



‘A Season of Friends’

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

*“A friend is one who knows you and loves you just the same.”
Elbert Hubbard*

Near the end of his life, Dr. Washington Gladden wrote that his lifetime as pastor, preacher and writer had led him to a simple conclusion: “Religion is friendship.”

It is friendship between each one of us and God. It is friendship with other people of faith. This simple formula is one that should serve each of us every day. Our friends enrich our lives and in them we find hope and peace. Friends are the ones who walk with us through our trials and our tribulations. Reflecting on friends, Oprah Winfrey has said, “Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but a true friend is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.”

We are entering a “Season of Friends” at First Church! The idea springs from some brain-storming by our Church Growth Committee. We will find it to be our favorite season of the church year. Imagine coming to church with a friend with whom you have always wanted to share the joy you experience here. Now that we have a “Season of Friends,” you have a whole month of opportunities to invite them to join you.

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One of my friends told me recently he doesn’t like organized religion. I invited him to First Church. I said, “We aren’t very organized. I think you will like us!” He came! Some friends have been “burned by church” or have no experience at all in worship. They can try our variety of services, including wonderful worship (and great cookies and coffee) each Sunday at 9 and 11 a.m. We will celebrate the Nativity on Christmas Eve with services at 7:30 and 11 p.m.

If they like incredible music in a spectacular setting (with no preaching) we have two concerts coming up in our “Season of Friends” – one for Bach (November 21, 4 p.m.) and one for Jesus (December 19, 4 p.m.!) Don’t miss the dinner and original play put on by Andrew Welsh-Huggins and all the children of First Church on December 12 beginning with dinner at 5 p.m. It is a great time for all ages to sing Christmas Carols, eat heartily and celebrate the children’s gift of singing and drama in this season of friends.

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Other friends of yours may be looking for a place to serve. We have many opportunities, including Friends of the Homeless meals served November 26 and December 24. Of course there is Christmas Day when the whole city comes to celebrate “Bethlehem on Broad Street.”

If religion is friendship as Washington Gladden suggested, then let us be a glorious society of friends seeking to live fully our religious life together on the corner of Cleveland and Broad! Bring friends, family, neighbors, co-workers and their friends too! Let’s celebrate our “Season of Friends” at First Church!



From the Pastors

Hang Out, Hang Some Greens

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

One of the great things about only being on staff for three seasons of the year is that there is still one more to come! I cannot express how great it has been to serve God with all of you this year and how pleased I am to get to walk into Advent, awaiting the coming of the Christ in new ways – especially with you!



I am enjoying your stories of family Thanksgivings and reunions and of Christmases past – the annual children and youth play, the music, the laughter, the crèche creations, Lessons and Carols and the sacred evening of December 24, as well as all of the special gatherings of friendship-building we have to look forward to in-between . . . all of which leads me to my first Advent invitation to you:

Would you like to help with the hanging of the greens on the first Sunday in Advent, Sunday, November 28? We will begin after the 11 a.m. worship with pizza in Fellowship Hall and music to keep us reaching upward, decorating and celebrating as we work together to transform the building (not just the sanctuary). If you would like to be part of the fun, please give me a call or drop me an email at jwilson@first-church.org. Newcomers are always welcome!

My second invitation is an echo of the invitations of others – bring a friend to worship. What better time to extend the right hand of friendship than during this season of new life? What better time to give hope to someone, or to give them a place to join in and help do God's work in the world, than this Advent and with us – Entering to Worship and Departing to Serve – starting from the corner of Cleveland and Broad?

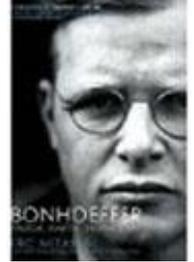
Dietrich Bonhoeffer Inspires Large Class

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

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a pastor, martyr, prophet and spy, according to author Eric Metaxas. I would add “a gifted teacher, preacher, and writer,” as well.

No matter how you present Bonhoeffer, the class gathering in his name in off to great start! With over

20 adults gathering in the Parlor for an hour on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 11 a.m., the most recent book by Metaxas is inspiring members and friends of First Church to revisit the life and legacy of one of the most important figures of 20th century Christianity.



If you can't make the class, I encourage you to read Metaxas' book. Everyone who is working their way through the biography has been inspired by the witness of Bonhoeffer. If you would like to join us for the final four classes, come December 1. If you have a great book to recommend for a future book discussion, please email me or call me at 228-1741, ext. 13.

A Big Thank-You to First Church

Thanks to everyone that shared in my celebration of the Lay Leadership Award, which Pastor Tim presented to me at the worship service on Sunday, October 31. Indeed, I was overwhelmed by all my friends who came, participated and greeted me during the church service and at the reception afterward. I was certainly humbled by all the attention.

I give the Glory to God! I am also very grateful for my Christian and Interfaith friends, and without you I could not have achieved what I have. By serving the Lord through our many mission endeavors, together, we can truly say that we at First Church "Enter to Worship , Depart to Serve."

Gratefully yours in Christ,
Arlene Reynolds

Book of Blessings Makes A Special Holiday Gift

Blessing Upon Blessing has just been published by the Spirituality Network of Central Ohio and should be on everyone's Christmas gift list. Dominican Sister Maxine Shonk, who blessed our church as one of our guest preachers this summer, has written a book of blessings for every occasion and season of life.

For \$10, the book can be purchased at the Spirituality Network office in our building in the space next to the vending machines. Some also will be available in the church office.

Capital Campaign Wraps Up Public Phase of Efforts

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

With Tom Stewart's announcement in worship on "Celebration Sunday," October 31, the 2010 Capital Campaign closed the public phase of the efforts.



Tom, Capital Campaign committee chairperson, announced that as of that day, \$3.1 million had been committed to the effort! This represents five times the annual giving and triples our largest effort in church history for capital campaign giving! While we remain short of the ultimate goal of \$6 million, everyone involved feels we are well on our way to paying for the property on the corner of Cleveland and Broad, making all the improvements necessary to our current building and meeting the mission commitments in Columbus, the United States and across the globe.

Related article on Page 6

We are waiting on final responses from a number of lead, major and supporting gifts from members and friends of the church. We know that the final number will be higher as we keep climbing toward our final number of dollars committed. The committee has joyfully decided to publish the names of all who have been able to make an estimated gift to the campaign. This list will be coming out by year's end. Thanks to all who have been able to step forward. If you haven't done so yet, but are working on your decision, please be in touch with Tom Stewart as soon as possible, or contact Bev Cook, who serves as the chairperson of our Continuity Committee and volunteers in the church office, 228-1741, ext. 29.

In his remarks on October 31, Tom graciously thanked all who were able to give in these challenging economic times. He also lifted up the entire church, acknowledging that we must all go forward together along our congregation's "broadening way." Thanks to all the committee members and the dozens of women and men who did so much to make this campaign a great success. With God's help and our continuing hopeful and cheerful giving membership, we will reach our goals for this campaign in the coming weeks, months and years. Thanks be to God!

Arlene Reynolds Honored with 2010 Lay Leadership Award

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

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

Elizabeth Kubler Ross

During worship on October 31 and afterward in Parish Hall, First Church celebrated and honored Arlene Reynolds as our 2010 Lay Leadership Award Winner. It was an amazing day!



Since joining First Congregational Church in 1954, Arlene has been a beacon of light serving Jesus Christ in Columbus. Arlene has served the city so well and so long for 56 years that we could lose track of her long record of service to the poor, the refugees, the forgotten and the forsaken of our city.

Whether starting and directing the first interracial preschool at First Church (the downtown preschool), getting Head Start launched in our city, resettling refugees from Southeast Asia, Ethiopia, Eutrea or Cuba, leading Bethlehem on Broad Street for 25 years or leading our Mission Commission and Good Samaritan Fund for a long time, and so many other efforts of charity and justice, Arlene has been a leader of compassion, service and love in our community.

During our celebration, Cambodians and Sudanese, Buddhists and Muslims, young and old, black and white, rich and poor stepped up to celebrate their friend and fellow mission partner. It was a joy to watch Arlene receive the love and thanksgiving they poured out for her. It was a time for so many people to be reunited to friends at First Church as well. Watching former refugees, now third generation Americans, embrace their friends here made our celebration for Arlene extra special!

Arlene recently wrote: "On the entrance to our church are the words, 'Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve.' May God be praised and glorified. May I always be faithful to his service." Thanks be to God for Arlene Reynolds!

Music Notes

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



November 2010

Congregational Concerts

A Bach Festival November 21, 4 p.m.

The themes of thanksgiving and praise are abundant in the festive Reformation Cantata *Gott, der Herr, ist Sonn' und Schild* (God, the Lord is sun and shield), BWV 79, with the First Church Choral Society, soloists, strings, oboes, trumpets and timpani. A select chamber choir will perform Cantata BWV 147, *Herz and Mund and Tat und Leben*. Each cantata contains a famous chorale setting: *Now thank we all our God* in BWV 79, and the movement known in English as *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* in BWV 147. Pre-concert talk is at 3:40 p.m.

Festival of Lessons and Carols December 19, 4 p.m.



That glorious song of old is sung once more in the radiance of candlelight with this traditional service of scripture, carols and congregational song. Join First Church choirs, ringers and organs for this highlight of the Christmas season. We warmly welcome WOSU-FM and host Christopher Purdy, who will broadcast this service live. The prelude begins at 3:30 p.m.

Next Compline is January 16

Plan to join us for the evening service of Compline, offered the third Sunday of each month, except on Congregational Concert days, at 9 p.m. This 30-minute service of unaccompanied plainsong chant is illuminated by candlelight.

It is a beautiful, peaceful, prayerful way to end the Lord's Day. Compline at First Church will be January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17 and May 15.

Meet Our Newest Members

Kelly and Matthew Allen and their 11- and 12-year old sons, **Jack** and **Ben**, live in Bexley. Kelly is a consultant and Matt's career is marketing. They all enjoy the outdoors and the boys play soccer, football and lacrosse. **Chelsea Hartz** is a music and music education major at Ohio State. She has a great voice and a delight in learning. Chelsea has served on the staff of a previous church and enjoys working with youth when her busy schedule permits.

Tanya and Jonathan Miller live in Reynoldsburg. Jon is a psychotherapist and Tanya is a paralegal currently enrolled in Franklin University's MBA program. Their son, **Finnegan**, is a joyful 7-year-old. Their family interests include gardening, homeschooling, learning, politics and music. **Linda Bozik and Raul Zendejas** are engaged and looking forward to their marriage next summer. Linda is a photo studio manager, Raul creates software and designs web sites and Raul's 13-year old daughter, **Robin**, has a great smile and gentle presence.



Our new members are a wonderful addition to our congregation. Be sure to make time to seek them out and welcome them into their new church family!

Rev. Ahrens' Upcoming Sermons and Texts

November 21 - Thanksgiving Sunday, Reign of Christ the King
Jeremiah 23:1-6; Colossians 1:11-20; Luke 1:67-79
"Zechariah's Prophetic Gratitude"

November 28 - Advent I
Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44
"Watch Out for Righteousness"

December 5 - Advent II
Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12
"Hope Rises from Stumps"

December 12 - Advent III
Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11
"Patient Prophets in Desert Times"

December 19 - Advent IV
Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7,17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
"Refuse Evil, Choose Good"

December 24 - Christmas Eve - 7:30 and 11 p.m.
"For Unto US"

Christmas Play is December 12

By Andrew Welsh-Huggins

The familiar smells of autumn are here – crisp apples, piles of leaves, the burning of Michigan effigies – and that can only mean one thing: the Christmas play is around the corner.

Please mark your calendars now for December 12 at 5 p.m. in the Parish Hall for our annual light-hearted look at the Nativity story. As always, it will be preceded by a family-friend meal.



We'll welcome the Mistletoe Marchers, a festive parade of children from pre-K through first grade; the Christmas Chorus, a merry band of second graders introducing the production; and the First Church Christmas actors themselves, all children third through fifth grades interested in participating.

Rehearsals during Education Hour have begun. This year's show, "A Corporate Christmas Conundrum," explores what happens when a cost-cutting executive tries to cancel the annual Christmas display – at his own peril.

Join us for this recessionary romp toward the real meaning of the season. Questions? E-mail Andrew Welsh-Huggins at awelsh@ap.org or call at 614-274-4803.

Upcoming Christian Education Program

11/28-12/19

Hallelujah! – Led by the Rev. Dr. Janine Wilson. Explore the Advent related scriptural texts of Handel's *Messiah*, including:

- * Comfort, Comfort My People
- * Who Shall Abide the Day of His Coming?
- * For Unto Us a Child Is Born
- * Glory to God in the Highest

2011 Budget Planning Under Way

By David Holt, Treasurer

Right now Church Council is finalizing budget plans for 2011. Each year these plans depend upon you, our members and friends doing two vitally important things:

1. Faithfully completing your giving for the current year, and

2. Joyfully responding to our stewardship campaign for the new year.

Your stewardship giving makes *you* an integral part of *all* of the wonderful works here at First Church:

- * Our majestic and awe inspiring church building
- * Our excellence in preaching and worship
- * Our magnificent music ministry
- * Our appreciation of art and heritage
- * Our faith enriching education ministries
- * Our nurturing youth ministries
- * Our fellowship building parish life programs
- * Our caring card care ministry and Stephen Ministry
- * Our evangelism and extravagant welcome
- * Our voice for peace and social justice
- * Our care for our sacred earth
- * Our outreach of mission and charity
- * Our support of the wider UCC church
- * Our beloved staff

We can do all of this and more because of our faithful and joyful contributors.

Here is your end of the year checklist:

- ✓ Review your statement of giving and complete (or even exceed) your planned giving for 2010 before 12/31/10, as you are able
- ✓ Prayerfully consider increasing your giving for 2011 in relation to your blessings
- ✓ Submit your letter of intention for 2011, if you haven't done so already
- ✓ Contact a church leader to volunteer your energy, time and talent

You may want to consider the following alternative methods for financial giving (contact Sharon Leidheiser for details):

- Online bill-pay through your bank
- Direct deposit through payroll deduction
- Stock, bond, mutual fund, CD, or IRA transfers

Don't be left out, when we all work together we can do amazing things. Let's make 2011 a fantastic year for our church.

Work Begins for Campaign's Implementation Committee

By David Holt, Committee Chair

Church Council has appointed an Implementation Committee to review requests for implementing the work funded by "The Future's Broadening Way" capital campaign and to make recommendations to Church Council for expenditures.



THE FUTURE'S BROADENING WAY

Here is a summary of our capital campaign project progress so far:

- Downpayment of \$550,000 for the purchase of the former Byers Lot from the Platt heirs
- Monthly mortgage payments of \$13,683 to the Platt heirs
- Cleared brush and unwanted trees from the fence line along our new west parking lot
- Removed chain link fence and brush to open a passage way between the north lot and the west lot
- Removed a brick wall remnant along the alley at the south end of the north parking lot
- Trimmed limbs from the three Linden trees along the fence line of the west lot
- Adjusted some of the lighting on the west lot and aimed more lighting onto the west façade of the church
- Removed the awnings from the former Byers sales office building
- Painted the railing, utility boxes, and poles along the west lot fence line
- Cut an opening in the railing and poured a concrete sidewalk connecting the west parking lot to the west entrance to the narthex
- Improved the landscaping along the west lot fence line
- Repaired eroding turf along the west side of the education wing with landscape timbers
- Constructed raised planting beds for a community garden
- Re-paved our north parking lot, the fenced play area on the west side of the education wing, and some spots needing paving repair on the west parking lot
- Removed the Used Car Lot sign
- Painted the wall on the north edge of the west parking lot

- Repaired the trim and painted the carriage house (work still in progress)

Projects on the near horizon:

- The old sales office building is scheduled for demolition before Thanksgiving
- Quotes to replace the chair lift down to the parish hall are being researched

Church Council is also forming a Long Range Planning and Vision Team with these core tasks:

1. Gather ideas and input from the congregation concerning long range plans and visions,
2. Design and recommend to council a physical master plan for our new west lot and our entire church grounds,
3. Make recommendations concerning development of the new west lot, and
4. Develop and recommend to council a long range plan for all of our ministries, missions, and programs.

This is only the very beginning. Many projects will commence over the next several years as a result of our capital campaign giving. It is not too late for you to be a part of all this great work. Contact the church office if you would like more information about participating in "The Future's Broadening Way" campaign.

Coffee Prices Go Up

The Equal Exchange Interfaith Team has increased coffee prices due to :

- * Rising costs for farmers of agricultural supplies and labor.
- * Extreme weather of excessive rain or drought decreases amount of coffee for sale.
- * Co-ops are under pressure from middlemen who offer up-front cash for beans leading farmers to leave the co-op system.

Sacred Earth has raised the price of coffee to \$8 a bag from \$7. Tea and cocoa prices remain unchanged. The little profit taken from the sale is to defray the cost of Fellowship Hour use and event and daily hospitality offered at the church.

Thank you for your continued support of this UCC mission, which ensures farmers a fair return for their labors and encourages ecologically sustainable farming practices. You may volunteer to sell coffee by calling Dawn George at 338.0507.

Good Samaritan Donation Can Be a Blessed Christmas Gift

By Marty Worth, Program Director
(mworth@first-church.org)

Our most recent Good Samaritan Day was Monday, November 8. All available funds were exhausted in order to help just 26 people. It was a discouraging day.



How can this be? After comparing 2009 and 2010 donations, some answers are evident. As of October 31, 2009, donations totaled \$29,000. Through October 31, 2010, donations have totaled \$16,000, That's 55% compared to last year. The Good Samaritan Fund had eight Sunday mission offerings in 2009, including Easter. In 2010, six are scheduled and Easter was not among those.

The need comes to our door on a daily basis. It is part of the fabric of our work week here at First Church. Not only ministers, but all staff members and office volunteers are fielding requests for help.



This past Sunday, we had our most recent Good Sam mission offering, I told the congregation that whatever funds come will be given out on December Good Sam Day, December 13. The response was overwhelming. Donations totaled \$2,400! Your support is an

inspiration to me and the volunteers who are dedicated to Good Sam.

Winter is just beginning and the need will only grow. If you wish to send a donation for Good Sam, a check made out to First Church and marked for the Good Samaritan Fund would be greatly appreciated.

Here's a great gift idea: One of the new Good Samaritan volunteers made a suggestion. If you are trying to think of a gift for someone, you may want to consider giving a donation to Good Samaritan in that person's name. Several people did this last year. An enclosure card is available when such donations come in. Contact me at 228-1741, ext. 12, or mworth@first-church.org.

I am blessed to have this ministry as part of my work here at First Church, even though it is the most challenging and emotional. Providing food to a man who then asks to pray with me; then listening as he blesses me, my family and this church in a most

beautiful prayer. I know that this ministry is living this teaching of Jesus every day:

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25).

Who are the Stephen Ministers?

By Reggie Cannon

Stephen Ministry is named for St. Stephen, the first lay person commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need. Stephen Ministers undergo 50 hours of training and serve for at least two years. Among other things, they develop skills in reflective listening, learn guidelines on confidentiality and prepare to minister to people in specific situations such as terminal illness, grief and divorce.

However, it doesn't have to be a dire situation. It could be any type of transition from something like the stress of childbirth or a child going off to college, to getting through a wedding or as simple as moving into a new home. They are trained to recognize when to refer someone to a helping professional.

It is the brainchild of the Rev. Kenneth Haugk, a clinical psychologist who was associate pastor of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in St. Louis when he saw people slipping through the cracks within his congregation because of too many needs and too few staff members.

Studying Ephesians 4:12 and God's provisions "to equip the saints for the work of ministry," Haugk (pronounced Howck) concluded that one of his pastoral roles should be to equip lay people to use their spiritual gifts to minister to others. So he developed a training program in Christian care giving, recruited and trained nine "Stephen Ministers" within his church, and matched them with people in crisis.

Stephen Ministry is based on "incarnational theology," which means that "when you care for another person, Jesus is in that person and you are the incarnation of Jesus Christ," says Haugk.

(Continued on Page 10)

First Church News

Church Growth Committee Sponsors 'A Season of Friends'

Wayne Piper, Church Growth Committee Chair

Have you experienced the joy of bringing a friend, co-worker or family member to worship with you at First Church? To see them marvel at the beauty of the sanctuary? To hear them praise the beauty of the music or the inspired messages from the pulpit?

I have invited friends from other faith traditions, friends from other cities and friends who do not have home congregations to attend services or concerts with me. In part, that enriching experience – when shared with members of the Church Growth Committee – inspired the committee to plan for a "Friends' Sunday" that would allow everyone at First Church to actively engage in our work by encouraging others to attend church with them.

With research into materials provided by Rev. Janine, we explored the work of congregations that had undertaken similar efforts. We soon came to realize that our success in this effort might well be a matter of timing. What time of year would be most appropriate to an initiative of this nature and with all the other activities at First Church what time of year would give our concept the attention we hoped it deserved?

The committee decided to launch a "Friends' Sunday" in November or December and sent a proposal to the staff worship committee. To quote Thoreau, our concept met there "with success unexpected in common hours." The worship committee not only embraced our idea, but expanded it to include the entire season of Advent!

As Rev. Tim has so eloquently expressed in his lead column in this newsletter, Advent and the traditions of Christian friendship at First Church afford each one of us a perfect time to bring those who matter most to us to worship with us.

Members of the committee hope that you'll join us and make this initiative a "success unexpected in common hours" by inviting and welcoming your family, friends and neighbors to join you in the uncommonly wonderful open and affirming atmosphere that is an integral part of First Church not only during Advent but all through each and every day and each and every year.

Blood Drive Scheduled for This Sunday

A blood drive will be held this Sunday, November 21, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. People as young as 16 are able to donate (with parent/guardian permission). To schedule an appointment, call the church office (614.228.1741).

Thanksgiving Food Collection is Nov. 21



The Mission Committee will be gathering canned and non-perishable food items for distribution to the Gladden House and Broad Street Presbyterian food pantries this Sunday, November 21. Please bring your donations to either the 9 or 11 a.m.

service and place them in the collection area. The committee will see that the food is delivered for Thanksgiving distribution.

These are suggested non-perishable items to bring: 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 mix; soup; peanut butter; and spaghetti sauce.

Thursday Fellowships to Meet in December

The First Thursday Fellowship will meet at the home of Marie Pfeiffer, 1050 E. Cooke Rd., at 10 a.m. on December 2. Rick Sayre will share highlights from his summer trip to Eastern Europe.

The Second Thursday Fellowship will meet at 10 a.m. in the Parlor on December 9. The Rev. Timothy Ahrens, our senior minister, will speak on Christmas in Israel, and the group will have a \$5 gift exchange. All are welcome to both gatherings.

Mission Offerings Schedule

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



- December 5 - AIDS Task Force**
- December 12 - Bethlehem on Broad Street**
- December 19 - Christmas Fund**
- December 26 - Good Samaritan**



Ushers/Greeters Needed to Improve Welcome to First Church

By Gerry Worth, Senior Deacon

In anticipation of the upcoming "Season of Friends," the deacons and ushers, with the help of Rev. Janine and Wayne Piper of the Church Growth Committee, are reorganizing the usher/greeting system with the objective of improved welcoming of worshippers.

The success of this effort depends upon recruitment of new ushers and greeters to expand the usher/greeter teams. Participation from new members, Parish Life, Youth and Council, along with others from the congregation, is anticipated. Inserts in the worship bulletins asking for interest in becoming an usher or greeter are part of the new recruitment process, and we are having a good response.

The new usher/greeters will have a brief orientation. Usher/greeter participation will expand at both Sunday worship services and special events. Ushers, deacons and greeters will be more easily recognized with their new white carnations and name tags. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Reggie Cannon, Greg Halbe, Rick Henderson or Gerry Worth.

End-of-Year Reports Coming Due

Members of the First Church committees and commissions are reminded that their reports for the 2010 annual report are coming due. Reports may be sent in beginning December 15, and the final deadline is 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 January 30.



Current Pledge Income

Annual Budget - \$587,779
October Actual - \$29,730
YTD Actual - \$443,401
YTD Budget - \$489,820
Below Budget - \$16,689

October Mission Offerings

Neighbors in Need - \$538.50
CROP - \$431.79
Catalyst - \$1,113.93 (two Sundays)
OCWM - \$438.00
Good Samaritan - \$375.00
Total - \$2,897.22

Member Happy December Birthdays

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

Member Happy December Anniversaries

10:	Diana and Bob Kutschbach
12:	Linda and Ron Reiger
19:	Marty and Gerry Worth
20:	Teresa and Jorge Polo
22:	Pauline and Earl Fritz
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
31:	Darel and Shawn Finley

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

Recent Celebration Gifts to First Church

By Bill Johannes and Jane Werum

Given to the Jackie Owen Memorial Music Fund in celebration of the life of Jackie Owen by:

William Owen

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.

Church Calendar

Sunday, November 21 (Thanksgiving Collection)

8 am – Blood Drive – Education Wing
9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am - Early Worship Service - PH
10 am – Choir – Choir Room
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D
11 am - Worship Service – San
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH
4 pm – Congregational Concert – San

Monday, November 22

6:30 pm – Stephen Ministers – Adult Library

Tuesday, November 23

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC

Wednesday, November 24

7 pm – Adult Education – LC

Thursday, November 25 (Thanksgiving Day)

Office and Building Closed

Friday, November 26 (Office Closed)

6 pm – Faith Mission Meals

Sunday, November 28

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am – Early Worship – PH
10 am – Choir – Choir Room
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D
11 am – Worship Service – San
12 pm - Fellowship Hour – PH
6 pm – Youth Groups – PH

Tuesday, November 30

12 pm – Card Care Ministry – LC

7 pm – Personnel – PFR

Wednesday, December 1

11 am – Book Study – Parlor

Thursday, December 2

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

Sunday, December 5

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am – Early Worship – PH
10 am – Choir – Choir Room
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D
11 am – Worship Service – San
12 pm - Fellowship Hour – Parlor

Monday, December 6

5:30 pm- Implementation Committee – PFR
5:30 pm - Sacred Earth – PR

Tuesday, December 7

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

Wednesday, December 8

5:30 pm – Budget and Finance – LC

Thursday, December 9

10 am – Second Thursday Fellowship – PR
2 pm – Art Committee – PR
6:15 pm – First Church Ringers – Gallerey
7:30 pm – Choir – Choir Room

Saturday, December 11

10 am – First Church Quilters – LC

Sunday, December 12

9 am – Treble 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
5 pm – Christmas Play and Dinner - PH

Monday, December 13

7 pm – Trustees – LC

Tuesday, December 14

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

Wednesday, December 15

11 am – Book Study – PR

Thursday, December 16

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

Saturday, December 18

9 am – House and Grounds Committee - PFR

Sunday, December 19

9 am – Treble Choir – Choir Room
9 am – Worship – PH
10 am – Choir – Sanctuary
10 am – Education Hour – Rooms C and D
11 am – Worship – Sanctuary
12 pm – Fellowship Hour – PH
4 pm – Festival of Lessons and Carols - Sanctuary

(STEPHEN MINISTERS, Concluded from Page 7)

In other words, what would Jesus do?

"If Jesus had a friend going through a divorce, he'd probably listen to them. If Jesus had a friend die, he'd cry, which is what he did when Lazarus died. This stuff is simple, but profound," says Haugk. "Sometimes in the church and certainly in society, we're not very good listeners. We tend to talk too much, myself included. We have to learn to bite our tongue and listen more. It takes discipline."

First Congregational has several of these disciples. They are Stephen Leaders: Don Streibig, Reggie Cannon, Margene Whittenburg and Duan Cannon; and Active Stephen Ministers: Ruth Allred, Sarah Giffen, Melody Leidheiser, Marilyn Minter and Virginia O'Neill.

Feel free to approach any of these dedicated souls as you face the different transitions in your lives. They are here to serve you, the members of First Congregational Church.

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.

Marriages

Becky Ackford and Troy Magaw – November 6

Gift Baskets Available for Holidays

Wonderful holiday gift baskets containing Fair Trade coffee, tea and/or cocoa will be created by Sandra Geronimo and offered for sale at the Fair Trade table. The baskets would be a lovely gift for a host.

Fellowship Hour Beverage Sales



Coffee and tea sales will be available on December 5 and 19 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 5: Micah
 December 12: Numbers
 December 19: Proverbs
 December 26: Psalms

December Acolyte Schedule

December 5: Jansen Allred
 December 12: Cameron Wade
 December 19: Merry Roach
 December 26: Joe Spofforth
 (Schedules online at www.first-church.org)

Next Newsletter Deadline

Articles Due: Monday, December 6, 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.

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 Chavers.....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 Chavers, John Deliman.....Music, Arts, Heritage/Ast.
 Nancy Loy.....Nominating Chair
 Jordan Knerr.....Member-at-large
 Tom Brownfield.....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 By: Monday, November 22, 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 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