

Can You Believe It?

By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister



Recently on the news, the anchorwoman said to her colleague, “Can you believe it? There are 44 days left until Christmas?” “ONLY 44 days? ,” I thought. “With so little time left until the coming of God’s revolution, I better get start getting ready!”

That night I made my Christmas gift list. Considering Christmas is a story about a baby, and that baby’s chief business is turning the world upside down, my list contained things that I could give away and assist the baby Jesus in turning the world upside down. Here are the items on my Christmas gift list:

1. Pray each day that God will open my heart and mind to new understandings of God’s word and will for my life.
2. Meditate for 15 minutes each morning on the scripture texts of this season - texts of prophecies, hope and joy.
3. Be more patient with myself and my family.
4. Do a random act of kindness for two of my neighbors.
5. Give away my time to help the poor on multiple occasions, in clear and identifiable ways, during the next 43 days (I figured it was already midnight!).
6. Reach out to my growing circle of Muslim and Jewish friends and break bread together during Advent.
7. Pray each day that God will draw me closer to Jesus.
8. Do a random act of kindness for someone other than my two neighbors.
9. Be home more with the ones whom I love most in all the world.
10. Be more present to members and friends of First Church.
11. Unconditionally love those who I am constantly tempted to unconditionally judge.

Can you believe it? In only 43 days (and less than that by the time you read this!), a baby will be added to our family. Not just any baby, but the “Prince of peace . . . our mighty counselor . . . son of God . . . Messiah.” Make your Christmas gift list. Get ready. Get set. Get praying. Get going. Give your heart to him.

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Bethlehem on Broad Street Again to Brighten Holiday

By Arlene Reynolds

There are lots of different ways to mark the holiday season. But for many of those who have participated in our yearly ecumenical fellowship, there is no better way to celebrate the birth of Christ than through Bethlehem on Broad Street.

Started 25 years ago in response to a single request for dinner on Christmas Day at the St. Lawrence Haven, BOBS has expanded to several thousand guests each year through the efforts of churches of different denominations, different faiths and organizations on and off Broad Street.

As we move into the coldest part of the year, there are many families and individuals with
(Continued on Page 2)



From the Pastors

Women and Spirituality

By the Rev. Barbara R. Cunningham
Associate Minister



When women work together, they have the opportunity to open the “spirit” of the world to a new way of living. It is clear to me that women have always had more power than we have claimed, and many of us now are claiming responsibility for our own spiritual lives.

Women can have a common goal, even with differences in personalities. The goal is not to be defined by someone else, but to *claim our own spiritual support and ritual reformation*. Being in a male-dominated society for many years, we sought to build our self-esteem and our self-worth. We are not yet beyond the male-dominated society, but we do not have to let that hold us back.

Our way of operating – gently and with openness to our own vulnerability – can lead the way to new ways of thinking and living. **Men are not our enemies.** We have ways of helping men open up to their vulnerabilities as we learn and grow together.

We have the opportunities to give of ourselves to the church in many ways – through our volunteerism in the church community, through giving of our financial resources, and mostly giving of ourselves to others in the church, our faith community. We will be focusing on ourselves and the gifts we bring at the women’s retreat in a few days.

Awareness is a hot topic in a lot of places, and awareness of the inner-self is important. Awareness is not perfection. Awareness takes becoming interested in what is real and true in our own lives. Women are gathered all over the world to help each other discover each one’s own spirituality. Even in some countries women are teaching girls who have not had a chance to learn.

Women are not out to take over the world, but to join in with our interpretation of the spiritual gifts we have and to share them with others. What a beautiful place it is to learn to trust our own inner guidance – in this community of faith! The love and guidance of women can be the most powerful gift we give ourselves and the church.

(BETHLEHEM, Concluded from Page 1)

deep and immediate needs for food and clothing. This is particularly true in today’s troubled economy.

We address the need for food through our Food Box Giveaway at Broad Street United Methodist Church and the Christmas Dinner Party and Gift Celebration at the First Congregational Church. We address the clothing through our partnerships with the United Methodist Free Store and the Project Help Clothing Ministry.

The schedule is listed below:

Saturday, December 19: Over 1,200 food boxes with gift certificates for perishable foods will be given out from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Broad Street United Methodist Church, 501 E. Broad St. Trinity, King Avenue, Maple Grove, Asbury North, Broad Street and Church of the Messiah, Westerville United Methodist churches gather and assemble the boxes at their own churches and then deliver them to Broad Street United Methodist on December 12. On Saturday, December 19, they will need volunteers in the sanctuary. Call 614-228-4571.

Saturday, December 5: Food, gently used clothes and school supplies will be distributed by Project Help Clothing Ministry from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the United Methodist Free Store, 941 Parsons Ave. Call 614- 475-9615 to donate or to volunteer.

Friday, December 25: Christmas Day will be celebrated at the First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad St. The doors open at 9 a.m. Dinner will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (There will be no carry-out meals). There will be entertainment, caroling, gifts, toiletries, free phone call and children activities. Call 614-228-7338 beginning December 1 to donate or to volunteer.

The Bethlehem on Broad Street Planning Committee includes the following from our church: Arlene Reynolds, Sondra Kessler, David Holt, Mary Day and Jim Fewless, and Anne Hudson. Nancy Burba will represent the staff.

New Members Class, Saturday, December 5, 9 a.m. to Noon
Call the church office at 228-1741, or email the Rev. Barbara Cunningham
(bcunningham@first-church.org) to register

Budget Needs Are Critical for 2009 and 2010

By David Holt, Treasurer



Our church budget needs some stimulus. Approximately 25% of our revenue comes from sources other than pledges, including Trustees, parking lot rental, weddings, room rentals and special gifts.

In most cases these other sources of income are not growing. This means that our pledge income is that much more critical. In order to treat our staff fairly, prudently maintain our building, and continue our programs, we simply need increased giving. We need financial stimulus from our members and friends. As we approach the end of the year, two things become very important to our financial health and our financial planning:

1. Completion of your 2009 pledge intentions by December 31. (Third quarter statements have been distributed)
2. Submit 2010 pledge intentions ASAP.

If you plan to make a gift of stock or other securities, contact Sharon Leidheiser for instructions.

Council is currently wrestling with the budget for 2010. Once again we find that budget requests exceed our estimated revenues by almost \$100,000. Every gift is cherished and needed. Please help us have a great 2010!

Monthly Budget Update

Current Pledge Income

Annual Budget - \$616,447
October Actual - \$28,460
YTD Actual - \$470,279
YTD Budget - \$513,706
Behind Budget - \$43,426

October Mission Offerings

UCC Neighbors in Need - \$650
UCC Outdoor Ministries - \$387
CRIS – Community Refugee & Immigration Service - \$326
Good Samaritan Fund - \$2,037.52
Total - \$3,400.52

Newsletter Going to Email Delivery in 2010

In an effort to save time and money, the *First Church News* is going electronic in early 2010.

Beginning with the January issue, we will be emailing the newsletter to members who have email, rather than sending it through the Postal Service. Those who do not have email can contact the church office (228-1741) and we will continue to mail it to you as we now do.

We have estimated that by eliminating most of the newsletter mailing, we will save nearly \$3,000 a year in ink, paper, postage and time.

In the meantime, don't forget that you also can read the *First Church News* online at www.first-church.org. We also will continue to post the newsletter on the Web site when we make the switch to email delivery.

Advent Has Two Faces

By the Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Minister

Advent has two faces, two orientations. It looks to the past to attempt to understand our ancient faithful forebearers' longing for God. How did they anticipate the coming of the Messiah? What were their hopes and dreams for his arrival? Advent also looks forward to a future hope in which God will come again. How will he come again? When will we see him?

This Advent, the lessons, music, and preaching will focus on our times and the present moment of expectation and hope. Each Sunday, beginning November 29, meditations on the theme "In a Time Such as This . . ." will be presented.



In the day in which we are living, how do we call upon God to *come soon*, revealing Godself to us? How do we *make ready* for God's arrival in our lives? If we find ourselves stuck in a past pain or burden which we carry, how do we *move forward*? When our voice seems silent and stifled, how do we *sing for joy* as we delight in God's love? When we encounter the face of the newborn Christ, how do we *stand in awe*?

(Continued on Page 4)

Christmas and Advent Resources From the Christian Ed Department

By Mark S. Williams, Christian Education Director



Advent resources for children, families and adults will be available beginning November 22 at the entrance to the worship space and in classrooms.

An Advent Children's Activities Calendar will be available and is perfect to display on a refrigerator or a family bulletin board.

"*Wait for the Light*" is a booklet of **family** prayers, scriptures and reflections for each day of Advent. "Living in Hope" by Henri Nouwen is an **individual** devotion booklet for the days of Advent. Please pick up a copy at either service or in the church office.

Each Sunday of Advent, several activities sheets will be available for the children that relate to our Children's Time in worship. The activities sheets also will be available for the 9 a.m. service as well. On Sunday, December 20, there will be several activities available at the door for the younger children during the service of lessons and carols since they remain in the Sanctuary for the entire time.

Children's Christmas Play Set for December 13

The children's Christmas play will be presented at the congregational Christmas dinner on Sunday, December 13, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The dinner is being catered and will include ham, green beans, scalloped potatoes, chicken fingers, carrots and salad.

Please watch for details on how to sign up. The children are very excited and will be rehearsing very hard for the coming weeks!

Middle School Art Installation

The middle school children will be looking at Advent as a journey. We will talk about how, in the church calendar, we take a yearly journey in time, space, and faith, to the manger. We will create works based on the actual journeys of Advent and Christmas that we know about from the Bible. It will be unveiled December 13 and for the following Sunday during the Fellowship Hour. Susan Rhoads is facilitating this project.

Potluck Dinner is December 6

The middle school and high school youth group and parents will hold their Christmas potluck dinner on December 6 at 6 p.m. For those attending, A-M should

bring a main dish and N-Z a side, salad or dessert. There will be an important parent meeting after the dinner.

Monday Night Lights Takes a Holiday

There is no Monday Night Lights in December. The next MNL will be January 4, and the movie *Doubt* will be discussed.

The MNL parenting class also will be held that night, with the topic, "You Don't Have to Do it all Yourself."

Save the Date: December 16 – Youth Ministry Team meeting at 7 p.m.

(ADVENT, Concluded from Page 3)

I hope and pray you take time for Advent this year. As we approach the stable and kneel in Bethlehem, I hope you pace yourself each week to begin in worship at First Church. Here are the sermons for Advent and Christmas:

Advent I - November 29 -Texts: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Luke 21: 25-36, Sermon title: . . . *Come Soon*

Advent II - December 6 - Texts: Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79, Luke 3:1-6 Sermon title: . . . *Make Ready*

Advent III - December 13 - Texts: Zephaniah 3:14-20, Luke 3:7-18 Sermon title: . . . *Move Forward.*

Advent IV - December 20 - Texts: Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-55 Sermon title: . . . *Sing for Joy*

Christmas Eve – 7:30 and 11 p.m. – Texts: Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20. Sermon title: . . . *Stand in Awe*

End-of-Year Reports Coming Due

Members of the First Church committees and commissions are reminded that their reports for the 2009 annual report will be due January 1. Please send your report to Denny Mahoney at dmahoney@first-church.org by that date. The annual report must be prepared and printed for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting on January 31.

From the Music Office

By James E. Bobb, Music Minister



In 1791, John Wesley published his *Selected Hymns*, which included a preface of instructions for congregational singing. The Wesleys, John and his brother, Charles, are credited with founding Methodism and their many hymns have been widely admired. Although we may bristle at their brusqueness, Wesley's instructions as printed below are full of good advice, color and encouragement.

1. Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
2. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn them as soon as you can.
3. Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a single degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.
4. Sing lustily and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half-dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sang the songs of Satan.
5. Modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.
6. Sing in time. Whatever time is sung be sure to keep up with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing too slow. This drawing way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.
7. Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creation. In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away

with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.

Congregational Concerts

**December 20 at 4 p.m.
Festival of Lessons and Carols**

In the glow of candlelight and the warmth of beloved music, we gather to hear again the message of the angels. First Church choirs, ringers, and both the Kimball and von Beckerath organs offer music by Orlando Gibbons, Michael Praetorius, John Gardner and others in this traditional service of scripture, carols and congregational singing.

Associate Minister Committee Interviewing Candidates

The Associate Minister Search Committee is continuing its work and the first round of interviews are under way.

Thirty-one well-qualified individuals from 17 different states have expressed interest in the position. The committee has spent many hours carefully examining their qualifications and attributes. Thus far, nine candidates remain under consideration. The committee will continue weekly meetings through early December, with the expectation that in-person interviews will take place with the finalists in early January.

Committee members are: Tom Brownfield, Bev Cook, Todd Cunningham, Sandra Geronimo, Katelyn Hoffman, Carrie Keller, Jim Kyle, Elaine Warren, Melody Leidheiser, moderator (ex-officio), Tim Ahrens, senior minister, Mike Weddle, co-chair, and Karen Carpenter, chair.

Spirituality Network Workshop is Dec. 5

The Spirituality Network will present "The Journey of the Marble Heart: A Reflective Writing Process" on December 5 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at First Church.

The workshop will be led by poet and artist MJ Abell. Registration is \$20 prepaid and \$25 at door. You can pre-register by calling 614-228-8867.

First Church News

Thanksgiving Collection Set for November 22

November 22 has been designated as our food collection day for Gladden Community House Food Pantry and Broad Street Presbyterian Church Food Pantry.

The Mission Commission is asking for donations of canned and non-perishable food items to be collected during the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services that day. Please remember this date and bring what you are able.

These are the food items in most need: Canned vegetables and fruit; pasta, rice, dried beans, instant mashed potatoes; boxed meals such as Hamburger Helper; tuna, canned meats; cereal; boxed macaroni and cheese; soup; peanut butter; and spaghetti sauce.

Annual Cookie Mission Needs Volunteers

By Sharon Leidheiser, Business Administrator

First Church's annual cookie mission is calling for volunteers and cookies. On Sunday, December 13, from



8:30 to 10:30 a.m., First Church volunteers will fill cookie tins in the Education Wing, Room C, to deliver to those less fortunate.

Please consider volunteering your time and/or your baking talents for this special gift-giving mission.

Opportunities to help with this mission include:

- Donating cookie tins. (Please bring clean tins to church office by December 9.)
- Donating 4-dozen Christmas cookies or candies. (Please bring to church the day of the event.)
- Helping fill tins with goodies on December 13 (8:30 -10:30 a.m.)

To register for any of the above volunteer opportunities, please call the church office at 614-228-1741.

*Read the First Church News online
www.first-church.org*

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Decorate our church and your home for Christmas,
and honor your loved ones.



Name _____ Phone Number _____

Total Number of poinsettias _____ x \$10 each = \$ _____

*(Orders must be in the church office **no later than Dec. 6.** Please include payment with order. Make checks payable to **First Church**, write "poinsettias" in memo line.)*

IN MEMORY OF _____

OR

IN CELEBRATION OF _____

I will . . .

_____ Take home after the 11:00 pm Candlelight Communion Service on December 24

_____ Leave in the sanctuary for Bethlehem on Broad Street, December 25

IRA Charitable Rollover Available for Contributions to First Church

By Phil Stichter, Trustees Chair

Recently, Council approved a request by the trustees to send letters to all members of the church who are or will be 70½ by December 31, 2009, to alert them to the unique opportunity offered by the "IRA charitable rollover" provision. This provision is in The Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, and is scheduled to end this year.

The charitable rollover allows **taxpayers aged 70½ or older to make tax-free contributions of up to \$100,000 in 2009** from either traditional IRAs or Roth IRAs (but not from 401(k) plans) to the church or to other qualified charitable organizations. **Contributions must be made by December 31** to take advantage of this enhanced tax benefit. It is not expected that this benefit will be available in 2010.

The contribution must come to the church (or to some other charitable entity) **directly from the IRA account**. Donations from these IRAs are not treated as an itemized deduction but are **excluded from taxable income**, even if you take the standard deduction. Also, the amount contributed from your IRA is not included as part of your adjusted gross for tax purposes.

Donors who itemize their taxes are prohibited from deducting more than 50% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) for the purpose of making charitable donations. But, **donations from IRAs are excluded from this AGI 50% limitation**, allowing individuals who have reached that limitation to give more if they wish to do so.

Certain states, including Ohio, do not allow itemized tax deductions for charitable contributions. However, by making a charitable contribution through an IRA, **Ohio taxpayers can exclude this amount from their state income and from state taxes**.

Every donor's circumstances are different so please **consult with your tax advisor** to see if an IRA charitable rollover is right for you.

Some members of First Church have already taken advantage of the IRA charitable rollover provisions by making contributions to various endowment funds, including the Church Expansion Fund. It was established for the purpose of acquiring and developing the property adjacent to the church at 444 East Broad St. We encourage additional contributions to this fund (or to other funds that have been described in past newsletter articles) from those members who can take

advantage of the charitable rollover provision by December 31.

If you have any questions or wish to consider making a special gift, **please contact a trustee or an advisor to the trustees**. The elected trustees include Joyce Canfield, Wally Giffen, Randy Hoffman, Matt Lazar, Patty Pohlman, Phil Stichter and our moderator, Melody Leidheiser. Advisors to the trustees include our treasurer, Bill Johannes, our legal counsel and secretary, Mark Knueve, and our senior minister, Tim Ahrens.

Fellowships to Meet in December

The First Thursday Fellowship (North and West) will meet at the home of Betsy Zahn on December 3 at 10 am. The Rev. Barbara Cunningham, associate minister, will be the speaker and there will be a \$5 gift exchange (1 gift for couples).

The East Central Fellowship will have a holiday gathering at the church on Thursday, December 10 at 10 a.m. There will be a \$5 "Yankee Swap" exchange (1 gift for couples) and Christmas music.

Both fellowships are open to all men and women of the church.

First Church Artists to be Showcased

Take notice all First Church artists – young, old and in between

In 2010, the Art Committee is developing plans for an exhibition of First Church artists. It will be held in Parish Hall and the Large Conference Room from late April through early June, during the annual Arts Festival.

Make your suggestions and address questions to Deb Anderson, organizer. This is to be a celebration of your talents. Don't be shy!



Don't Forget!

*Hanging of the
Greens*

*December 6 in the Sanctuary Following
Worship and Fellowship Hour*

Missions

Mission Endowment Fund Helps a Variety of Needs in the Community

By Fran Panek, Missions Co-Chair



community of faith.

Every Sunday, we at First Church are invited to give to one of our many mission partners. This weekly tradition is part of the fabric of First Church – part of our life blood. We are a caring and generous

community of faith. But did you know that the Mission Committee also administers a Mission Endowment Fund to address specific requests from the church, our local community and the world?

Established in 1995 during our last Capital Campaign, the fund allows us to assist a variety of individuals and organizations with an infusion of cash to support common goals of justice, charity and self-improvement.

Individuals or groups make a request to the Missions Committee for funding of a project or need. The committee reviews the request and determines whether to recommend funding the proposal in full, in part or not at all. The proposal then goes to Council for final approval before funds are distributed to the requestor.

To date in 2009, we have supported five requests for funding ranging from \$200 to \$1,500 each. Included are rent support to a Darfuri couple re-settling in Columbus; school supplies for our locally supported family brought here after the Hurricane Katrina disaster; financial assistance to the First Church Youth mission trip in June; a donation in the memory of Dorothy Cromartie, eligible to receive matching funds from the Kresge Foundation that supports the new facility of the Mid-Ohio Food Bank; and funding to assist with the renovation of two housing units maintained by Lower Lights Ministries in Franklinton. Additional requests may be reviewed in December.

If you would like more information about the endowment fund or the service offered by the First Church Mission Committee, please contact Anne Hudson, Fran Panek or any committee member. We love our work, and we love sharing!

Deep Griha: A Holiday Gift That Gives Back

If you're looking for a meaningful gift that isn't just more "stuff," consider making a donation to Deep Griha in the name of someone special.

The First Church Mission Commission has created special holiday cards to let that special someone know that you made a donation in their name. The photographs on the card were taken by local UCC members on their visit to Deep Griha. The cards explain that Deep Griha is a mission in Pune, India, with programs designed to empower the disadvantaged, giving people the skills, confidence and support they need to improve their lives.

These special cards are available at coffee hour on the first and third Sundays of the month through December 20. A donation can be made in any amount. Please consider supporting this worthwhile mission as you do your Christmas shopping!

Totes Still on Sale



Only 24 totes remain for sale at \$10. The House and Grounds Committee will be given the profit to make energy efficient improvements to the building. Totes may be purchased at the Fair Trade coffee sales table and in the church office.

Holiday gift baskets containing Fair Trade coffee, tea or cocoa will be for sale in December. These are lovely gifts to give to hosts and teachers.

Christmas at Gladden Community House: Gladden House staff members and volunteers expect to prepare 300 food boxes for senior citizens and families in need during Christmas. Gifts for the children are being donated by firefighters. However, this year, United Way is unable to contribute gifts for the senior citizens. Gladden would appreciate \$20 gift cards from Target or Wal-Mart for the seniors in the neighborhood and for the teens who come to the center. Drop off the cards in the office by December 15.

Mission Offerings Schedule

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

December 6 - Columbus AIDS Task Force

December 13 - BOBS

December 20 - Christmas Fund

December 24 - Christmas Fund

December 27 - Good Samaritan



Advent/Christmas at First Church 2009

December 6 – Hanging of
the Greens – Sanctuary
after worship



December 6 – Middle
School and High School
youth group and parents
Christmas dinner, 6 p.m., Parish Hall

December 13 – Children's play and dinner, Parish
Hall, 6 p.m.

December 20 – Service of Lessons and Carols,
Sanctuary, 4 p.m.

December 24 – 7:30 p.m., pageant; candlelight
service, 11 p.m.

2009 Christmas Ornament Available



First Church is continuing our exciting program in celebrating the history of our church through an ongoing Christmas ornament project. Each year, one of our beautiful stained glass windows is featured as an ornament.

The first ornament (2007) was the "Shepherd Window" that is located in the Gladden Chapel. The second ornament

2009 Christmas ornament

(2008) was "The Light of the World" window in the sanctuary in the Parable Windows. Both ornaments are still available in limited quantity at \$15 each, or you can purchase both ornaments for a discounted price of \$20. The 2009 ornament is "Jesus Blessing the Children" panel from the Jeffery Window, located above the Chancel. The cost is \$18 and payment must accompany when placing the order.

Presale of this year's ornament continues on Sundays after the 9 a.m. service and during the Fellowship Hour in the Parish Hall after the 11 a.m. worship.

Member Happy December Birthdays

1: John Rau	18: Mary Alice Kuhn
3: Darel Finley	19: Carol Hussey
3: Leslie Fulford	19: Larry Dixon
3: Molly VanGorden	19: Bob Davis
4: Elaine Warren	19: Barry Bastian
4: Frank Cook	20: Margaret Browne
5: Jason Bishop	20: Christa Ewing
5: Madeline Hadley	21: Joyce Canfield
6: Kay Davis	21: Dorothy Leachman
6: Joanne Avers	21: Jamie Bobb
6: Tom Danneberger	21: Andrew Thomas
6: Diane Rambo	22: Rick Hendersen
8: Janet Axt	22: Ellie Zeiger
8: Kent Rambo	23: Martha Worth
10: Brian Thomas	24: Lee Ann Hadley
11: Sam Spofforth	25: Elaine Fennell
11: Charlie White	25: Diana Kutschbach
13: Anne Aldrich	26: Tricia Bishop
13: Joe Provenzano	27: David Fulford
14: Elizabeth Asp	27: Rachel Axt
14: Dan Ward	28: Paul Leidheiser
14: Pamm Greene	28: McAshan Dean
14: Susan Rhoads	29: James Organ
14: Lori Horne	29: Ben Rowley
14: Gretchen Weller	30: Jamie McWilliams
15: Anne Bennett	30: Tracy Cloud-Thomas
17: Dale Leidheiser	31: Jim Ream
17: Jane Leidheiser	31: Jon Anderson
	31: Catherine Cunningham

Member Happy December Anniversaries

10: Diana and Bob Kutschbach
12: Linda and Ron Reiger
19: Martha and Gerry Worth
20: Elaine and Alton Fennell
20: Teresa and Jorge Polo
22: Pauline and Earl Fritz
22: Virginia and John Matney
23: Jane and Mike Weddle
26: Becky and Sheldon Taft
27: Sarah and Tom Trace
27: Jane and Dick Ward
28: Rebecca and Ian Baird
28: Francille and John Firebaugh
29: Pam and Andrew Welsh-Huggins
30: Mary Alice and Tom Kuhn
31: Darel and Shawn Finley

OOPS! We missed Sarah Ahrens' November 25 birthday in our last issue. Happy birthday Sarah!

If we miss your birthday or anniversary, contact Denny Mahoney at 228-1741, ext. 17, or dmahoney@first-church.org.

Church Calendar

Sunday, November 22

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am – Early Worship - PH
10 am – Education Hour
10 am – First Church Choir – Choir Room
11 am - Worship Service - San
12 pm – Fellowship Hour - PH

Monday, November 23

6:30 pm – Stephen Ministers – Adult Library

Tuesday, November 24

12:00 pm – Card Care Ministry – PFR
7 pm – Personnel – PFR

Thursday, November 26

Thanksgiving Day, Office Closed

Friday, November 27 (Office/Building Closed)

6 pm – Faith Mission Shelter Meals

Sunday, November 29

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am - Early Worship Service - PH
10 am – Education Hour
10 am – First Church Choir – Choir Room
11 am - Worship Service - San
12 pm - Fellowship Hour - PH

Monday, November 30

5:30 pm- Sacred Earth – PFR
7 pm – Search Committee - LC

Tuesday, December 1

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – PFR
6:30 pm – Children's Ed – Ed Wing Rm C

Wednesday, December 2

11 am – Book Study Group – LC
7 pm - Evangelism and Church Growth – PFR

Thursday, December 3

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

Saturday, December 5

9 am – New Member Class – Choir Room

Sunday, December 6

9 am - Early Worship Service - PH
9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
10 am - Education Hour
10 am – First Church Choir – Choir Room
11 am - Worship Service - San
12 pm - Fellowship Hour - PH
12:30 pm – Parish Life – PFR
12:30 pm – *Hanging of the Greens - San*

Monday, December 7

6 pm – Policy and Procedures – PFR
7 pm – Search Committee – LC

Tuesday, December 8

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC
6 pm – Music Committee – LC
7 pm – Executive Committee – Adult Library
7 pm – Mission Committee – PFR

Wednesday, December 9

7 pm – Budget and Finance – LC

Thursday, December 10

10 am – Eastside Fellowship – PR
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Bell Room
7:30 p.m. – First Church Choir – Choir Room

Friday, December 11

3:45 pm – Parents for Others

Saturday, December 12

9 am – Children's Play Practice – PH
10 am – Quilters of First Church – PFR

Sunday, December 13

8:30 am – Christmas Cookie Mission – Ed Wing Room C
9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am - Early Worship Service - PH
10 am - Education Hour
10 am - First Church Choir - Choir Room
11 am - Worship Service – San
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH
6 pm – Children's Christmas Play – PH

Monday, December 14

6:30 pm – Stephen's Ministers – Adult Library
7 pm – Trustees – PFR

Tuesday, December 15

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – PFR
7 pm – Church Council – LC

Wednesday, December 16

11 am – Book Study Group – LC

Thursday, December 17

6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Bell Room
7 pm – Deacons – LC
7:30 pm – First Church Choir – Choir Room

Saturday, December 19

9 am – House and Grounds

Sunday, December 20

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am - Early Worship Service - PH
10 am - Education Hour
10 am - First Church Choir - Choir Rm
11 am - Worship Service - San
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH
12:30 pm – Confirmation Class – Room D
4 pm – Congregational Concert – San

Monday, December 21

7 pm – Budget and Finance – PFR

Tuesday, December 22

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC

Thursday, December 24

12:30 pm – *Office Closes*

6 pm – Make Up Call For Pageant – Bell Room
6:15 pm – Ringers – Bell Room
7:30 pm – Worship (Pageant) – San
11:30 pm - Candlelight Worship – San

Friday, December 25, Christmas Day

Bethlehem on Broad Street

Prayers

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.

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.

Deaths

Ruth Rieppel – October 17

Weddings

Crystal and Luis Mojicar – Nov. 14

Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on December 6 and 20 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

December Fellowship Hour

December 6: Corinthians
December 13: Daniel
December 20: Deuteronomy
December 27: Ephesians

December Acolyte Schedule

December 6: Katie Wagner and Luke Zimmerman
December 13: Carly Kutschbach and Will Zimmerman
December 20: Ella Kosher and Joe Spofforth
December 27: Jansen Allred and Ben Allred
(Schedules online at www.first-church.org)

Next Newsletter Deadline

Articles Due: Monday, December 7, by noon
Folding Team: Wednesday, December 16, 9 a.m.

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.

Church Staff

Timothy C. Ahrens.....*Senior Minister*
Barbara R. Cunningham.....*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*
Stan Parron.....*Building Manager*
Denny Mahoney.....*Office Manager*
Kelvin Murphy.....*Custodian*
Frank Wall, William Lee.....*Custodians*
Nikki Boop, Rosemary Pawandiwa.....*Nursery*
Linda Mumford.....*Wedding Coordinator*
Jane Leidheiser.....*Wedding Coordinator*
Fran Panek.....*Wedding Coordinator*

Church Council

Melody Leidheiser.....*Moderator*
Sarah Reed.....*Vice-Moderator*
Carol Gallagher.....*Secretary*
David Holt.....*Treasurer*
Phil Stichter.....*Trustee Chair*
Frank Cook.....*Administration Commissioner*
Pavan Peter.....*Church Growth Commissioner*
Diana Kutschbach.....*Education Commissioner*
Bill Rhoads.....*House & Grounds Commissioner*
Anne Hudson, Fran Panek.....*Mission Commissioners*
Julia Myers, Amy Fulton.....*Parish Life Commissioners*
Charlie Weaver.....*Deacon*
Kevin Butler.....*Deacon*
Shannon Washington.....*Music, Arts, Heritage*
Nancy Fields.....*Budget and Finance*
Kim Kutschbach.....*Member-at-large*
Doug Buck.....*Member-at-large*

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

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Please Deliver: Monday, November 23, 2009

TO:

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The First Congregational Church, UCC

444 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614.228.1741 FAX: 614.461.1741
Email: home@first-church.org Web site: www.first-church.org
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed Major Holidays

“An Open & Affirming Faith Community”

SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS

Worship at 9 a.m. ~ Parish Hall
Worship at 11 a.m. ~ Sanctuary