

First Church News

First Congregational Church, UCC
Columbus, Ohio

"Enter to Worship - Depart to Serve"

March
2012
Vol. 160,
No. 3



Lent: A Season of Prayer

By The Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister
(tahrens@first-church.org)



On Ash Wednesday, I opened the season of Lent with a sermon titled "Great Prayers Shape Our Faith." I spoke of our need to pray each day - morning, noon and night. It is good for our souls to pray. The words for prayer may be hard to find. But we need to give voice to that which is stirring within us. Here is an excerpt

from the sermon:

Recalling the Hebrew people as slaves in Egypt, Walter Brueggemann writes in *Great Prayers of the Old Testament*, that their prayers were "primitive."

"In their earliest prayers found in Exodus 2:24-25, the people of old had no particular focus to a God whom they did not name. It was in the crying out that God's attention was grabbed. God heard their prayers and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites and took notice of them. Our God, the God of Jesus Christ, notices us. Especially when our sighs are too deep for words, when our prayers are simply cries for help: 'Help me!' or 'O Jesus, help me' or 'O God, help me.' In our desperation, God hears us."

Lindsey Crittenden writes in *A Skeptic Learns to Pray* about crying out to God. She didn't know how to pray. So, Lindsey spoke with an Episcopalian priest, who helped her to recognize that she was in pain. Once she learns that simply admitting she felt awful was the first step into prayer, she began crying out all the time.

She writes, "I cried out 'help' in the car and underwater in the swimming pool, where no one could hear me. Desperation that blatant and raw felt embarrassing but oddly liberating and justified, too."

During this season of prayer, find time to pray. Beyond what you "give up" for Lent, please "take on" time, space and a heart for prayer. See you in church.

Thanks for Stepping Up With Challenge Budget Giving!

By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister

2012 is a Leap Year! At the annual congregational meeting January 29, members voted unanimously to "leap forward" through a one month "Extra Mile Campaign."



This decision came in response to the two-year salary study that determined five of our eight staff members were under median-pay levels for their positions. These five include the Program Manager, Music Minister, Christian Education Director, Associate Minister and Senior Minister. To bring the staff to median pay levels, the congregation determined to raise an additional \$55,000.

Everyone on the staff deeply appreciates your decision to leap forward in February. As of February 29, the total dollars pledged was \$30,681, coming from 78 of the 248 pledging households (31.5%). Thank you for your generous efforts. Since we have fallen short of the total goal, the Personnel Committee in consultation with the Council will determine how these dollars will be allocated to the staff. They have set in place a fair and equitable pay distribution of these dollars.

Again, on behalf of the staff, thank you for your efforts to close the gap and support equity of pay at First Congregational Church.

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Changing Times for the Church

By the Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson, Associate Minister
(jwilson@first-church.org)

Are you old enough to remember the phrase, "You can't trust anyone over the age of 30"? It wasn't true then or now, but someplace between the free-spirits and the psychologists a notion surfaced that an adult identity was established between our teen years and the age of 21. The under 21 group had tasks to do before the projected marriages, children, mid-life crisis, planned retirements and aging. Churches grouped programs accordingly: from confirmation to teen class, to singles class, followed by young married's class and then into the 'real adult' classes. It was part of our life cycle. It made sense in its day, yet some things have changed.



In his new book *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion*, Robert Wuthnow illustrates that things don't just *seem* different now, they actually *are* different. There lots of changes. The blessings and challenges for younger adults are filled with new potential. As the church always re-forming, we have some catching up to do, but the promise is great.

First, some fun facts. Did you know life expectancy in 1900 was below 49 years old for both men and women? By the '50s it was 72 or below and by 2000 the *average* life expectancy was 80 or below. The range for mid-life is identified as halfway between 21 and the average life expectancy, plus the first 21 years. In other words, from a statistical point of view, younger adulthood could now be considered between age 21-49 and the older adult range becomes 49-77.

Does it make sense for us to reconsider our previous age/stage labels? Yes. Consider that today's younger adults do not have to begin having children at 18 in order to live into the hope of seeing their children grow up. Career selections have changed, for many it will take longer to gain financial independence. What about the developmental tasks, are they postponed too? According to the MacArthur Foundation, the short answer is yes, it does.

What impact do these things have on the church? We need to keep our learning curve moving forward with the unique challenges for all ages. And, we are called to pay attention to younger adults in new ways. The age and choices regarding marriage, starting a family, changes in work, finances and relationships have made

a radical shift. For instance, in the '50s many imagined they would find a good job and remain in it until retirement, many did. Today we discuss the fluidity of the labor force.

This has a few negatives, but also a lot of positives. What is the role of the church during transitions? There is also fluidity to church affiliation and attendance. With attention being drawn toward stabilizing relationships, building families and getting their feet on solid financial ground, younger adults are sometimes preoccupied. We must reach out. They may love being part of the church and yet not be in worship every week. Add in globalization, information technology, social media and it becomes easy to see that yesterdays patterns of church are a good foundation, yet we have many changes to consider.

As God's creative church, we are and we will continue to be open to responding to newness. We look forward to providing our younger adults (however you personally choose to define it) with flexible, interesting, meaningful ways to discover and grow in relationship with God, each other, our community of faith here at First Church and with the world. God, the vision of our senior minister and our new Long Range Plan are guiding us!

With joy, Janine

Sunday Morning Class Studying 'The Prophetic Imagination'

In his book *The Prophetic Imagination*, Dr. Walter Brueggemann delivers a powerful message. He points out that the prophet's role is to criticize the dominant consciousness and to energize communities of faith moving to change the world in which they live.

During the 10 a.m. teaching time each Sunday in Lent, Revs. Tim Ahrens and John Aeschbury will co-teach a class on *The Prophetic Imagination*. Rev. Aeschbury is a member of First Congregational and the lead organizer for the BREAD Organization.

As we prepare to welcome Dr. Brueggemann as our 2012 Gladden Lecturer the weekend of May 12 and 13, we are holding classes on some of his 58 books. We hope you can join the class during the Sundays of Lent - February 26, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1. You can come every week or whenever possible. This will be a great time to learn and grow in your faith and knowledge of the Old Testament prophets and Jesus' role in prophetic witness. - Rev. Tim

March Music Notes

By James E. Bobb, Minister of Music
(jbobb@first-church.org)

First Tuesday Tuesday, March 6 12:15 p.m.



Organist G. Dene Barnard plays music of Karg-Elert, Hancock, Honegger and Rheinberger. The half-hour recitals is followed by a homemade lunch (\$5 donation) in Parish Hall.

Congregational Concert Sunday, March 25, 4 p.m.

We welcome organist Kimberly Marshall. A stunning performer, respected scholar, recording artist and winner of the 1985 St. Alban's Competition, Ms. Marshall is professor of organ at Arizona State University and active concert artist in Europe, the United States and Asia.

Compline Sunday, March 18 and Sunday, April 15, 9 p.m

The office of Compline is presented by candlelight, followed by organ voluntary on the 1931 Kimball organ.

First Tuesday Tuesday, April 3, 12:15 p.m.

Organist Matthew Nadalin will perform.

Council Roundup New Council Begins Work

The Church Council had its first meeting of the new council year on February 21, following the pancake dinner and musical presentation by the youth. The meeting was called to order by Gerry Worth, moderator, and the Revs. Janine Wilson and Tim Ahrens offered opening prayer and devotion.

Rev. Tim announced that 10 small groups have been formed to meet five times during Lent. The groups will be using Walter Brueggemann's book *Great Prayers of*

the Old Testament as the focus for their discussions. Rev. Janine discussed the combined meetings of several commissions and the developing plans to include more new members in activities and commissions of the church.

Neal Brower, administration commissioner, gave an update on the status of the "Challenge Budget," noting that the response had been good to date.

David Holt was approved as liaison between the various Capital Campaign committees and the Council. He reported that over 1.7 million has been received to date, and the Implementation Committee plans to make an additional prepayment on the principle of the loan soon. This will enable the church to pay down the loan at an earlier date, as well as save interest.

Tom Worley, representing the Property Planning Group (PPG), followed with an update on the progress of the PPG and reviewed the plans for Phases I, II, and III for the improvements for the current building and the west lot. Information sessions are being developed to obtain congregational input for future priorities. Tom also discussed cooperative work being done with our neighbors in the Discovery District and city agencies for funding and work to be done in the future.

Randy Hoffman, Trustees chair, reported that investment income for the church has grown since the end of 2011. The trustees are in the process of reviewing all the funds of the church.

Cori Rowley, Parish Life commissioner, has designed a new logo for the church and will be finalizing the details and determining a standard font to be used by the church for all correspondence and printed material.

Sarah Reed, vice moderator, discussed the formation of a "listening group" of lay people at First Church, to be led by the Central Southeast Ohio Association (CSEO) Transition Team, to consider the role and structure of the association. This group will meet for lunch and discussion March 18 after the 11 a.m. service.

There is to be a congregational meeting on May 6 to present an update to the congregation on the Long Range Plan, Property Planning Group, Capital Campaign and the final status of the challenge budget.

The Focus of this year's Council will be on the implementation of the Long Range Plan, and a discussion and progress report was led by Gerry Worth to determine the current status of the LRP and who is involved.

Rest and Relaxation in God's Poetry

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

Join the First Church family as they head toward the hills – Templed Hills that is. Our Spring Retreat, "God's Poetry," is Friday evening, April 20, through Sunday morning, April 22. Please mark your calendars and plan to bring your whole family or just yourself.



Our weekend will include hiking, nature talks and activities, devotions, basketball, fishing, a folk dance for all ages, a campfire with s'mores, crafts, singing and worship at camp Sunday morning. All First Church children and youth are able to attend at no cost thanks to an Alma Keeler grant requested by the Parish Life Committee. Adults are \$95 each, which includes food, lodging and all program costs. All confirmands will be attending and their mentors are encouraged to attend as well.



Templed Hills is one of the United Church of Christ camp and retreat centers. It is an hour north of Columbus, east off I-71 at Bellville. (There is a map on the brochure.) Our accommodations vary, and will be assigned according to each individual or families needs. The

camp buildings are clean and comfortable. The food is good!

There are acres of woods, meadows, streams, a pond and a pine forest to hike in or just to sit in and watch the birds. Relaxation and enjoying the colors of nature will be the major emphasis for the weekend.

Brochure and registration forms are in the church office and on the Web site. **Deadline for registration is April 8.** We have space for 70 people – let's fill it! See Mark S. Williams for more details.

It's Time for Camp Registration!

If the Outdoor Ministries summer camp information has arrived, can spring be far behind? Everyone is ready to plan some fun in the sun and that's just what camp is. There are camps for kindergarten children and first graders with a grandparent. Weeklong camps are for children who have completed second grade and older.

There are camps for teens and camps with themes. There are camps for adults and even one for families.

Registration has begun!! Camp weeks fill up fast!!!
Don't wait too long!!!

Online

Camp schedule and descriptions are available online at: <http://www.ocucc.org>

Once you've decided on a camp, just click one of the "Register Online" buttons to complete your registration and make your payment.

Remember to register by March 31 to receive the special "camp pack."

First Congregational Church has always been a strong supporter of the Outdoor Ministries Summer Camp Program by



encouraging participation and by offering scholarships for campers. Thanks to the generosity of longtime member Alma Keeler, we are able to offer a 50% camp scholarship on the registration fee (after the \$75 deposit) to any First Church child or youth who wants to go to camp. *A request for these funds must be made by the parent /guardian. This is not automatic as in the past.*

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

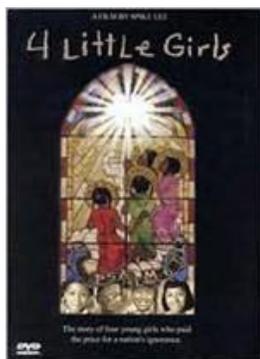
- 1.) Decide which camp you want to attend;
- 2.) Send in your \$75 deposit **as soon as possible** with the 2012 camp registration form.
- 3.) Send the remaining amount owed to the Ohio Conference at least two weeks prior to your camp;
- 4.) Have a wonderful time!

Due to the increase in camp registration this year, First Church also will offer additional scholarships for those families who need extra help. Any child who wants to go to camp should not be stopped due to financial concerns of the family. For more information about camp, please contact Mark S. Williams. **Deadline for early registration and First Church campership request is March 31.**

Spike Lee's *4 Little Girls* to be Shown March 25

By Mark S. Williams, Christian Education Director

The Education Committee of First Church will host the showing of the movie *4 Little Girls* on March 25 at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.



Spike Lee is easily America's most confrontational filmmaker: Didactic, bombastic and often as subtle as a sledgehammer to the face. His films, often standoffs on the impossible issue of race in America, are so hyper-realized that it's difficult to ignore them. However, Lee has a heretofore hidden level of fierce restraint when dealing with nonfictional material in his first documentary, a harrowing,

angry film about the church bombing in Birmingham in 1963 that killed four black children.

The Rev. Carolyn Maull McKinstry, a witness to the bombing, will be First Church guest preacher April 15.

The bombing -- a crime so brutal as to give the entire nation pause -- was a watershed incident that galvanized the civil rights movement. But *4 Little Girls* is more about the pain of losing daughters than the politics of making martyrs. That a raving Ku Klux Klansman is eventually convicted of the crime does not lessen the film's impact.

Lee interviews family members, parishioners, witnesses and, perhaps most stirringly, the former Alabama governor and vitriolic segregationist George Wallace, now weakened by age and a series of strokes and reliant on a black personal assistant. This is by far Lee's quietest film and, save for *Do the Right Thing*, his most affecting. This film is for viewing for adults and teens. *Childcare will be provided for the evening.*

While the World Watched McKinstry Book Study Begins March 7 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

On Sunday morning, September 15, 1963, Carolyn Maull McKinstry was a 15-year-old going to church for Youth Sunday. In her white dress, she and her best friends would shine bright as they led worship at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. All of that changed - forever - when a bomb went off at 10:22 a.m. and took the lives of Carolyn's four closest friends. The bomb

was set by the Klu Klux Klan. Two more black children were killed that day in Birmingham by hate crimes committed by white people.

Rev. McKinstry has written a book, *While the World Watched*, about her memories of that day and the experience of growing up in Birmingham during the civil rights movement. It is a powerful testimony of faith and life.

She will preach at First Church on April 15 at the 9 and 11 a.m. services. Before she arrives, we will read her book in our next book study.



Rev. Carolyn Maull McKinstry

The book is available in the church office. The book study will include

both a morning and evening session on March 7, 21 and April 4 at 11a.m. and 6 p.m. Rev. Ahrens will lead the morning class and Jackie Dean will lead the evening session. We hope you can join us.

– Rev. Tim

First Church to Present Annual Cabaret on April 15

It's cabaret time again at First Church!

The First Church adults and youth will take the stage on Sunday, April 15, at 6 p.m. in the Parish Hall. There will be amazing acts to entertain every age, and lots of food and fun. Proceeds from the night will benefit the Youth Ministries' 2012 summer mission trip.

We are seeking more acts for this great event. If you are interested in showing off your talent, contact Mark Williams at 228/1741, ext. 15, or mwilliams@first-church.org. This is your time to perform!

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. They can be purchased in the office, during Fellowship Hour, with your offering or at the door. Come celebrate the talent of First Church – and have a great time, too!

- Mark S. Williams

DON'T FORGET!
Daylight Saving Time Begins March 11
At 2 a.m.
Move Clocks Forward One Hour

'Great Prayers of the Bible' Is 2012 Lenten Sermon Series

By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister

On February 22, we began our journey to Easter through the 40 days of Lent. This Lenten season, Rev. Wilson and I are sharing the sermon series "Great Prayers of the Bible."

Based on *Great Prayers of the Old Testament* by the Rev. Walter Brueggemann, we not only are speaking from the pulpit, but also these prayers will be read and studied in our homes in small groups across greater Columbus. Stay tuned for more announcements and invitations to small groups.



Here are the upcoming sermons:

- March 4** – "Abraham: Spare Them, Lord" - Genesis 18:22-33
- March 11** – "Moses: Forgive Them, Lord" - Numbers 14:13-23
- March 18** – "Hannah: My Heart Exults in the Lord" - 1 Samuel 2:1-10
- March 25** – "Jeremiah: Deliver Us, Lord" - Jeremiah 32:16-25
- April 1** – Palm Sunday – "Jesus Prays in the Time of Trial" - Luke 22:39-46
- April 8** – Easter – "An Answer to Prayer" - Mark 16:1-8

Blood Drive Set for March 18

The next First Church blood drive will be held Sunday, March 18, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. To donate, sign up in the church office. Have questions? Email Denny Mahoney at dmahoney@first-church.org.

Upcoming Events

- April 1 – Palm Sunday
- April 5 – Maundy Thursday Dinner and Service
- April 6 – Good Friday Service
- April 8 – Easter
- April 15 – Cabaret, 6-8 p.m.
- April 20-22 – Spring Retreat
- May 6 – Teacher Appreciation Sunday
- May 12-13 – Walter Brueggemann Weekend
- May 20 – Confirmation Sunday
- May 27 – Pentecost Sunday
- June 10 – Graduation Sunday/ Youth Mission Sunday



Recent Gifts to First Church

By Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

Given to Pastors Fund by:
Marge Parsons

Given to Dorinda K. White Youth Endowment Fund in memory of Dorinda White by:
Jim Kyle



Given to the Buel Family Fund in memory of Marguerite Buel by:
Patricia Patterson

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

Tribute Planned for Katherine Clark

A memorial tribute will be held March 10 at 11 a.m. at the Whetstone Park of Roses shelter house, 3901 N. High St., for Katherine Clark, a former First Church member.

Katherine, daughter of Karen Carpenter, died in California on December 28.

Summary of January Annual Meeting

By Judy Smith, Secretary

The First Church annual meeting took place January 29 with about 110 in attendance. Rev. Tim Ahrens opened with a prayer. Several leaders gave brief reports, supplementing their written reports in the annual report and pointing out particular highlights. These leaders included Rev. Ahrens (Senior Minister), Sarah Reed (for the Central Southeast Association), Tom Worley (for Trustees and Property Planning Group), Mary Weaver (Senior Deacon), David Holt (Moderator), and Bev Cook (for Capital Campaign Continuity Committee). Melody Leidheiser presented the new slate of church officers and leaders, and they were elected unanimously.



Jim Fewlass, treasurer, spoke about the importance of mission, noting that everything we do as a church relates to mission. And he pointed out how that connected with Tim Ahrens' sermon that day. He warned how easily we can fall into a trap of cutting important line items from the budget that ultimately cost the church more money. His example was our cutting back on technology when we need to depend on it more to get the word out about our church in the 21st century.

Chris Glaros, Personnel Committee chair, talked about the salary study and the new policy on compensation that Council has endorsed. He said the findings were very troubling: Most of our staff is paid less than the median amount when compared to similar churches, some personnel by more than 30% below the median. He called the situation unacceptable and said that the first step to address it will be to raise the salaries to at least a median level.

Sandy Bennett introduced a resolution that passed unanimously for a "challenge" budget that will require additional revenue of \$55,000 to achieve a balanced budget. We were all asked to increase our pledges by at least 10% to meet the goal of bringing all the church staff and our paid choir section leaders to at least a median salary level (including the amount appropriate for the church's 6.5% pledge to support the wider United Church of Christ).

Because of the necessity of resolving the budget issues early in the year, this brief additional pledge campaign ended on February 29. When asked what will happen with the budget if the full \$55,000 is not raised, David Holt responded that the Personnel Committee would then be asked to recommend to Council how the

additional money raised should be divided among the staff.

A few individuals were specially thanked, including David Holt, who is stepping down as Moderator. Rev. Janine Wilson closed with a prayer. A delicious lunch for the whole church followed in the Parish Hall.



Gleva Stephens, First Church volunteer, celebrated her 80th birthday in style with a bottle of champagne from the staff and volunteers. Happy Birthday Gleva, "You look marvelous!" (Photo by Sharon Leidheiser)



Missions Offering Schedule

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

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| March 4 - | Faith Mission |
| March 11 - | Prison Ministries |
| March 18 - | One Great Hour of Sharing |
| March 25 - | Italian Children Ministry |

Notes from the Mission Commission

By Fran Panek

February brought some great opportunities to First Church members for mission outreach and groundwork was set for more hands-on activities to come in the spring.

On February 12, several members of First Church joined others from First Community and Dublin Community churches to share fellowship and to hear from a recently-returned group of travelers to Deep Griha in India. Jan Wade shared some wonderful items she had gathered on two visits to India in a cultural display that welcomed people to the potluck dinner. Don Streibig served as master of ceremonies for the program, offered by the Rev. Kate Shaner from First Community, and returning travelers shared photos taken at Deep Griha.

This annual event to promote sponsorship of children at Deep Griha and the City of Child continues to seek additional sponsors. If you, your family or a group of friends is looking for a great and rewarding activity, please consider sponsoring a child. Cost for one year is \$220 and provides complete care and educational supplies.

As part of the Capital Campaign, the Missions Commission pledged a portion of our donations to the UCC camps, Temple and Pilgrim Hills, for site improvements. The first installment has been sent to Outdoor Ministries, where several projects have been identified for undertaking and completion this spring. We would like to form a group to work together at the spring family retreat in late April. Watch for details in the weeks ahead, and plan to sign up to help our camps get a fresh face for the upcoming summer season!

Lenten Small Groups Meeting

Our small Lenten groups are meeting again this year. In 2011, 115 people participated in 12 small groups throughout central Ohio. As we prepare for the arrival of Dr. Walter Brueggemann in May, the small groups are using his book *Great Prayers of the Old Testament* as the focus of discussion. The book also is at the heart of the Lenten preaching series.

The small groups will meet four or five times throughout Lent. Each small group meeting will be 60-90 minutes. We hope that every member takes time to join with others in their community to pray, study and grow in relationship with God and one another. – **Rev. Tim**

Good Sam Day is March 12

Our next Good Samaritan Day will be March 12. The need is great, and your generosity helps us to assist paying utility bills, and to give out COTA bus passes and Kroger gift cards. Any amount you can give to help us do this important work would be greatly appreciated!

Easter Flower Order Form

Order today Easter Flowers for the Sanctuary on Easter, April 8. The flowers may be taken home after the 11 o'clock service. Complete this order form and return with payment to the church office or place in the offering plate with payment folded inside. **The deadline for ordering is March 25.**

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Flowers ____ at \$8.00 each =Total Enclosed \$ _____

(Make checks payable to First Congregational Church, on Memo line, write "Easter Flowers")

In Celebration of _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

~~~~~

I/We plan to attend the Maundy Thursday dinner/communion on April 5.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Adult(s) \_\_\_\_ Child(ren) Donation baskets will be at the table to help cover the expenses of the dinner.



## Gift Baskets Available By Request

Now you can treat someone for any occasion with a Fair Trade gift basket. Recently, a member welcomed a new family to her neighborhood by giving them a gift basket of coffee and tea. Sarah Reed and Sandra Geronimo will create a gift basket if given at least a week's notice. Prices will vary depending on the content. Please contact Sarah or Sandra to order.



## Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on March 4 and 11 during Fellowship Hour. This is a UCC coffee project initiative and your participation is greatly appreciated.

## Thursday Fellowship Meets March 8

"Georgia (former USSR) on My Mind" will be the topic when Don Streibig addresses the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Fellowship on March 8 in the Parlor. Don is former director of the Ohio Arts Council and CAPA. The group will gather for refreshments at 10 a.m. followed by the program. All are welcome.

## Budget Update



|                             |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Pledges Budgeted            | \$592,220.00 |
| Jan. Actual Pledges         | 73,454.90    |
| (Some Prepaid 2012 Pledges) |              |
| Needed Monthly              | 49,351.67    |

## January Mission Offerings

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Mid-Ohio Workers        | \$573.00 |
| Good Samaritan Fund     | 1,004.28 |
| Gladden Community House | 314.16   |
| Church World Service    | 45.00    |
| Spirituality Network    | 448.27   |

## Member Happy March Birthdays

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1: Emily Kutschbach     | 20: David Mailer        |
| 2: Sheldon Taft         | 20: Erin Johnson        |
| 3: Gerhardt Wolff       | 20: Karl Schneider      |
| 3: Bruce Panek          | 20: Brett Bachman       |
| 4: Julie Roth-Alexander | 21: Dorothy Horn        |
| 4: Devon Bastian        | 21: James Gaugh         |
| 4: Annie Rower          | 21: Eric Ewing          |
| 5: Phil Stichter        | 22: James Powell        |
| 5: Anna Jensen          | 22: Malik Dean          |
| 6: Shirley Calhoun      | 22: Kerry O'Leary       |
| 6: Robert Kirk          | 23: Lee Burba           |
| 7: Bob Monahan          | 24: Amy Wagner          |
| 7: Christina Kirker     | 24: Jessica Underwood   |
| 7: Andrew Smith         | 24: Paige Rochus        |
| 8: Gretchen Atkinson    | 26: Morgan Bonito       |
| 9: Wally Kesler         | 26: Catherine Kennedy   |
| 9: Michael Weaver       | 27: John Firebaugh      |
| 9: Michelle Winberry    | 27: Danny Yontz         |
| 9: Heather Giffen       | 28: Judith Hunter       |
| 11: Candy Cummings      | 28: Margene Whittenburg |
| 11: Allison Lange       | 28: Rob Rosati-Yoos     |
| 12: Barbara Ritter      | 28: Bryce Milliken      |
| 12: Jenny Provenzano    | 30: Ruth Allred         |
| 12: Doug Galloway       | 31: Jennifer Newhous    |
| 13: Tami Fields         | 31: Donna Coe           |
| 14: Robert Hadley       | 31: Jeff Faryman        |
| 16: Beth Kochman-Wilson | 31: Malini Gnanatheeban |
| 16: Rob O'Leary         | 31: Katie Gies          |
| 17: Ashley Gover        |                         |
| 18: Megan Daniels       |                         |
| 19: Darla Luebbe        |                         |
| 20: Tom Worley          |                         |

## Member Happy March Anniversaries

|                                                |
|------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Ellen and Pete Boriin                       |
| 11: Jill and Dana Paulus                       |
| 14: Sara and Jon Frank                         |
| 14: Janet Stoneking and Eric Boyd              |
| 16: Aimee and Tom Cerny                        |
| 16: Charlie and Mike Knerr                     |
| 18: Melissa Murdock-Weygandt and Nate Weygandt |
| 18: Julie Roth-Alexander and Tammy Alexander   |
| 20: Megan Kelley and Todd Perry                |
| 20: Janice and Mariner Taft                    |
| 21: Sadie and Brian Oldham                     |
| 26: Anne and Rick Bennett                      |
| 28: Diane Cole and John Rau                    |
| 29: Sheila and Jeff Faryman                    |

**OOPS!** 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).

## Next Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles for the April *First Church News* is March 20 at noon. It will be published Friday, March 30.

# Calendar

## **Thursday, March 1**

10 am – First Thursday Fellowship – Edwards Home  
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

## **Sunday, March 4**

9 am – Treble/Teen Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
10 am – Choir – San  
11 am – Worship – Sanctuary  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – Sanctuary  
12 pm – Confirmation Class – Visit to Islamic Center  
5 pm – Youth Volunteer Meeting – Youth Room  
6 pm – Sonreir – Youth Room

## **Monday, March 5**

6 pm – Church Growth – Ed Wing Room D  
7 pm – Mission Committee – PFR  
7 pm – Radical Love Book Study – Parlor

## **Tuesday, February 7**

11:45 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
12:15 pm – First Tuesday Concert – San  
12:45 pm – First Tuesday Luncheon – PH  
5:30 pm – Sacred Earth – LC  
7 pm – Education Committees – Room D

## **Wednesday, March 7**

11 am – Book Study – Parlor  
6 pm – Book Study – Parlor

## **Thursday, March 8**

10 am – Second Thursday Fellowship – Parlor  
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

## **Saturday, March 10**

10 am – First Church Quilters – LC

## **Sunday, March 11**

9 am – Treble/Teen Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH  
6 pm – Middle School Youth Group – Middle School Room  
6 pm – Sonreir – PH

## **Monday, March 12**

7 pm – Trustees – LC  
7 pm – Radical Love Book Study – Parlor

## **Tuesday, March 13**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
6 pm – Music Committee – Parlor  
7 pm – Executive Committee – PFR

## **Thursday, March 15**

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

## **Saturday, March 17**

9 am – House and Grounds – PFR

## **Sunday, March 18**

8 am-1 pm – Blood Drive – Room C  
9 am – Treble/Teen Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
11 am – Worship – San  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH

12 pm – Ohio Conference Luncheon – LC  
12:30 pm – Confirmation Class – Room D  
6 pm – Sonreir – PH  
9 pm – Compline – San

## **Monday, March 19**

7 pm – Radical Love Book Study – Parlor

## **Tuesday, March 20**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
12 pm – Newsletter Deadline  
7 pm – Council – LC

## **Wednesday, March 21**

11 am – Book Study – Parlor  
6 pm – Book Study – Parlor

## **Thursday, March 22**

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

## **Sunday, March 25**

9 am – Treble/Teen Choir – Choir Room  
9 am – Worship – PH  
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D  
10 am – Choir – San  
11 am – Worship – Sanctuary  
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – Sanctuary  
4 pm – Congregational Concert – San  
7 pm – Sonreir (Attending movie)  
7 pm – Middle School Youth Group (Attending movie)  
7 pm – Movie (*4 Little Girls*) – Parish Hall

## **Monday, March 26**

7 pm – Radical Love Book Study – Parlor  
7 pm – Budget and Finance – LC

## **Tuesday, March 27**

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC  
7 pm – Personnel – PFR  
7 pm – Deacons – LC

## **Thursday, March 29**

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallery  
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

## March Fellowship Hour

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| March 4:  | Proverbs |
| March 11: | Psalms   |
| March 18: | Romans   |
| March 25: | Ruth     |

## March Acolyte Schedule

|           |                                            |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| March 4:  | Jack Koscher and Cameron Wade              |
| March 11: | Ben Allred and Dylan Hopcraft              |
| March 18: | Victoria Washington and Courtney Batchelor |
| March 25: | Joe Spofforth and Luke Zimmerman           |

(Schedules online at [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org))

**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. Timothy Ahrens at 614.228.1741, ext. 13, by using prayer request cards found in each pew or by emailing [tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@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.*

### Church Staff

|                                            |                                 |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Timothy C. Ahrens.....                     | Senior Minister                 |
| Janine Wilson.....                         | Associate Minister              |
| James E. Bobb.....                         | Minister of Music               |
| Mark S. Williams.....                      | Director of Christian Education |
| G. Dene Barnard.....                       | Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus   |
| Sharon Leidheiser.....                     | Business Administrator          |
| Martha Worth.....                          | Program Manager                 |
| Denny Mahoney.....                         | Office Manager                  |
| Thomas Luff.....                           | Building Manager                |
| Kelvin Murphy.....                         | Custodian                       |
| Frank Wall, William Lee.....               | Custodians                      |
| Nikki Boop, Rosemary Pawandiwa-Priore..... | Nursery                         |
| Chinyere Nuesom.....                       | Nursery                         |
| Linda Mumford.....                         | Wedding Coordinator             |
| Jane Chavers.....                          | Wedding Coordinator             |
| Fran Panek.....                            | Wedding Coordinator             |

### Church Council

|                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Gerry Worth.....                      | Moderator                   |
| Sarah Reed.....                       | Vice-Moderator              |
| Bev Cook/Jim Griffin.....             | Secretary/Assistant         |
| Cindy Conn.....                       | Treasurer                   |
| Neal Brower/Jim Fewlass.....          | Administration/Assistant    |
| Melissa Prendergast/Deb Thompson..... | Church Growth/Asst.         |
| Tanya Miller/Deana Armstrong.....     | Education/Asst.             |
| Charlie Weaver/Rick Sayre.....        | House & Grounds/Assistant   |
| Bruce Panek/Matt Allen.....           | Mission/Assistant           |
| Cori Rowley/Catherine Kennedy.....    | Parish Life/Assistant       |
| Elaine Warren.....                    | Senior Deacon               |
| Betty Johnson.....                    | Deacon                      |
| Jim Gallagher/Greg Halbe.....         | Music, Arts, Heritage/Asst. |
| David Holt.....                       | Nominating Chair            |
| Randy Hoffman.....                    | Trustees                    |
| James Knerr.....                      | Member-at-large             |
| Lisa Morris.....                      | Member-at-large             |

~ Remember Your Loved Ones ~  
With a Dedication of Flowers

Contact Marty Worth at 614.228.1741, ext. 14,  
[mworth@first-church.org](mailto:mworth@first-church.org)

**The First Congregational Church**  
United Church of Christ  
444 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3821

DATED MATERIAL - VERY IMPORTANT

Please Deliver By: *Monday, March 5, 2012*

TO:

[Empty dashed box for recipient address]



**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