



Chronicle

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF AKRON

Rooted in Christ · Fostering Justice · Celebrating Diversity

**JUNE 2019
SUNDAY WORSHIP**
9:30am - Upper Room
11am - Meetinghouse

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

June 2
Communion Sunday
Teacher and Graduation
Recognition
9:30am & 11am

June 9
Pentecost Sunday
9:30am & 11am
Robert Shriner's Baptism at
9:30am
Amanda Cole's Baptism at
11am

June 16
Trinity Sunday
9:30am & 11am
Michael Lehman offering
special music on the marimba
at 11am

June 23
9:30am & 11am
Anita Rayburn offering special
music at 11am

June 30
9:30am & 11am

NEXT CHRONICLE

Deadline: Friday, June 14
Email Submissions:
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Beloved,

When we moved into our home in West Akron, a member of the church gave us a Macone Clay housewarming gift. It is an artistic plaque with an affirmation that we treasured and displayed and, as one might expect, eventually took for granted and then largely overlooked.

As many of you know, Steven and I recently welcomed two wonderful children into our lives – a foster son (11) and daughter (9). Each night at dinner and bedtime, we say prayers and, in the three months we've been together, we have given God thanks for a lot and also learned the Lord's Prayer, the Serenity Prayer, and the Johnny Appleseed grace. One night before dinner, one of the children suggested: "Let's say the 'we do love' thing!" We couldn't understand what they were talking about until they ran upstairs and came back with the plaque that reads,

In this place
we do love
we do laughter
we do mistakes
we do forgiveness
we do family

Just like our home right now, the church is a place where we are constantly blending together from our different origins, our different lives, our different hopes and hurts, into one family. This makes it so much more important for us to understand why we come together and for us to share values of grace and forgiveness, to listen to one another deeply and respond to God's call in our lives and world. Indeed, the church is a place where we do love, laughter, mistakes, forgiveness, and ultimately become a family. Let's embrace this simple message on a beautiful plaque as we continue to forge our life together as a church family.

Grace and peace,

Nanette

New Ways of Ministry

As you are no doubt already aware, at our Annual Meeting the congregation approved the reorganization of our First Church ministries for the 2019-20 church year.

And that's all it is – a reorganization. The ministries are alive and well, just operating a little differently.

For many years, the church has struggled to fill the 76-90 Board positions. So we are trying something a little different to attempt to get more people involved in the variety of ways that First Church makes a difference in people's lives inside and outside of our church walls.

The bottom line for many congregants is that one can get involved in direct ministry without having to attend monthly meetings, or make a two or three year commitment.

At the same time, there is important work to be done by the Boards: Building & Grounds, Stewardship & Finance, Membership, Human Resources and Nominating – and the church still needs people to step up.

So my message to you, dear reader, is – get involved. For it is in giving that we truly receive. I believe that faith without works is empty. So follow this link to make a difference in your life: www.surveymonkey.com/r/NLTFB9T

Submitted by: Larry Becker, Moderator

Summer Sunday Mornings

Please note that Church School will not be meeting over the summer. Classes will resume again with the start of the new program year. Beginning June 2, our children's programs will be following a new schedule:

9am-12:15am: Early Morning Childcare for age 4-7 is available on the 2nd floor.

9am-12:15pm: Nursery care (infants and toddlers ages 3 and under) is available on the 2nd floor.

9:30am Worship: Children and youth are invited to attend worship with their families. There is an activity carpet available in the worship space.

11am Worship: Children and youth are welcome to attend worship with their families. The Family Room at the rear of the Meetinghouse is also available for your use and is equipped with toys, toddler furniture, a changing table, a rocking chair, and has access to a restroom.

Get Social!

First Church is on social media! Have you “liked” our Facebook page? You can find us at **FCCofAkron**. We will keep you up-to-date with the latest news and events, so be sure to visit our page. Prefer Twitter? Follow **1stChurchAkron** or **#FirstChurchAkron**.

Goin' Green

Have you noticed our new cups in Fellowship Hall? First Church has committed to going green with our kitchen food serving products. Compostable cups, plates, bowls and cutlery will soon be the norm as we work down our existing inventory. Remember, you can survive without plastic, but you can't survive without clean water! Join us as we do our part!



Earth Saving Ideas

Are you still working on your spring cleaning? Have you ever considered making your own cleaning solutions? A lot of the time, store bought products are full of chemicals that are both harmful to your health, your pets, and when washed down the drain, can contaminate soil and waterways. To help decrease the size of your carbon footprint, consider a simple DIY for household cleaners!



In a spray bottle, mix:

- 1 part water (distilled is best)
- 1 part white vinegar
- 12-15 drops of essential oil (optional)

The essential oil gives a great smell; try out lavender or lemon! Spray the solution onto a soft towel to clean everything from toilets, clogged drains, soap scum and hard water stains to denim and yoga mats! If you omit the essential oil, you'll lose the refreshing scent, but can also use this solution as a glass cleaner.

However, because of the acidic nature of vinegar, you should avoid stone surfaces, such as marble and granite, metal, wood, as well as egg messes, as the vinegar will make the egg congeal into a bigger mess. Those types of surfaces are better off with plain soap and water.



If you have some particularly stubborn patches in the bathroom, there is another simple, but powerful, DIY:

In a spray bottle, combine:

- 1 part white vinegar
- 1 part blue Dawn dish soap

Coat your tub or shower with the spray and let it stand for 15 minutes. If you have severe soap scum, leave the mixture on overnight. When your time is up, scrub your shower with a sponge and rinse thoroughly to reveal your brand new clean.

Akron Fire Summer Camp

This summer, First Church is hosting the inaugural year of Akron Fire Summer Camp. Youth who have completed grades 1-5 are invited to spend a week with the creative arts. From singing and dancing, to theatre performance, arts and crafts, and yoga, there will be opportunity for everyone to learn a new skill and build on a new talent.

Akron Fire will be held June 24-28, from 8:30am-4pm Monday-Friday, starting with breakfast in the Fellowship Hall and breaking out for a day of fun! The cost for the whole week is \$25 per camper, which also includes breakfast and lunch and an Akron Fire t-shirt.

If you have any children in your life that are looking for something fun and inspiring to be a part of this summer, please register today for Akron Fire. Applications are online at akronfcc.org/akronfire and will be accepted up until the start of camp if space allows. They can be submitted in the church office to Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator.

Seeking volunteers!

To help make Akron Fire a success, we are seeking help from volunteers! Some of the jobs include helping Debbie Riley in the kitchen, assisting Lead Teachers in the classroom, and organizing parent drop-off and pick up. We are open to new ideas, so if you would like to share your time and talents with Akron Fire, please contact Associate Minister Antigoné Lowery at antigone.lowery@akronfcc.org or at 330.780.8122.

Consultant Update

Dr. Mark Chupp and Kathleen McDonnell, from the Community Innovation Network of Case Western Reserve University, have begun working with us to help us assess key issues within our congregation that we need to address. In this first phase of their six months with us, they have started listening to members of the congregation through personal interviews and will soon be circulating a survey to the entire church to gain your perspective. They have also started meeting with a working group of diverse members from our congregation: Ruth Ann Allison, Logan Baez, Beth Cooper, Jay Hershey, Kellie Ramirez, Sarah Vradenburg, Larry Becker, and Rev. Nanette Pitt.

If you would like to reach out to either consultant, Mark can be reached at mark.chupp@case.edu or 216.368.5157, and Kathleen can be reached at kathmcdonnell@aol.com or 216.789.9265.

The goal of the six-month period of consulting is to strengthen and unify our congregation and increase understanding between members who may hold different points of view. Kathleen and Mark will use their skills to deepen the quality of our communication in order to help us create agreements that will value everyone in our congregation.

Once, the listening process is complete, they will make recommendations, which will be made available to all church members, about how we can strengthen our unity and pursue balanced growth and mission development in the years ahead.



More Recycling Updates:

In the past few weeks, a new policy has been set for the church dumpster and recycling bins: they are now to be locked as a safety precaution to avoid uninvited dumping or people sleeping in them. Members are welcome to use the dumpsters; on Sundays, they will be unlocked for your easy access. During the week, if you need access for any reason, there is a key in the front office. Please speak to a staff member for access. Kindly do not leave any recycling or trash outside the dumpsters. Thank you.



Edge Academy Field Day

On May 20, First Church hosted a field day activity for Edge Academy students in kindergarten and first grade. While at First Church, the students were given a tour of the garden, free time to enjoy the playground, and they participated in a garden relay race led by Associate Minister, Antigoné Lowery. There was laughter, games, and most of all fun! Special thanks to Edge Academy P.E. teacher and First Church attendee, Ruth Chapman, for helping to make the event a success. We look forward to partnering with Edge Academy in the future!

June Garden Updates

Many thanks to all who helped make the plant sale fundraiser on May 25 & 26 a success! We are very grateful to have the support of our community and to provide a service for the community in turn. The funds raised will enable us to continue to grow fresh produce for the First Church Food Pantry and provide employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to traditional employment. After three months of seed starting, record keeping, transplanting, watering, and careful tending, it's hard to believe that the plants are all either sold, donated, or in the ground now.

It's time to switch gears into market season! Starting June 18, the Feed My Sheep Garden crew will be vending every Tuesday from 4-7pm at the Summit Lake Neighborhood Farmers' Market. The Summit Lake Market serves as a fresh food access point in the city, featuring small-scale growers and local businesses such as Ms. Julie's Kitchen and 2 Daughters Tea Company. Shoppers can also enjoy live music, children's activities, and free canoe rides on the beautiful Summit Lake.

If you are interested in volunteering with us at the Farmers' Market or in the garden, please contact me at sam@letsgrowakron.org with your availability. We would love to have you!

Submitted by Sam Phillips, Garden Manager

Mission of the Month

Gennesaret is the June Mission of the Month! Gennesaret is an all-volunteer organization, including its Board of Directors. The Gennesaret mission is to provide interim housing, food, training and support services for those families who are earnestly seeking to improve their lives and living conditions.

If you wish to make a donation, please write your check to First Congregational Church of Akron with "Gennesaret" on the memo line. Thanks!

Love Truck

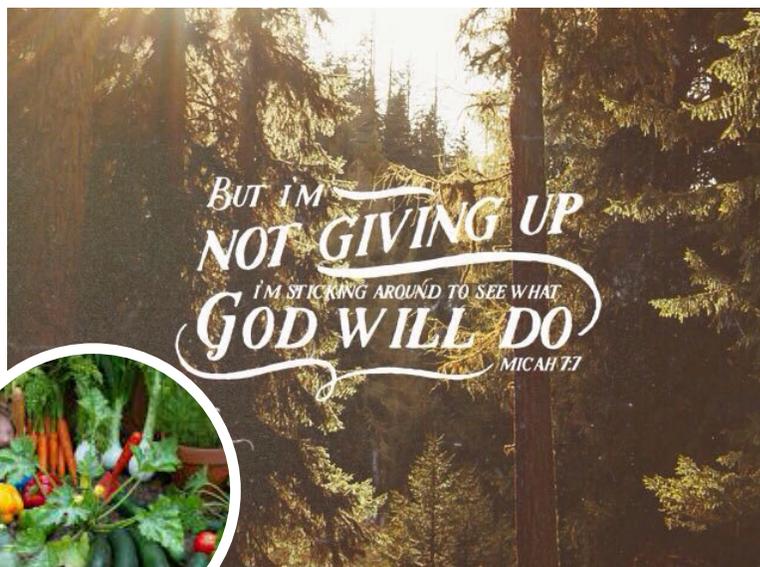
Love Truck is serving on June 29 from 4:30pm-5:30pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Nathan Walder for more information at the.lovetruck@yahoo.com.

Mitzvah Day

You are invited to be a part of Mitzvah Day, or "Tikkun Olam," which is Hebrew for "to commit a moral deed." In 2002, Temple Israel began this tradition in Akron, where area faith organizations come together for a day of caring for the community. This year, Mitzvah Day will be held on June 1 and 2. If you are interested to learn more or participate, please stop by the church office for a brochure.

Saturday, June 1 Projects:

- Angels in Blue Jeans, 8:30am-4pm, family friendly
- Akron Cooperative Farm, 1-4pm, family friendly



- Brookdale Nursing Home, 2-4pm, family friendly
- Gennesaret, 1pm-4pm
- Habitat for Humanity, 9am-3:30pm, 18 years or older
- Nazareth Housing, 8:30am-4pm
- Open M, 9am-11am, family friendly
- South Street Ministries Bike Shop, 10am-1pm,

Sunday, June 2 Projects:

- Advocacy Meeting I, 1pm-3pm
- Advocacy Meeting II, 3:30-4:30pm
- Akron-Canton Food Bank, 9:30am-12pm, family friendly
- Battered Women's Shelter, 1-4pm, family friendly
- Brookdale Nursing home, 10am-2pm, family friendly
- Hospice of Visiting Nurse Service, 11am-2pm, family friendly
- Metro Parks Activity, 1pm-4pm, family friendly
- Project Linus, 12:30-4:30pm, family friendly
- Ronald McDonald Cookies for Kids, 11:30am-12pm, family friendly
- Safe Landing for Boys, 11am-2pm
- Sewing for Haiti, 1-4:30pm
- Pot Luck Dinner, 3-5pm

You can sign up online at www.mitzvahdayakron.com or contact Elizabeth Fesler at feslerdr@gmail.com or 330.836.8089.



Thank you...

Dear First Church [Prayer Blankets Ministry],
My husband was one of the recipients of one of the beautiful blankets given to him at Akron General Hospital on Easter Sunday.

I know you have prayed over it, and it was quite consoling to know when he was having a bad day. He went into Hospice the Tuesday after Easter, and passed May 10. He used that blanket always. Thank you for the lovely blanket and all your kind prayers.

Mason PB&J Thanks You!

We have finished another successful school year providing weekend bags of food for fifty of Mason's neediest students. This would not have been possible without a wonderful group of volunteers: Sue & Chris Godard, Jenni Gray, Linda & Chip Houghton, Becky Moore, Sally & Dave Oneacre, Sally Reed, and Beth & Cal Robertson. We also want to acknowledge the generous monetary and food donations from church members, friends, and grants. Many thanks also to those who donated new or gently used books. The children enjoyed selecting a book or two to take home every week.

From Elizabeth Fesler & Mary Ann Gray, PB&J co-chairs

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Victoria and Nathan Alexander on the baptism of their son, Luke Carter Alexander, on May 26.

Congratulations to Amanda Cole for entering the sacrament of baptism on June 9. Amanda is an active member of the First Church community.

Congratulations to Robert Shriner on his baptism on June 9. Robert is a volunteer from the Food Pantry.



In Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers are with Nanci Self on the passing of her brother, Robert W. Self, on May 18. A memorial service will be held on Friday, June 7 at Hummel Funeral Home in Akron, with Pastor Nanette officiating.

In Our Prayers

Duane Angel, Kathy Berg, Karen Foley, Jessica Fox, Barbara Hansford, George Kostan, Bill Rodefer, Jean Trawick, Joan Tousley, Art Wallach, and Doug Weyrick.



Seasonal Recipes from the Archives

Over the years, First Church has published many recipe books. Each month, we'll share a recipe from the archives celebrating the submissions made by church members.

Banana Split Dessert

Submitted by Gladys I. Gustely

Ingredients:

- 3 cups of coconut
- 1/3 cup of melted butter
- 2 cups of powdered sugar
- 2 sticks of soft margarine
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla
- 2 cups of crushed pineapple, drained well
- 4 large bananas
- 1 large container of Cool Whip

Directions:

- Put coconut and melted butter
- into a skillet on low; brown and toss with a fork. Press the mixture into a 9x13 inch pan. Place margarine, powdered sugar, eggs, and vanilla into a mixing bowl and beat on high for two minutes. Put filling into the crust and spread. Spread the crushed pineapple on top; slice the banana and arrange evenly on top. Add Cool Whip;



Food Insecurity at Home

In 2019, the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank released Feeding America's Meal Gap Report. The findings indicate that 14.9 percent, or almost 81,000, of the Summit County population are food insecure. Children are more likely to be food insecure, with a child food insecurity rate of 19.3 percent in the Foodbank service area. Food insecurity is a measure defined by the USDA as lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members.

The Food Pantry has provided food for almost 48,000 meals in January through April of this year to those who visit the Food Pantry and are income eligible to receive food assistance based upon current federal poverty guidelines. 33 percent of that was for children and 19 percent for seniors.

Thank you so much to all those who volunteer in the Food Pantry Food Justice Ministry. Thank you for doing your part to help address the meal gap in our community! There have been 72 people who volunteered to help the Pantry through April of this year.

Stewardship/Finance Report (unaudited)				
April 2019 - FINAL				
	April	YTD	YTD Budget	Percent to Budget
INCOME				
2019 Loyalty Campaign	17000	95381	80253	118.85%
Non-pledge Income	9958	22967	16650	137.94%
Special Ministries-incl. Spec. Offer.	8880	11998	16184	74.14%
Endowment, Sprowls Trust, Pollock	45217	182610	186683	97.82%
Other Income	<u>-11196</u>	<u>43434</u>	<u>11603</u>	<u>374.34%</u>
TOTAL	69859	356390	311372	114.46%
EXPENSES				
Total Admin. & Support	6722	17158	33407	51.36%
Total Mission	5694	18649	33824	55.13%
Food Service Expense	1815	6620	6101	108.51%
Personnel	33897	148704	169526	87.72%
Property Expenses	<u>32597</u>	<u>101470</u>	<u>109034</u>	<u>93.06%</u>
TOTAL	80725	292601	351891	83.15%
* All Boards, Pastoral Care & Special Ministries				

Summer "Fill-A-Bag" Project

In an effort to support our neighbors at First Glance and their "Fill-A-Bag" project to help members in the Kenmore community of Akron, First Church members are encouraged to consider making donations of cleaning supplies including cleaners, soaps, and toilet paper and tissues. Other items needed include dry good food items, and meal supplies such as paper plates, plastic cutlery, and garbage bags. Items can be left with Kasey Kalchert in the front office.



Keep Calm and Carry Yarn

In collaboration with the nationwide nonprofit group, Warm Up America!, the Mansfield Correctional Institution formed a new group to help decrease anxiety and stress among inmates. The group meets three times a week to learn to crochet and create winter items to help meet the needs of area homeless and crisis centers. We are seeking donations of yarn to help with their cause! It will be accepted in any form: remnants from other projects, leftovers from crafts, tangled balls- it's all needed! Please drop off your donations in the church office. Thank you!

Habitat For Humanity

Habitat for Humanity in Summit County is starting a new home-building project in Akron. Workdays are Thursday May 30 and Saturday, June 1, starting at 9am. Volunteers are needed for a variety of projects, including providing lunch for at least 8 people. Volunteer forms, waivers, and safety videos are available online at www.hfhsummitcounty.org or you can contact Elizabeth Fesler with questions. Thanks!



Seeking Sponsorship

First Church member Courtney Zimmerman is participating in the Pan Ohio Hope Ride, a 328-mile bicycle ride that benefits the American Cancer Society. Since 2007, the POHR has raised over \$8 million to support the American Cancer Society's missions in Ohio, including research, education, support and Hope Lodges, which provide accommodations for people receiving cancer treatments far from home. Courtney will be riding from Cleveland to Cincinnati as a part of Team MCPc along with over 300 other cyclists, staying at college campuses along the way. To learn more about the ride and support Courtney, please visit <http://main.acsevents.org/goto/czimmerman>.

Community Concert

On June 9, Doug Anderson will be performing at the New Horizons Christian Church at 6pm. The concert is free and open to the public. Following the concert, there will be a meet and greet. A freewill offering will be accepted. New Horizons Christian Church is located at 290 Darrow Road in Akron. You can contact their church office with questions at 330.733.3533.

About Doug:

Doug Anderson is a Grammy-nominated, multi-Dove award-winning singer from Label, Indiana. He tours all over the world to sold out venues as a soloist and member of Cana's Voice. He also traveled and was a founding member of the quartet Ernie Haase & Signature Sound for 13 years. The group was made popular through the Gaither Homecoming Series. His 13 Dove Awards include: Country Album of the Year, Country Song of the Year, and Male Vocalist. He's been a part of two videos and one CD project to attain Gold on Billboard sales. Doug is married to his high school sweetheart, Michele, and they have two daughters, Isabela and Emma.



Sacred Harp

The NE Ohio Sacred Harp Singers invite you to join us for some afternoon hymns! The group will meet on June 2 from 2pm-4pm in the Chapel. All are welcome to attend. Please contact Corey Sees for more information at coreysees@gmail.com.

Canaan Sales

Food products from the Holy Land will be in the Fellowship Hall on June 9 before and after the 11am worship service. If you have questions or are looking for particular items, please contact Carolyn Durway at spicewood@neo.rr.com.

Worship Flowers

First Church requests donations of worship flowers through the summer.

If you would like to honor, celebrate, or remember a loved one, please contact Patty Durkos at 330.253.5109 x110 to see which dates are available and to place an order.



Men's Lunch Bunch

The Men's Lunch Bunch will continue to meet through the summer every Monday at noon in the Fellowship Hall for a brown-bag lunch. All men of the church are invited to attend. After lunch, the group often enjoys an educational segment based on a pre-selected documentary series in the 2nd Floor theatre room. Please sign up in the church office. For more information, please contact Howard Tolley at 330.867.1469.



Guess Who?

Do you recognize the baby in this photo? She's one of your First Church staff members!

If you think you know who is in the picture, email your guess to Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org. Good luck!



Janis Worley was featured last month!

Congratulations to all those who guessed correctly!

Hearing Assistance Devices

If you are in need of a hearing assistance device for the 11am worship service, please stop by the church office. Our devices can connect with the user's personal hearing aid or we can provide an earphone. We ask that users return the devices to the office immediately following worship each week.

Parking at Church

Please remember the upper parking lot nearest to the church building is reserved for disabled drivers on Sundays and the lower lot for those who have mobility challenges.

Parish Nurse Ministry

Blood pressure and diabetes checks will be available on June 16 from 10am - 1pm in the Conference Room.

Volunteer with Summit County

Many seniors in Summit County are unable to manage their own affairs and the Summit County Probation Court is seeking Volunteer Guardians to advocate for them and ensure that their personal and safety interests are being met. To qualify, you must be at least 21 years old to complete an application and background check. Training is provided. The program is a collaboration of community social services that includes Summit County Probation Court, Summit County Public Health, the Department of Job & Family Services, and the ADM Board and the Summit County DD Board. For more information, please visit www.volunteerguardian.com or contact Julie Falter, Volunteer Recruiter with Summit County, at vgpsummit@gmail.com or 330.703.5970.

On Sunday, June 16, come and meet Julie in the Fellowship Hall before and after the 11am service. She will be happy to answer your questions!





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Welcome

First Congregational Church of Akron unconditionally affirms all people as we live out our call to follow Jesus Christ and his teaching of inclusive love.

We welcome people of every race, age, nationality, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, family circumstance, socio-economic status, physical and mental ability, or spiritual background. We invite all who are seeking God's presence in their lives to participate fully in our church life, ministry, and leadership.

We strive to be a safe place, free from the fear of judgment, where wounds can heal, differences are cherished, and inclusivity is intentional. We commit ourselves to the struggle against injustice, discrimination, violence, and hatred, in order to foster a world of peace and wholeness.

God loves you. Christ invites you. We embrace and celebrate you.