellowship hour on Sunday, June 27, as we celebrate this very important and exciting milestone.

## Rethinking Church: Measuring Growth and Vitality

By the Rev. Rebecca Bowman Woods  
United Church News

While the United Church of Christ continues to lose both members and congregations, the decline may be slowing. Denominational leaders are eyeing these numbers while staying focused on vitality and considering ways to connect with an up-and-coming generation for whom the traditional model of church membership may be obsolete.



Recently-released figures for 2009 show a net loss of 33 UCC congregations and 31,492 members. Total membership as of December 31 stood at 1,080,199, with 5,287 congregations.

In 2008, the UCC saw a net loss of 57

congregations and 33,590 members. In 2007, the denomination declined by 141 congregations and 51,193 members — its biggest loss since 1961. The 2005 General Synod affirmation of marriage equality fueled losses in 2007 and 2006, but also led to some new affiliations, church leaders say.

How is the UCC faring compared to other mainline denominations? According to the *2010 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* published by the National Council of Churches, no mainline denomination saw a net gain in members in 2008 (the year for which the NCCs 2010 data was collected). The UCC lost 2.93 percent of its membership; the Presbyterian Church USA 3.28 percent; the Episcopal Church, 2 percent; and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1.92 percent. The United Methodist Church, the largest mainline Protestant denomination, lost 1.01 percent in 2008.

During the same year, the Catholic Church, the Latter-day Saints, the Assemblies of God, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) gained between 1 and 2 percent. The largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Church, lost 0.24 percent of its members.

Denominational leaders in the UCC are paying attention to the decline, but are interested in other factors besides

the number of people in the pews. "We're not looking at membership as much as we used to as an indicator of church vitality," said the Rev. Stephen Sterner, executive minister for Local Church Ministries.

One sign of vitality is a diversity that increasingly reflects the changing U.S. population, says Sterner. Within local churches, worship attendance, the number of adult baptisms and members' involvement in mission or service are also key indicators, he said. A small church that looks like its community and is engaged in ministry there may actually be healthier than a larger church that does not reflect its community's racial mix and is located where people must drive some distance to attend, Sterner added.

One trend impacting churches is the religious habits of young adults. Robert P. Jones, CEO of Public Religion Research, says young adults are marrying and starting families later. They live with roommates or partners and juggle busy schedules, but appreciate opportunities to get involved with groups and issues they care about, Jones said.

Jones and others who study religious engagement patterns among "millennials" (ages 18 to early 30s) say young adults don't have strong denominational loyalties. Those who claim any religious involvement are likely to connect with a number of different faith groups and organizations for service, mission, study and worship.

"This is different than a membership model, where you're at services or Sunday school on a weekly basis," said Jones. While millennials' affiliations may be less regular or institutionalized, "those connections are important to them," he said.

The UCC's progressive stances on issues such as marriage equality have led some members and congregations to leave. These stances may attract youth and young adults, said Jones, because the treatment of gays and lesbians is "a huge factor in how younger generations are evaluating religious institutions."

His findings are similar to the Barna Group's survey of 16 to 29 year-olds outside the Christian faith about their perceptions of contemporary Christianity. The results were the basis for the 2007 book *unchristian*, by Gabe Lyons and David Kinnaman. Barna's subjects described contemporary Christianity as "anti-gay" "judgmental" and "hypocritical" — qualities they saw as antithetical to Jesus' life and teachings. **(Continued on Page 10)**

# First Church News

## Recent Gifts to First Church

By Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

Given to the Music, Arts and Heritage Endowment Fund in celebration of Jan Wade's special birthday by:

**Bill and Gail Johannes**

Given to the Remembrance Fund in celebration of the life of Robert Williams by:

**Joe and Donna Neidhardt**  
**Everdry Waterproofing of Columbus**  
**Bill and Penne Huckleberry**  
**Dawn George**  
**Jim and Pat Sagester**  
**Donna Flint**  
**T. W. Quinn**  
**Bob and Shirley Carpenter**  
**Debbie Wee**  
**Chester and Leona Gordan**

Given to the Unrestricted Endowment Fund in celebration of the life of Jean Byerly by:

**The estate of Jean Byerly**

Given to the Choir Fund in celebration of the life of Bob Roberts by:

**Pam Welsh-Huggins**  
**Bill and Alice Boden**

Given to the Concert Fund in celebration of the life of Bob Roberts by:

**Karl and Lesley Schaab**

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

## Mothers for Others Makes its Return

By Catherine Kennedy

Parents for Others is up and running again under the new name Mothers for Others!

Because of more complicated schedules, we are now meeting only once a quarter. At each meeting, the moms coordinate a service drive, which will be opened to the First Church congregation for a period of two to three months. The children complete their own service during



the meeting (or play around, depending on the age of the child).

If you are interested in joining our group, please contact Catherine Kennedy at cskennedy1981@yahoo.com. Our next meeting will take place Friday, August 20 at 4 p.m. The meeting place is to be determined.

Also, through August 31 we are collecting cell phones, prescription glasses and sunglasses. So, clean out your drawers!

The cell phones will benefit the organization Cell Phones for Soldiers ([www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com](http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com)). The glasses and sunglasses will benefit the organization One Sight, which is committed to providing clear vision to those in need around the world. The collection box will be located outside the main office.

## Young Adults Are in Demand!



Are you between the ages of 18 & 35? Would you like to meet other young adults – some single, some married, some with children and others without children? Are you a searcher, seeker, or doer? Do you like to read, explore, play, pray, or

engage in mission? Does time to explore your faith, study the Bible, discover and discuss books, theology, daily life or science appeal to you? Are you getting ready for college or looking forward to enjoying your break away from college?

If any of these ideas are of interest (or if you have an interest you'd like to share with others not on the list), then please contact Rev. Janine Wilson at: 614 228-1741, ext. 21, or [jwilson@first-church.org](mailto:jwilson@first-church.org). Young adult ministry opportunities are on the horizon. We hope you will be part of this new beginning!

## Mission Offerings Schedule

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

**July 4 - Kairos prison ministry**

**July 11 - Deep Griha – Mission effort assisting young people in India**

**July 18 - Faith Mission**

**July 25 - Good Samaritan**



## Staff Pay Hikes Approved

By David Holt, Treasurer

At the annual meeting in January, our church budget was balanced by a commitment to continue our stewardship efforts to raise an additional \$39,000. The congregation also charged the Council to review the budget, consider staff compensation increases and report back to the congregation in 45 days.

It has taken longer than 45 days, but at the May Council meeting, we received good news from various stewardship efforts, reviewed several areas of the budget, and approved a 1.5% pay increase for staff members (excepting new hires).

How was this made possible? The keys were: 1. Adjustment to several budget items; 2. Continued stewardship giving from the congregation in February; 3. Challenge gifts to the church leadership; 4. Increased giving intentions from church leadership and staff matching the challenge gifts; 5. Designated gifts.

There is much good and exciting work going on here at First Church, and it takes all of us to make it happen and to keep it going and growing!

## Monthly Budget Update



### Current Pledge Income

Annual Budget - \$625,414  
May Actual - \$38,818.97  
YTD Actual - \$239,861.93  
YTD Budget - \$260,589.15  
Below Budget - \$20,727.22

## May Mission Offerings

BREAD - \$547.00  
Lower Lights - \$728.70  
Youth Mission Trip - \$772.52  
Back Bay Mission - \$676.00  
Our Church's Wider Mission - \$341.10  
Total - \$3,065.32

*Read First Church  
Sermons Online at  
[www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org)*

## Member Happy July Birthdays

1:	Larry Walquist	17:	David Carpenter
1:	Roger Fox	19:	Bob Avers
3:	Judy Wolff	19:	Bev Cook
3:	Laura Hadley	20:	Dale Ann Gray
4:	Cori Rowley	20:	Karen Swatsler
5:	Nancy Evans	21:	Debra Hadley
5:	Susie Heer	22:	Eric Chambers
7:	Kathy Brownfield	23:	Jim Kyle
7:	Carrie Keller	24:	Stan Myers
8:	Joyce Campbell	24:	Kristi Thompson
8:	Sandra Geronimo	24:	Linda Gieseke
8:	Mike Rippel	24:	Fred Hadley
9:	Ed Waller	25:	Earl Fritz
9:	Joan Lebold	25:	Nancy Braverman
9:	Scott Sass	25:	Eric Hunker
10:	Shun Endo	25:	Sarah Welsh-Huggins
10:	Monique Penfield	26:	Joanne Morse
11:	David Bowers	27:	Courtenay Gregory
13:	Carol Lowy	28:	Steve Sterrett
14:	Jack Davis	28:	Katelyn Hoffman
15:	Joe Glick	29:	Jason Bryant
15:	Francile Firebaugh	30:	Karen Carpenter
15:	Elise Faith	30:	Priss Endo
16:	Twink Starr	30:	Fran Panek
16:	Steve Brandehoff	30:	Kent Shimeall
16:	David Magers	31:	Carolyn Watkins
16:	Mark Brown	31:	Leon Axt
16:	Sharon Leidheiser		
16:	Elizabeth Drotleff		
16:	Shelly Gies		

## Member Happy July Anniversaries

1: Sharon and Larry Walquist  
1: Robyn and Mike Petras  
4: Sandra and Gilman Kirk  
4: Nancy and Lee Burba  
7: Kerry and Rob O'Leary  
7: Trish and Tom Bishop  
8: Denise and Nate Vogt  
9: Mary Ann and Herb Goetz  
11: Shelly and Tom Geis  
11: Murley and Alan Miller  
12: Cindy and John Deliman  
12: Barry and Devon Bastian  
13: Julie and Tom Stewart  
14: Carrie and Patrick Keller  
14: Christen Coyle and Jason Holton  
15: Sarah and Erik Mitchell  
15: Anne and Gerry Hudson  
17: Carol and Jim Gallagher  
18: Molly and Eric Van Gorden  
23: Lissa and Drew Wade  
26: Catherine and Todd Cunningham  
31: Catrina and Jim Drotleff

If we miss your birthday or anniversary, contact Denny Mahoney at 228-1741, ext. 17, or [dmahoney@first-church.org](mailto:dmahoney@first-church.org).

# Church Calendar

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## **Sunday, June 20**

9 am - Early Worship Service - PH  
11 am - Worship Service – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH

## **Monday, June 21**

7 pm – Capital Campaign Committee – PFR or PH

## **Tuesday, June 22**

12 pm - Card Care Ministry – PFR  
7 pm – Personnel Committee – LC

## **Saturday, June 26**

9 am – Faith Mission Meal

## **Sunday, June 27**

9 am – Early Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship Service – San  
12 pm - Fellowship Hour – PH  
6 pm – Youth Groups – PH

## **Monday, June 28**

6:30 pm – Stephen’s Ministers – Adult Library  
6:30 pm – Techology Committee – LC  
7 pm – Capital Campaign – PFR or PH

## **Tuesday, June 29**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC

## **Sunday, July 4**

9 am – Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH

## **Monday, July 5**

*July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday, Office and Building Closed*

## **Tuesday, July 6**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry- LC  
6:30 pm – Children’s Education Committee – Ed Wing Rm D  
7 pm – Deacons – LC  
7 pm – Mission Committee – PFR  
7 pm – Youth Ministry Team – Ed Wing Room C

## **Thursday, July 8**

2 pm – Art Committee – Parlor

## **Saturday, July 10**

10 am – First Church Quilters – LC

## **Sunday, July 11**

11 am – Worship – San  
12 PM – Fellowship Hour – PH  
6 pm – Youth Groups – Parish Hall

## **Monday, July 12**

6:30 pm – Trustees – LC

## **Tuesday, July 13**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
7 pm – Executive Committee – PFR

## **Wednesday, July 14**

7 pm – Budget and Finance – LC

## **Saturday, July 17**

9 am – House and Grounds Committee – PFR

## **Sunday, July 18**

9 am – Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH

## **Monday, July 19**

7 pm – Capital Campaign – PFR or PH

## **Tuesday, July 20**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC

## **Friday, July 23**

6 pm – Faith Mission Meals

## **Sunday, July 25**

9 am – Worship – PH  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour - PH

### **(GROWTH, Concluded from Page 7)**

The Rev. Geoffrey Black, general minister and president of the UCC, says the challenge of connecting with youth and young adults often comes up in his conversations with local churches, conferences and associations.

Black, Sterner and others are in the final stages of preparing a denomination-wide strategy for youth and young adult engagement. That strategy, Sterner said, must go beyond trying to figure out how to get 18 to 30 year-olds into the church. "What we need to figure out is how do we get the church to youth and young adults," he says. This could require "a rethinking of what it means to be church," he added.

Black's travels around the country during his first year as general minister and president have given him much reason to be hope-filled about the denomination's future, he says.

"We're trying to work through some things, but the church, in its many configurations, is really alive and vibrant and poised to engage those questions and to do that reaching out."

**To My Fellow First Church Members:** I would like to thank you for your many kind words and deeds as I have recovered from my recent surgery. Having such good friends has helped to brighten my days, and ease the healing process. – **Bill Wirsching**

**Congratulations!** Faith Washington and her Reynoldsburg High School track team won the Division I state track title for the second year in a row earlier this month. Faith, a sophomore, was a member of the 1,600-meter relay team that finished first. She also placed second in the 300-meter hurdles and fourth in the 100-meter race.

# Prayers

## July Fellowship Hour

July 4: Leviticus  
 July 11: Micah  
 July 18: Numbers  
 July 25: Proverbs

## July Acolyte Schedule

July 4: Victoria Washington and Katie Geis  
 July 11: Michael Warrick and Nicholas Warrick  
 July 18: Merry Roach and Joe Spofforth  
 July 25: Adam Wade and Cameron Wade  
 (Schedules online at [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org))

## Next Newsletter Deadline

**Articles Due:** Monday, July 12, by noon

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

**Prayer Request:** Please let us know of a prayer concern for yourself, a family member or other church member by calling the Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson at 614.228.1741, ext. 21, by using prayer request cards found in each pew or by emailing [jwilson@first-church.org](mailto:jwilson@first-church.org).

*Please pray for those who continue to walk through grief and loss, for those battling illness and addictions in their families, for all serving in Iraq and elsewhere and for others in need. Please offer prayers for those who are lonely, lost and hurting. Pray for our nation as we face all too much anxiety, fear and uncertainty with faith, hope and love. May God bless you in your giving and in your living in Christ's love and grace. Amen.*

### Baptisms

Cindy Conn – May 16  
 Morgan Shaw – May 23  
 Reel Chaudhri – May 23

### Deaths

Henry Bell – May 29

### Marriages

Brynn Hannay and Jeff Steckman – May 22  
 Jessica Benner and Mario Catenacci – May 22  
 Heather Drake and Kyle Rudduck – June 12

### Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on July 4 and 18 during Fellowship Hour. This is a UCC coffee project initiative and your participation is greatly appreciated.

**~ Remember Your Loved Ones ~  
 With a Dedication of Flowers**

Contact Marty Worth at 614.228.1741, ext. 12,  
[mworth@first-church.org](mailto:mworth@first-church.org)

### Church Staff

Timothy C. Ahrens.....Senior Minister  
 Janine Wilson.....Associate Minister  
 James E. Bobb.....Minister of Music  
 Mark S. Williams.....Director of Christian Education  
 Jackie Dean.....Interim Director of Chr. Ed.  
 G. Dene Barnard.....Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus  
 Sharon Leidheiser.....Business Administrator  
 Martha Worth.....Program Manager  
 Bill Beckett.....Building Manager  
 Denny Mahoney.....Office Manager  
 Kelvin Murphy.....Custodian  
 Frank Wall, William Lee.....Custodians  
 Nikki Boop, Rosemary Pawandiwa.....Nursery  
 DeAndree Norris.....Nursery  
 Linda Mumford.....Wedding Coordinator  
 Jane Leidheiser.....Wedding Coordinator  
 Fran Panek.....Wedding Coordinator

### Church Council

Melody Leidheiser.....Moderator  
 Sarah Reed.....Vice-Moderator  
 Trish Bishop, Judy Smith.....Secretary/Assistant  
 David Holt, Jim Fewlass.....Treasurer/Assistant  
 Frank Cook, Sandy Bennett.....Administration/Assistant  
 Wayne Piper.....Church Growth  
 Diane Cole, Priss Endo.....Education/Assistant  
 Wally Giffen, Vince Papsidero..House & Grounds/Assistant  
 Anne Hudson, Patrick Keller.....Mission/Assistant  
 Julia Myers.....Parish Life  
 Gerry Worth.....Senior Deacon  
 Kevin Butler.....Deacon  
 Jane Leidheiser, John Deliman..Music, Arts, Heritage/Ast.  
 Nancy Loy.....Nominating Chair  
 Jordan Knerr.....Member-at-large  
 Doug Buck.....Member-at-large

**The First Congregational Church**  
United Church of Christ  
444 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3885

DATED MATERIAL - VERY IMPORTANT

*Please Deliver: Monday, June 21, 2010*

TO:

[Empty dashed box for recipient information]



**The First Congregational Church, UCC**

444 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Phone: 614.228.1741 FAX: 614.461.1741  
Email: [home@first-church.org](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