



APRIL 2022 • Number 3

# Chronicle

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF AKRON

*Rooted in Christ • Fostering Justice • Celebrating Diversity*



Dear First Church family,

I adapted words I heard Barbara Brown Taylor speak for the prayer I most often say before preaching: “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of each of our hearts be like water and sunlight for the truth you have planted in each of our souls. Amen.”

The simple truth of this is that we, like plants, need certain elements to flourish. The humility, grace, commitment, and, at times forebearance, required to become part of a church community may not be foremost in our minds, if we were listing out the ingredients for flourishing. I firmly believe, however, that just as the seasons of Lent and Easter invite us to acknowledge our own vulnerability and need, so too does a life lived in community in the church. It invites us all, even the most self-sufficient, the most confident, the weathiest, and most erudite, to acknowledge that we are all in need of God’s love, forgiveness, and compassion. From this point of routine humility, we are open to the water, the sunlight, and the soil of God’s nurture. From this place of honesty, we then bless others, not out of our own strength but out of the bounty we accept from God.

Like plants, we can eke out an existence with less or more water, sunlight, or soil but to truly flourish, we need just the right combination.

This month as we move from Lent into Easter, I pray we will invest in the many opportunities First Church offers for our flourishing. Like sunlight, water, and soil, First Church offers a place, alongside other believers and seekers, for us to lean into our own vulnerability, not to wallow in it or be consumed by it, but to find in it the constant reminder that God is the giver of new life. God who is our strength, our redeemer, and our guide.

As we emerge from winter, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic, may we welcome the new creation that Easter promises by sinking our roots into the soil and opening ourselves to the water and sunlight of God’s provision – the blessing of First Church and this faith community.

Blessings,

*Nanette*

# Semi-Annual Meeting Notice

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 7:30pm, ONLINE ONLY

The First Church 2022 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on May 19 at 7:30pm. Individualized arrangements will be made for those who do not have internet access. If this is the case for you, please contact Alex or Janis in the church office.

Register for the meeting at <https://bit.ly/2022-Semi-Annual>. Voting will be done within Zoom, and attendance will be taken via the chat function. You will be able to download the meeting's agenda and other pertinent documents at <https://www.akronfcc.org/semi-ann-2022/> at a later date. The agenda will include the congregation voting on:

1. Slate of Board members and Church Officers
2. Budget for the 2022-2023 fiscal and program year
3. Proposal to offer \$25,000 sponsorship for Sojourner Truth Statue in Akron

If you are unable to attend, you can fill out an absentee ballot. Download the ballot at the link above or pick one up at the church office during normal business hours. Please return absentee ballots by 5pm on May 18.

## 190th Anniversary

Join Kellie Ramirez on an ad hoc team planning the 2023 events that will kickstart our bicentennial planning. Founded in 1833, First Church is Akron's oldest existing church and we will be celebrating our 190th anniversary next year in 2023. We'll hold a few special events in 2023, and again in 2028 for our 195th anniversary, to create awareness and excitement as we prepare for the momentous occasion of our 200th anniversary in 2033. Contact [church@akronfcc.org](mailto:church@akronfcc.org) for more information or to volunteer.



## Easter Paper Lace Banners

The paper lace banners for Easter have been traced and are ready to be cut. Along with the origami, help us cut the banners on Sundays between services and after the 11am service during coffee hour!



## Holy Week

**MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 6:30PM, IN PERSON**

Join First Church members and friends for a service in Fellowship Hall in the style of dinner church as we gather around tables in small groups, sharing a meal and Communion together with relaxed music and space for conversation. This intergenerational service focuses on Jesus' New Commandment accompanied by a reenactment of foot washign that attendees can observe or participate in, as they choose.

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 9AM-NOON, IN PERSON**

The Chapel will be open for personal prayer and meditation.

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 15, NOON, IN PERSON & ONLINE**

Scripture reading and organ music in the Chapel.

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 7:30PM, IN PERSON & ONLINE**

Traditional tenebrae worship in the Meetinghouse. A service that involves the successive dimming of the lights as we contemplate the meaning and power of Jesus death.

## Lenten Origami

All of your origami sculptures are being hung in the Meetinghouse; we hope you'll visit on Sundays to see them on display.

More are welcome to fully flush out this art installation. Write a prayer or something you are cultivating or letting go of this Lent onto a square of paper and then fold away. Instructions are available on our website or join others from the church between services and after the 11am service during coffee hour to create more origami art!

# A NEW CREATION

## Palm Sunday

**APRIL 10, 2022, 9AM & 11AM, IN PERSON & ONLINE**

A joyous and celebratory season that rounds out the season of Lent and ushers in the beginning of Holy Week, join your faith family in welcoming in the Spirit of the Living Christ as we remember the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Each service will feature special music as well as palms and an uplifting message, making meaning of biblical events for our every day lives.

*There is a time for stillness, for waiting for Christ  
as he makes his dancing way toward us.*

*And there is a time to be in motion,*

*to set out on a path,*

*knowing that although God is everywhere,  
and always with us, we sometimes need a journey  
in order to meet God - and ourselves - anew.*

Jan Richardson, The Painted Prayerbook, 2017

## Inquirer's Gatherings & Joining

**LEARN MORE ABOUT FIRST CHURCH THIS SPRING**

On May 15, we will be welcoming members into the congregation. If you would like to explore becoming a member, or maybe just learn about First Church, please join us at noon on Sunday May 1 and Sunday May 8 for our two-part Inquirers' Gatherings. During these meetings, you'll learn more about First Church. On May 1, we'll cover the basics of the Congregational faith tradition and First Church's wider church affiliations. Participants will have an opportunity to meet one another and go on a nooks-and-crannies tour of the building. The following Sunday, May 8, you'll learn more of First Church's history here in Akron, how we function, and what God is calling us to do and be in the world around us. These two events will occur in person in the Upper Room.

Those who wish to will then have the opportunity to covenant in membership on Sunday, May 15, on both the 9am Celebrate and 11am Festival worship services.

## Easter Sunrise Service

**APRIL 17, 2022, 6:30AM, IN PERSON**

Join us on the front lawn of the church for a brief outdoors service to welcome in the dawn of hope, weather permitting, as we begin the day's celebration. Please dress warmly and bring a lawn chair along.

## Easter Sunday Celebration

**APRIL 17, 2022, 9AM & 11AM, IN PERSON & ONLINE**

Join us for our joyous Easter celebrations - New Creation. At 9am for our Celebrate Service and at 11am for our Festival Service. All featuring special music, readings, poetry and an uplifting message! Each service will be followed by an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn for our youngest members and friends.

## Easter Egg Hunts

**APRIL 17, 2022, AFTER 9AM & 11AM WORSHIP, IN PERSON**

After each service on Easter Sunday, we will hold an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn. All children are welcome to participate. We'll gift older children with chocolate and encourage them to help the younger children hunt for eggs. If weather is inclement our hunts will take place in Fellowship Hall. Bring your baskets!

### CANDY DONATIONS

To make the egg hunt a success, we will need donations of candy, individually wrapped, that can easily fit in a plastic egg. Leftover candy will be given out at the Food Pantry the following Tuesday. Donations can be dropped off at the church office during normal business hours.

## Easter Flowers

A wonderful tradition that brings the memory of loved ones into the Meetinghouse every Easter Sunday, flowers for the chancel can be ordered in memory or honor of anyone you choose.

Simply fill out and return the form on page 8 to order your flowers. Flowers can be retrieved after worship on Easter Sunday and taken home with you to decorate your table.

Celebrate your loved ones in a special way this coming Easter Sunday by honoring them with a lovely spring plant in the Meetinghouse.

# Ministry Focus

## Prayer Blankets

For over 12 years, the Prayer Blanket Ministry has been providing comfort and prayers to people in their time of most desperate need. Since beginning, we have given nearly 2,800 blankets to members and friends of First Church and to the Oncology patients at the Cleveland Clinic Akron General Hospital.

Recently, a woman came to our Prayer Blanket meeting in search of a blanket that she could give to her loved one who is very ill. Her husband had received one of our blankets when he was a patient at Akron General two years ago. He has since passed, but she still has the blanket that comforted him. With tears in her eyes, she asked if she might have a blanket that she could give to her loved one. We were in the process of making blankets and had none to give her, but we were able to give her a blanket that was stored in the church office for such a time of need. She was deeply grateful and left a donation for the ministry.

The Prayer Blanket Ministry meets the 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 2pm in the Fellowship Hall.

This is one example of how this ministry reaches people we might never know – giving them a soft blanket that is surrounded in prayer. It touches the lives of patients, their families, the nurses who give the blankets, to those of us making these blankets, and to our pastors who bless them.

If you would like to participate in this ministry, please contact the church office at 330.253.5109 x112. We meet on the 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 2pm in the Fellowship Hall.

If you wish to make a donation to the ministry, please make your check payable to First Church with Prayer Blanket Ministry written on the memo line. Or, donate online at <https://www.akronfcc.org/donate>, selecting Prayer Blankets as the designation. Your donations are most greatly appreciated.

Submitted by Deborah Anderson

## April Mission of the Month

### FEEDING HOPE FOOD PANTRY

Our April Mission of the Month is our own volunteer-run Feeding Hope Food Pantry. The Feeding Hope Food Pantry purchases canned, frozen, and fresh products from the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank (various products are also free). The pantry is also blessed to obtain donations from Giant Eagle (Stow), Walmart (Arlington Road), and Panera (Montrose).

There are other items, primarily for personal care, that are not received from the above organizations and this is where everyone has an opportunity to “give (alms) in secret ... so that your Father who sees in secret (can) reward you.”

The following list contains items that are needed/requested by the food pantry clients. If you can see your way clear to donate any of these items, please place them in the Pantry Donation Box near the Chapel entrance. Thank you, in advance!

Men and women’s body wash, shampoo, and deodorant, bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, shaving cream, new men and women’s socks (no other clothing, please), baby diapers in various sizes, adult Depends in various sizes, medium and large suitcases with wheels, heavy plastic/fabric bags (for carrying groceries), egg cartons, clean plastic peanut butter jars (with screw top lids), and gallon and 2.5gal zip lock bags for pet food.

Are you interested in learning about volunteering for the Food Pantry? Many different jobs at many different times are available. Contact Larry Becker, 330.696.6709, for more information!

In addition to the funds set aside for each of our Missions of the Month, you are encouraged to designate some of your April offerings for this program. Our collective donation benefits these organizations and strengthens our ties to the community.

## Coming Out Christian

On Sunday evenings twice each month, from 6-7pm, members of the LGBTQIA+ community meet together in person to explore Christianity and the possibility of understanding faith in new ways. Please email facilitators Brenda Waddell and Tevin Tietje, [cochristian@akronfcc.org](mailto:cochristian@akronfcc.org), with any questions.





# Children's Ministries

## Faith Formation Youth Groups

### ALTERNATE OPPORTUNITY FOR APRIL

In March, the youth groups gathered for our monthly meeting and together we discussed Lent, Easter, and communion all while baking loaves of bread. It was a joyous time and, hopefully, the families enjoyed eating the bread that their children filled with love and prayers as they kneaded and baked their loaves.

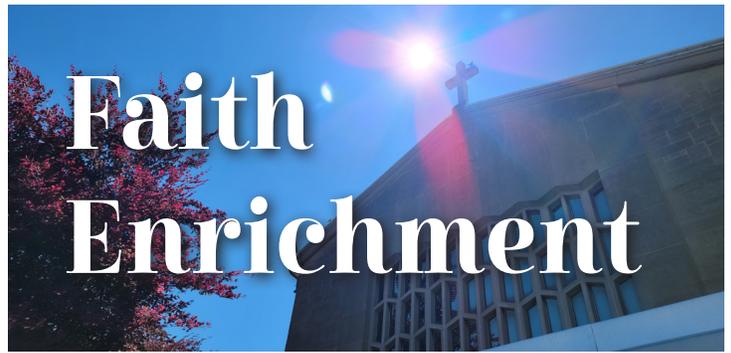
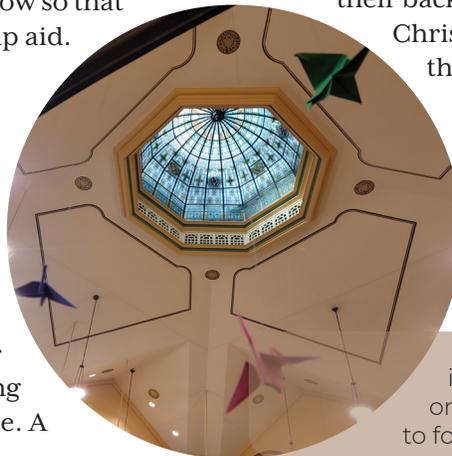
In April, our usual meeting time happens to fall on Easter Sunday, and while there will be an Easter Egg hunt for our youngest members, we will be canceling our normal youth group meeting on April 17. Instead, we will be hosting all of our families by the fireside on April 29 from 7:30pm to 9:30pm. Bring your lawn chairs and join us in the Feed My Sheep Garden for some games, s'mores, and campfire songs as we spend the evening together enjoying the fire and fellowship. Families of all sizes, ages, and variations are welcome and invited to attend. We hope to see you there!

## Register for Camp

Camp registration is still going strong and we would love to help your children attend. Camp is an opportunity to grow in faith, leadership, and friendship with other youth from around the state. Several families have already registered, but we have plenty of room to send more kids as well. You can register online today by visiting <https://www.heartlanducc.org/templed-hills>. Make sure to let Acting Associate Minister Bobby Burttt know so that we can help you receive some campership aid.

## Welcome in Worship

Children are always welcome at both our 9am Celebrate and 11am Festival worship services. After our children's message, which we call 'Thoughts for the Young', children are invited to join Acting Associate Minister Bobby Burttt for a fun activity in a separate space, joining worship again near the end of the service. A family room is also available.



# Faith Enrichment

## Upcoming Opportunities

Current offerings continue through April 10 with a break the next week for Holy Week and Easter. Then two new faith enrichment opportunities begin on Wednesday, April 20, and a virtual offering on Sunday, April 24, and run for six weeks.

### SINGING AND SIGHING ON WEDNESDAY MORNINGS

On Wednesday mornings in the church library, join Bobby for *Singing and Sighing: Studying the Psalms* from 10:45am-noon each week.

### THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

*The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith* by Marcus Borg and its accompanying study guide and DVD by Tim Scorer, will form the basis for our Wednesday evenings with Nanette from 6:30-8pm. The book may be purchased from your favorite bookseller and each week two chapters will be discussed. "With great clarity and pastoral genius, Marcus Borg offers questioning Christians a way to keep the faith without shutting down the search for truth" – Barbara Brown Taylor. At the 6:30pm gathering, a simple dinner of soup and bread will be served in our Fellowship Hall. A vegetarian option will be available if the soup for the evening contains meat.

### THE CHOSEN - A VIRUTAL FAITH ENRICHMENT GROUP

Sunday evenings beginning April 24 we'll continue to offer a virtual opportunity from 7-8pm to discuss the remainder of the TV series *The Chosen* which depicts the life of Jesus through the eyes of those who met him. The production presents a vivid interpretation of biblical characters and their backstories, bringing the life and times of Jesus

Christ to our senses in new ways that spark the imagination and warrant consideration and conversation. If you haven't already, please register for the weekly discussions at [https://bit.ly/Discuss\\_The\\_Chosen](https://bit.ly/Discuss_The_Chosen) and watch the episodes in advance beginning with Season One, Episode 6 "Indescribable Compassion," at [https://bit.ly/Watch\\_The\\_Chosen](https://bit.ly/Watch_The_Chosen).

Lots of origami sculptures have appeared in the Meetinghouse lately. Drop off your origami art anytime or join others on Sundays to fold a beautiful paper creation!

LET'S GROW AKRON & FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

4TH ANNUAL  
**SPRING FUNDRAISER**  
**PLANT SALE**

**MAY 21 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

**MAY 22 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

292 E Market Street Akron, OH 44308

**PREORDER BEGINS MAY 1 - MAY 14**

Preorder will be available through  
Let's Grow Akron Community Farm online Market  
[lets-grow-akron.square.site.com](https://lets-grow-akron.square.site.com)

**VEGETABLE SEEDLINGS! SEEDS! HOUSE PLANTS!**

Call (330) 745-9700 or email [info@letsgrowakron.org](mailto:info@letsgrowakron.org) for further information

## Plant Sale and Makers' Market

The 4th Annual Spring Plant Sale Fundraiser is scheduled for May 21 & 22, 2022 at First Congregational Church of Akron with online preordering available in April at <https://lets-grow-akron.square.site/>. Please save the date and reach out if you are interested in volunteering at the event.

Additionally, on May 21, we will be hosting a Makers' Market where local business owners will be able to sell their products. The table charge is \$25. If you or someone you know may be interested in selling your products at this market, or have any questions, let us know by contacting [church@akronfcc.org](mailto:church@akronfcc.org).

## Garden Renovation

Last June we installed a Memorial Wall – a place where ashes can be buried affordably and loved ones honored. We are grateful to Pastor Nanette for her vision and to the Memorial Wall Committee: Julie and Bill Brandy, Todd Brown, Terri and Jake Cook, Jay Hershey, Judy Nicely, and Sarah Vradenburg.

Members of the committee proposed that the area surrounding the wall be beautified and the garden integrated and landscaped. Seed money was donated and a professional landscape designer consulted.

After much conversation, a design has been drafted that will integrate the three primary areas of the garden – vegetable beds, playground, and Memorial Wall – and create new opportunities with an ADA accessible ramp, compacted gravel pathways, stone seating area for an outdoor classroom or worship space, paved areas for tables and chairs, and a fire pit. Construction will begin this summer.

## Garden Update

Spring is here and we are looking forward to an exciting growing season in the Feed My Sheep Garden! Together we grew over 2,100 pounds of fresh produce for our neighbors and distributed over 8,000 seedlings to local gardeners in 2021; with your help, we will “beet” these records again in 2022!

The Feed My Sheep Garden is open for volunteers and visitors on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings! We welcome volunteers of all ages and abilities for a variety of garden-related tasks; no experience needed. Note that we harvest for the Feeding Hope Food Pantry on Tuesday mornings, while Mondays and Thursdays are general garden work days. All are welcome for occasional visits of any length or to find a routine that works for your schedule. Indoor and outdoor help is needed. Let us know how you'd like to be involved, [sam@letsgrowakron.org](mailto:sam@letsgrowakron.org).

Jonathan, a volunteer from the BraVo! program partnered with First Church through UDS (United Disability Services) loves to help out in the garden!



## Support Biodiversity

### YOU CAN GROW NATIVE PLANTS

Trees, shrubs, vines, annuals, perennials, and more have evolved to coexist with the local climate and geology. As much as they rely on their surroundings, their surroundings rely on them! Adding a productive native plant to your landscape improves your local food web, and supports wildlife.

You can begin introducing biodiversity around your own home in small steps. A good way to start is by planting 'keystone' species. You can find keystone species for your area at <https://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder>. Another step you can take is to remove invasive species. Invasive species tend to spread aggressively, displacing native plants. The local ecosystem doesn't know how to incorporate these invasive species, resulting in food and habitat loss. Find more information on invasive plants at <https://www.oipc.info>. Limit your use of herbicides and pesticides. After all, you are planting these native species to contribute to the local ecosystem; don't deter wildlife from interacting with your plants. These "icides" can harm us and our pets, so always be cautious.



## Senior Minister Recognition

April 24, 2022, 10AM

Spring is here! It is the perfect time to come together for a First Church tradition – recognizing our senior minister at the 5-year mark. Pastor Nanette began her ministry with us in 2015, so she has actually been here for 7+ years (the pandemic delayed this event).

On Sunday, April 24, there will be one combined worship service at 10:00am and afterward we will gather in the Fellowship Hall to recognize and show Pastor Nanette our appreciation for all she has done during her time at First Church. The affair will consist of food, drink (Covid restrictions have been relaxed), and a presentation focusing on notable ways Nanette has served our church and community.

We are collecting pictures, videos, and memories to be included in the presentation. If you would like to share anything, please email it to [church@akronfcc.org](mailto:church@akronfcc.org). Memories can also be brought to the office. Thank you, and we'll see you at this fun and meaningful event!

*Submitted by Jim Gartner, Moderator,  
and Sue Yoder, Vice Moderator*



13<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Akron Area Interfaith  
Council  
**Hunger Walk**  
Sunday, May 1, 2022  
Unitarian Universalist Church  
of Akron  
3300 Morewood Road  
Fairlawn, Ohio 44333

## Hunger Walk

Akron's 13th Annual Hunger Walk is quickly approaching, and First Church will be sponsoring a team of walkers. Benefitting the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank, the annual Hunger Walk is a major contributor to the overall operating budget of the food bank through its usual donation of approximately \$20k. The walk will be hosted at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Fairlawn on May 1, 2022, with the walk starting at 3 pm. There are 1 and 2-mile options for the walk and following the walk, there will be light refreshments like soup, cookies, and beverages.

We are also collecting donations to be added to the First Church Team's contribution. If you would like to help support the First Church Hunger Walk Team and the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank, you can donate on the church website, <https://www.akronfcc.org/donate>, through a designated check, or by designating an envelope with cash to the Hunger Walk.

If you are interested in joining the First Church Team for the walk, please let Acting Associate Minister Bobby Burt know, [bobby.burt@akronfcc.org](mailto:bobby.burt@akronfcc.org). All walkers must have a signed liability release form that can be downloaded at <https://www.akroninterfaith.org/hunger-walk/>. We will be meeting at the UU Church on May 1 between 2pm and 2:30pm.



## Time for Tea

MAY 7, 2022, 11AM-1PM

Bring a special friend and join us for a fun spring tea party! Feel free to wear your Derby hat, (especially if you will be heading on to the Derby party later in the day!) You will enjoy a delicious selection of finger sandwiches and desserts, a few table games, and time to catch up with each other and with friends. No age restrictions for this event – everyone is welcome. Tickets are \$5 per person. Make your reservations now by contacting Congregational Life Coordinator Alex Morris at alex.morris@akronfcc.org or buy your ticket online at akronfcc.org/donate. Have a group of six or more friends and want to make sure you are all at the same table? Reserve a table for only \$10 more!



## Derby Party

MAY 7, 2022, 6PM

It's time to talk Derby! Please join us to celebrate a southern tradition. Don't forget your hats and bowties before joining on May 7 at 6PM for cocktails, southern fare, and the greatest two minutes in sports! Bring a southern dish, appetizer, or dessert to share.

This event is hosted by the Membership Board and will happen at 286 S Rose Blvd, Akron, OH 44278. If you have any questions, please contact Membership Board Chair Toby Liechty-Clifford.

## Sloppy Joes & Bingo

APRIL 22, 6:30PM

Join the Membership Board and the First Church community in our Fellowship Hall for a Bingo Night on April 22 beginning at 6:30pm. All are welcome. Sloppy joes will be served. All are encouraged to bring an appetizer or dessert to share, but if you are unable do not be discouraged, come anyway! Please email [church@akronfcc.org](mailto:church@akronfcc.org) with any questions.

## Pop Tabs to Help Families

Collect your pop tabs and help families who have sick children at Akron Children's Hospital! Drop your tabs off anytime in the church office. Thank you!



# Easter Flowers 2022



Please return this form and \$10.00 per flower to the church office ASAP in order to have an Easter flower in the church on Easter Sunday, April 17.

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

With this donation, the names of those mentioned will be listed in News and Notes on Easter Sunday, April 17.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be present to claim my flower.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish my flowers to go to someone who is sick or homebound.

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

# It's the Little Things

A few weeks ago, we held a ceremonial ribbon cutting to open our new ADA-compliant restrooms. Along with the restrooms, several other projects within the building were completed including new vestibule doors and new doors/opening leading to the food pantry. Within these large projects were many little details which can be easily overlooked, but play an important role in the facility maintenance and use of these spaces.

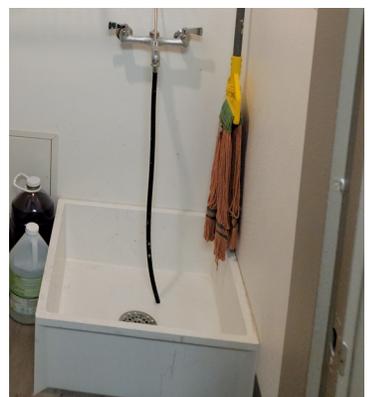
The restrooms were equipped with motion-sensor light switches, to conserve energy. They also include coat hooks so that items do not have to be placed on the floor. The larger, ADA-compliant restrooms also have full length mirrors for those in need, and all have motion-sensor waste baskets for a touch-free experience. We have also included a baby-changing table in one restroom for family needs. Being single-user restrooms, we are also able to identify our new restrooms as gender-neutral.

The new outer vestibule doors contain large, clear glass windows. This increases the safety and security of this area, allowing users to be aware when people are approaching and the door is opening. Both the inner and outer vestibule doors were fitted with a removable astragal (a piece of hardware that is used on a pair of doors to seal the gap between the doors when they are closed). Now, food pantry orders coming in on large carts can more easily maneuver the area as they are not trying to enter the building through a single door width.

Inside the church, the pair of doors leading to the library and food pantry area had its astragal removed, so it is clear sailing for food deliveries from the front entrance all the way to the pantry. Special hinges were added to the inner doors as well as the north food pantry room door. These hinges allow the doors to swing open and away, giving a few extra inches of clearance which can be very necessary at times. Steel corner guards were added to several key turning points between the entrance doors and the food pantry to help protect our walls from nicks and dings from the carts.

When the restroom renovation was underway, and new plumbing was being installed, First Church took the opportunity to make an important change to the utility closet that abuts the restrooms. Originally, it contained a cast-iron sink that was installed in the 1950's that was mounted to the wall at waist height. This made it exceptionally difficult to fill or dump full mop buckets, which wasn't safe for our staff. This closet now sports a floor sink and basin as well as a reconfigured shelving system.

None of these changes are immediately noticeable, but they can, and do, make a big difference in how our spaces are used and will make many jobs much easier as we move forward.



# April Birthdays

## April 3

Logan Dusseau  
Howard Greene

## April 4

Jim Vaughan

## April 6

Betsy Pence

## April 8

Paul Anderson  
Anna Dusseau

## April 11

Stefan Forcey  
Sarah Yeager

## April 12

Ben Speight

## April 14

Joan Tousley

## April 15

Hannah Clemons  
Victoria Leach  
Rich Moore

## April 19

Jordan Ledger

## April 22

Maurine Speight

## April 24

Karen Nixon

## April 26

Glenn Baughman

## April 28

Marcia McCarthy

## April 29

Barbara Skidmore

## Stewardship/Finance Report (unaudited)

Actual Thru February 2022

	February	February YTD	YTD Budget	Percent to Budget YTD
<b>INCOME</b>				
Pledge Income	\$6,886	\$75,099	\$127,500	58.9%
Non-pledge Income	\$14,800	\$93,797	\$69,721	134.5%
Grant Income	\$1,965	\$198,671	\$3,375	5886.6%
Food Pantry	\$1,967	\$21,785	\$21,750	100.2%
Other Special Ministries	\$331	\$2,701	\$2,475	109.1%
Endowment, Sparrows Trust, Pollock	\$42,609	\$432,643	\$453,781	95.3%
Rental and Food Service Income	\$740	\$15,341	\$19,500	78.7%
Other Income	-\$10,885	-\$1,819	\$15,337	-11.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$58,412</b>	<b>\$838,217</b>	<b>\$713,440</b>	<b>117.5%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Personnel	\$34,952	\$344,431	\$412,246	83.5%
Admin and Mktg	\$2,057	\$37,887	\$39,450	96.0%
Membership Board	\$0	\$5,603	\$5,745	97.5%
Governing Board	\$52	\$4,349	\$6,125	71.0%
Food Pantry	\$844	\$5,380	\$17,063	31.5%
Other Special Ministries	\$848	\$7,037	\$10,065	69.9%
Congregational Care	\$532	\$3,785	\$5,250	72.1%
Worship	\$3,995	\$24,803	\$21,162	117.2%
Fellowship Team	\$0	\$160	\$450	35.5%
Christian Education	\$0	\$1,136	\$5,134	22.1%
Development Team	\$0	\$231	\$150	154.0%
Food Service Expense	\$442	\$8,206	\$9,000	91.2%
Property Expense	\$24,280	\$419,365	\$368,975	113.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$68,002</b>	<b>\$862,372</b>	<b>\$900,815</b>	<b>95.7%</b>
Net Income/Loss	-\$9,590	-\$24,154	-\$187,375	12.9%

## Giving is Good for Your Health!

Giving is good...and here are five ways it pays to be generous:

1. Giving adds pleasure to your life – your brain likes it when you give! A study by researchers showed that those who were frequently generous exhibited a low stress response, as well as more activity in the brain’s “reward center”.
2. Giving may increase brain volume – studies have shown that giving to others can diminish the effects of aging on the brain, and in some cases, brains actually grew larger in size.
3. You may live longer (and live better!) Giving back adds satisfaction to your life, which improves brain health and helps increase your connections to others.
4. Time seems more plentiful. It’s a common excuse, “I just don’t have time to give back”. But studies have shown through a series of experiments that people who helped others felt that they had more time than those who didn’t.
5. You feel happier. Acts of kindness not only produce endorphins and serotonin (good for reducing anxiety and depression), but also the feel-good hormone oxytocin which can lower blood pressure, make you happy and improve your self-esteem.

At First Church there are many ways you can give – contact Congregational Life Coordinator Alex Morris, [alex.morris@akronfcc.org](mailto:alex.morris@akronfcc.org), to learn more about volunteer opportunities, or Finance and Operations Manager Janis Worley, [janis.worley@akronfcc.org](mailto:janis.worley@akronfcc.org), to learn more about financial giving opportunities. Now’s your chance – c’mon, get happy!



## Seasonal Recipes from the Archives

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

### Nine-Day Slaw

Submitted by Chris Becker

#### Ingredients:

- 1 med. cabbage, shredded
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 c. vinegar
- 1 c. oil
- 2 T. salt
- 2 T. sugar

#### Directions:

Mix together vegetables and 2 cups of sugar. In a small pan, combine remaining ingredients and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Pour over cabbage mixture at once and allow to cool. Store in a jar or covered container in the refrigerator for at least one day before serving.



### In Gratitude

Thank you so much for your donation to Limitless Ambition! This gift will help us to continue to make an impact in the lives of young girls in our community! We really appreciate the support!

*Alicia Robinson, Founder, Limitless Ambition*

Thank you so for all the goodies that have come to our door during this trying time.

*Corinne and David Zinader*

Because of your generosity, we are able to further our mission in bettering the lives of nearly 200,000 people who we serve annually through our programs. Thank you!

*Mark Frisone, Executive Director, Family & Community Services*

Dear First Church family,

Many thanks for all of the inquiries and prayers as Steven has been writing his dissertation. The 300-page work, titled "Unsettling the Settler Colonial Imagination: Decoloniality as a Theological Hermeneutic in South Africa?" is now complete and we invite your prayers as he defends it on April 1 at 2pm at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN.

*With grateful thanks for your ongoing support,  
Nanette and Steven*

### In Sympathy

We offer heartfelt condolences to Joanna Gartner and the family of her sister, Theresa Frazier, who passed away on February 4, to the family of Duane Peterson who passed away on March 4, and to Jeanine Carroll and the family of her sister, Diane Bell, who passed away on March 8.

### In Our Prayers

In our First Church community, we pray for Antigone P., Art W., Barbara S., Betty S., Bill F., Callahan H., Duane P., Elizabeth V., Joan L., Karen F., Margaret P., Margaret P., Michael L., Mildred A., Patti N., Paulette J., and Rick T.

*If you have any questions about those listed, would like to add a name, or would like to share a celebration or condolence with the First Church community, please email Acting Associate Minister, Bobby Burt, at [bobby.burt@akronfcc.org](mailto:bobby.burt@akronfcc.org).*

## Welcome Kayla Dukes

### AV TECHNICIAN

Kayla Dukes is a recent graduate of Kent State University. She received her bachelor's degree in Digital Media Production. She looks forward to bringing her skills, creative mind, and positive attitude to our church and its members.



Kayla, a single mother of two, has a passion for filmmaking and hopes to one day make her dream come true of having her name in the credits of a feature film. She is excited to work with the First Church community, helping to record and distribute Sunday services online to allow everyone in our community and beyond access First Church's message and worship of God.

Kayla will work alongside Alex Morris, our Congregational Life Coordinator who doubles as the Lead AV Technician, to manage our online services.



*Rooted in Christ · Fostering Justice · Celebrating Diversity*



## New Restrooms Now Open!



After months of construction dust, and with great anticipation, our new ADA-compliant restrooms are now available! A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held after worship on March 6, and some of our young members enjoyed being the “first flush”!