



Chronicle

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

Rooted in Christ · Fostering Justice · Celebrating Diversity

NOVEMBER 2018 SUNDAY WORSHIP
9:30am - Upper Room
11am - Meetinghouse

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

November 4
All Saints & Loyalty Communion Sunday
9:30am & 11am
In the Hand of God
Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-4
Revelation 21:1-6a

November 11
9:30am & 11am
Eternal Trust
Psalm 146
Mark 12:38-44

November 18
Thanksgiving Sunday
11am only
Bring a True Heart
Hebrews 10:11-14, 15-18, 19-25
Worship will be followed by a dinner, please see page 3

November 25
9:30am & 11am
You Say I Am
Revelation 1:4b-8
John 18:33-37

NEXT CHRONICLE

Deadline: Mon. Nov. 12
Email Submissions:
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Beloved,

As we approach this Thanksgiving season, I have been praying about the word “appreciation.” Hearts filled with appreciation move quickly and easily to thanksgiving and it spreads within communities. As Voltaire wrote: “Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”

In church revitalization there is a mode of organizational development called appreciative inquiry, which is a strength-based approach to organizational change that asks constructive questions and builds shared values and vision. While we know for a fact that we can only practice Congregationalism with engaged stakeholders, I would also offer that the *manner* of our engagement is of equal, if not greater, importance as it determines the spirit of our community.

As I’ve shared with you before, my favorite holiday is my newest! This North American tradition of Thanksgiving is wonderful and I love it as a metaphor for the church – gathered around the table, making sure all are fed, and appreciating the people and blessings in our lives. We take the day with its feast to honor life’s strengths. That’s not to say we aren’t still aware of the places where growth is needed!

I ask us this Thanksgiving, to reflect on how we might choose to make appreciation and appreciative inquiry more a part of the spirit of our church community so that, as we engage, we ask one another more questions, talk more about the decisions we assume another person has made, and ask them about the motivation and experiences that led to particular actions. While often it may seem politically incorrect to broach these conversations directly, this is the only way we can share values and build common vision. Through honest dialogue we are in fact communicating our faith in that person’s commitment to our community, as well as our appreciation for all they give and for the relationship you have and are building with them. It says, “I see the value in you so much so that I want to know you better and invest with you.”

We are a strong and vibrant community and that strength always relies on our nurturing the relationships we have through our appreciative inquiry and engagement with one another – an act of our thanksgiving.

With abiding appreciation,

Nanette

From the Moderator

As I expect most of our readers know, Alcoholics Anonymous was founded right here in Akron, Ohio. Step 11 of the famous 12 Step Program is applicable to any program of faith development, particularly in our Congregational tradition.

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out."

First Church is a busy place and I suggest that we are actively putting Step 11 into practice through ACTION. Consider...

As a faith community we make an IMPACT...

- In large part due to our collaboration with Let's Grow Akron, over 2,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables were harvested from our Feed My Sheep Garden this year – a 70% increase!
- Debbie and Clay Canfield estimate that our choice Food Pantry will serve nearly 100,000 meals in 2018 – a 40% increase!
- Our association with Mason CLC continues to benefit children through the PB & J Program and providing coats, gloves and Christmas gifts to children who might not have any of those were it not for your generosity.
- The church continues to provide scholarships in Ecuador – and has for over 20 years – where education is inexpensive, but beyond the reach of the majority of the indigenous people.

Your pledges and gifts help make all this and much, much more possible.

On Loyalty Sunday, November 4, members and friends of First Church have the opportunity and the privilege of putting their faith into action by prayerfully making a financial commitment to continue to expand the ministries of our faith community.

I pray that Loyalty Sunday is more for you, dear reader, than simply making a financial commitment. Jesus spoke of how difficult it is for a wealthy person to enter heaven. But as Pastor Nanette shared in her sermon on October 21, Jesus is speaking of the person's heart not their pocketbook.

"But when you give alms do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4

So as 2018 is drawing to a close, I invite you to consider your blessings, whatever they may be, and compare your life with others throughout the world. A house, freedom to worship, good loyal friends, food in the refrigerator, a car, safety driving home...

We are truly blessed. How will you give thanks to God this year?

Larry Becker, Moderator

Loyalty and All Saints Sunday

November 4 is All Saints and Stewardship Sunday. At both worship services on the 4th, we will honor the legacy and loyalty of many who have blessed and touched our lives with love. On this day, the church will also welcome our pledges for the 2019 fiscal budget year. Please join us for this annual event as we celebrate the joy of supporting the mission and ministries of First Church. In the 11am service, as is our tradition, you are invited to pick up and wear a colored ribbon corresponding with the year you began attending or joined the congregation. Then, during the service, you'll be invited to bring your pledge forward during the singing of hymns. After worship, please plan to join the community in the Fellowship Hall for a mashed potato bar and salad luncheon.

We are seeking volunteers to help with clean-up after lunch. If you are willing to help out, please sign up in the church office or contact Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator, at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org or by calling 330.253.5109.



Open M Christmas Baskets

Fifty years ago, First Church was a founding church of OPEN M. Since then, we have supported their efforts to make life easier for people in need of kindness and caring.

Open M is collecting food and household products for 210 Christmas baskets. First Church is responsible for paper towels! Please bring single packages of paper towels to the Church office by November 25.

Any questions see or call Chris and Sue Godard at 330.699.0509. Thank you so very much!

Food Pantry Update Chicken in Every Pot Until Nov. 25

Help the Food Pantry provide clients a chicken for their holiday meals. A \$5 donation will help buy one chicken. The campaign will end on November 25. To make a donation, there are envelopes in the pews or you can write your check payable to First Congregational Church with "Chicken in Every Pot" written on the memo line. Thank you!



Thanksgiving Sunday

Thanksgiving Sunday is November 18! There will be one worship service held this day at 11am in the Meetinghouse. Following worship, please join us for the annual Thanksgiving dinner in the Fellowship Hall.

A traditional Thanksgiving dinner will be served, with options for those with dietary restrictions, including lactose and gluten-free meals as well as a vegetarian option. Please RSVP on the church website at: <http://www.akronfcc.org/thanksgiving-sunday/>

We need volunteers for a successful event! If you are interested, please sign up in the church office or contact Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator, at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org or 330.253.5109, ext. 112.



Breakfast With Santa

Breakfast with Santa is Saturday, December 8. Children and adults alike are invited to First Church for a pancake breakfast and a morning of fun activities, including meeting Santa Claus. Breakfast is served from 9-11am.

We are seeking elf volunteers to help in the kitchen, serve, and clean up at this event. Any interested holiday elves, can contact Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator at 330.253-5109 ext. 112 or email kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org or sign up in the church office! Thank you!



Guess Who?

Can you tell which First Church staff member this baby grew up to be?

If you think you know, email Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator, at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org! A prize will be awarded to the first person to guess correctly! Good luck!



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Christmas Poinsettias 2018

Please return your completed form with payment to the church office by December 2, 2018.

Cost per plant: \$8

Total number of plants:

Total amount enclosed: \$

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

The Sunday Bulletin on December 16 will list the names of those being remembered and honored.

Please be sure to pick up your poinsettias after the Christmas Eve Service on December 24 -- or on December 28 when the church reopens.

Ordered by: _____

Phone: _____

**Please make your checks to First Church with "Christmas Poinsettias" on the memo line.*

The Garden Season Ends

As the garden is cleaned out and the frost is settling in to stay, we are busy preparing for 2019. We've planted next year's garlic and a new crop of strawberries that will produce for years to come. We have repaired our garden beds, amended our soil, cut back perennials, and pruned our fig and mulberry trees. Cover crops are coming in well, providing nutrients and structure to the soil. Duane has been hard at work on our garden plan for next year.

We would be remiss if we didn't stop to reflect on a wonderful season. This season we were able to increase our harvest by 70% from last year. At the time of this writing, over 1,200 pounds of produce were distributed to local families through the Food Pantry and 870 pounds were sold at the farmers' markets. While I believe these numbers reflect hard work and careful planning, the true successes are the relationships built, the skills gained, and the memories shared.

High points include our first field trip to the Minority, Women, and Small Farmers' Conference back in April, the mad rush of planting seedlings in May, and hosting Mitzvah Day in June, when it started pouring rain on our volunteers. In July, one of our Future Story women gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, and in August we visited Seasons Micro Farm in Kent to tour their operation and learn about running a small backyard farm business. September brought the peak of tomato harvest, and in October, one of our program participants and I attended the Hands On Sustainability Conference right here at First Church, which included a case study on our rainwater catchment system and hands-on workshops in the garden. The Future Story participants, Jamie and Kelly, graduated from their program on Tuesday, October 23 with a small celebration in the garden.

I would like to thank Duane Husted for all his hard work, for sharing his extensive knowledge of the Feed My Sheep garden, and for being willing to learn new things this season as well. Many thanks as well to the staff, leadership, and congregation of First Church for supporting the partnership with Let's Grow Akron that brought me to the most rewarding job I've ever had. Thanks for sharing your garden with me. It's been a great season and I will see you all next year!

Sam Phillips, Garden Manager

2019 Offering Envelopes Available

If you've requested 2019 offering envelopes, you can find them on the Welcome table in the front foyer of the Meetinghouse.



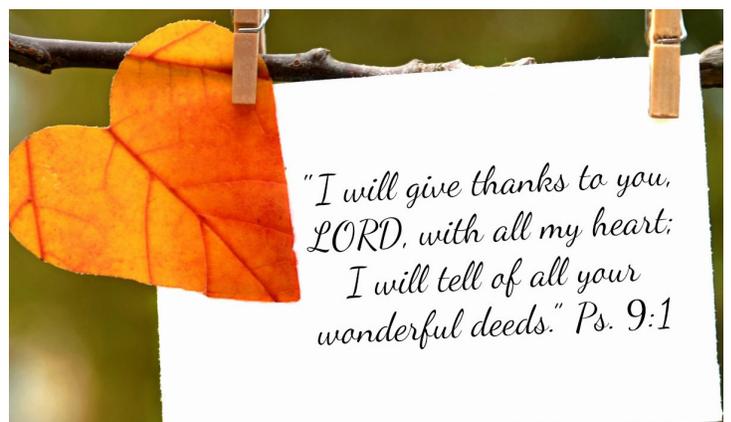
Mission of the Month

The Outreach Board selects the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund

The November Mission of the Month is the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund. In years past, First Church supported what was then called "Veterans of the Cross." This annual gift supports both retired and active clergy and lay employees of the wider church, who are in need of financial support. To make a donation, please write your check to First Church with "UCC Christmas Fund" written on the memo line. Thank you.

Mission of the Month Updates

Our September Mission of the Month, Harvest Home, received a combined donation, collected from the congregation and the Outreach Board contribution, totaling at \$600! Thank you for your support!



Mason CLC Family Sponsorship Sunday, November 11, 2018

For the sixteenth year, First Church is reaching out to the children at Mason Community Learning Center. There will be several opportunities for you to make a child smile:

Coats: Select an ornament from our Coat Tree. Each pink and blue coat ornament will have a specific size and family code to identify the Mason family children who are in need of a winter coat. Please attach the ornament to your gift before placing it in the designated coat box.

Toys: Select an ornament from our Toy Tree, and you will be helping to make a Christmas wish come true for a Mason child. You can leave your gift under the Toy Tree in the Fellowship Hall, marked with the ornament.

Family: Our Mason Family Book will be available for your consideration in the Fellowship Hall. From the book, you can select a family in need and provide the children with specifically requested gifts.

Clothing: Ornaments on the Clothing Tree will be available to provide basic clothing needs of socks, uniform pieces, and underwear to the Mason CLC school population. Please attach your ornament to your gifts when returning the donations to the tree.

Please bring your purchased coat, toy, family items, or clothing to the church NO LATER than December 2. Monetary gifts will be gladly accepted. Please make checks out to the First Church with "Mason CLC" on the memo line. If you have any questions, please contact Maggie Grigsby at 234.369.9261 or the church office at 330.253.5109.



Hanging of the Greens

The Diaconate Board is seeking volunteers to help decorate for the Christmas season! Join us on November 27 for the annual Hanging of the Greens. A pizza dinner will be served at 5:30pm and decorating begins at 6pm. Please sign up in the church office to participate!

This is a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday spirit and get the season off on the right foot - recognizing the "evergreen" presence of God in Jesus Christ. Come and join us as we decorate our Meetinghouse together and anticipate Advent.

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.

Mother Kate Hibbard's Pumpkin Pie Filling

Submitted by Bet Godard. The Hibbard Family is one of the founding families of First Church.

- Ingredients:**
- 2 eggs, beaten
 - 1 cup of milk
 - 1 ½ cup of pumpkin puree
 - ½ cup of sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon of salt
 - ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon
 - ¼ teaspoon of ginger

- Mix all ingredients together thoroughly and bake in a rich pie shell. Bake for 10 minutes in 400° oven; reduce heat to 300° and continue baking for 25 minutes.

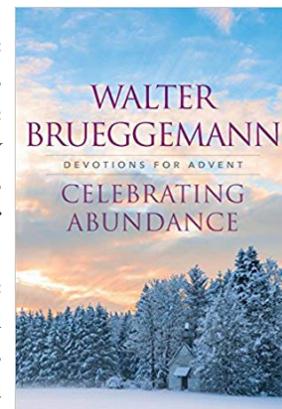


First Church Reads Advent Devotional

This Advent season we will be reading Walter Brueggemann's *Celebrating Abundance*, a collection of daily devotionals for Advent compiled by Richard Floyd.

Floyd writes in the introduction: "Advent is a time for telling the truth - the truth of our weariness and our anxiety, yes, but also the truth of the relentless generosity of God, which opens up futures that seem to be shut down. Walter Brueggemann is a persistent truth-teller, and his sermons invite us to consider the newness and abundance of God that is always already breaking into our settled lives. If Advent is also a time for waking up, consider Walter an indefatigable alarm clock."

Walter Brueggemann is William Marcellus McPheeters Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, he is the author of dozens of books. Copies of *Celebrating Abundance* are available from the church office beginning in November for a donation of \$10, or may be sourced from your favorite bookseller.



Wednesdays at First Church

Wednesdays offer great opportunities for fellowship, exploration, relaxation, conversation, and faith formation at First Church.

Morning Bible Study

Beginning on November 7, 10:45am-noon and lasting through the Advent season, Pastor Nanette will be sharing the thoughts raised by Marcus J. Borg in *Days of Awe and Wonder: How to be a Christian in the 21st Century*. Borg offered profound wisdom and inspiration – a new way of seeing and living the Christian life – for believers, students, and lay readers. Ultimately, he taught us that by developing a deeper understanding of Jesus and the New Testament, we can discover a more authentic way of being. Yet Borg himself was always conscious of a greater truth beyond what he could explain: the wonder of God. Attendees do not need to have read the book, although copies are available from your favorite bookseller. Please note that the group will not meet on Wednesday, November 21.

Evening Seekers Group

Until November 14, on Wednesday evenings from 6:45-8:30pm, Pastor Nanette will be facilitating conversations based on the provocative DVD resource, *Living the Questions 2*. The topics of conversation such as Compassion, Transformation, and Mystery, are richly theological while applying very directly to our everyday lived faith. Supplemental reading materials are available for download at www.akronfcc.org/explore-learn/faith. Beginning on November 28, at the same time each Wednesday, through the Advent season, Pastor Nanette will be sharing the thoughts raised by Marcus J. Borg in *Days of Awe and Wonder*, described above. Attendees do not need to have read the book, although copies are available from your favorite bookseller.

Dinner

Through the fall, join us for Wednesday Night Dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6pm. The cost of dinner is \$8 per meal, either paid in advance or at the door. Reservations are required. Please sign up either in person or by calling the church office by 2pm on the Monday prior.



Night at the Movies

If you enjoy thought-provoking, insightful, and entertaining cinema, grab your ticket for Wednesday Night at the Movies at 6:45pm, with discussion to follow. Contact Bernie Babb with any questions at 330.687.0823. We hope you will join us for a fun evening in the 2nd floor Theatre Room!

Join us for a feature film on Nov. 7

Unleashed: After a massive betrayal by her boyfriend, Emma, a brilliant but awkward app designer, moves to San Francisco with her beloved cat and dog in tow. One strange night, by the light of a supermoon, the pets are transformed into full-grown men, forcing Emma to reconsider her outlook on dating, work out her trust issues, and ultimately learn to love herself.

Join us for three short films on Nov. 14

Mr. Connolly has ALS: This documentary chronicles Gene Connolly's final year as principal of Concord High School, where he was known for his nonstop energy and the personal connections he forged with his students, even after receiving a devastating diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS.

Origami: A young boy tries to save his parents' failing marriage by taking them through a treasure hunt to all the most important places in their relationship.

Bunny New Girl: Annabelle arrives for her first day at a new school wearing a homemade rabbit mask. Despite the gentle reassurance of her teacher, her classmates are soon wondering what she is hiding.

Join us for a feature film on Nov. 28

Losing Sight of the Shore: The extraordinary journey of the brave women who set out to row unsupported across 8,000 miles of the Pacific Ocean, from America to Australia. During their nine months at sea, rowing in pairs in two hour shifts, 24 hours a day, they must overcome the extreme mental and physical challenges. This is a story of perseverance, friendship and the power of the human spirit.



Prayer Blanket Ministry

Our Prayer Blanket Ministry is now in its eighth year and is on track to make their 1,500th blanket before 2018 is over!

This ministry was established in memory of David and Gwen Crow, using memorial funds donated to the church following David's passing in 2010. David had received a prayer blanket shortly before he passed and it brought him great comfort and peace. Seeing the remarkable results from this simple act of kindness, Deborah Anderson was moved to create this ministry to bring warmth, comfort, hope and peace to others in their time of need or in times of celebration and joy.

Each month, on the second and third Tuesday at 3:00pm, the members of the Prayer Blanket Ministry gather in Fellowship Hall to begin their work. Some cut the large rectangles of fleece, some are in charge of cutting the fringe, others tie knots, while still others take the finished blankets to fold and finish with a ribbon, a card, and a prayer. The finished blankets are blessed by Pastor Nanette on the last Sunday of the month during worship, and then they are shared with those in need.

Many of our blankets are sent to the Akron General Oncology department, to be passed out as needed by the nurses. One nurse wrote us, *"This is where people are their most vulnerable. They are not only stripped of their possessions, but also their strength and dignity."* Our blankets make a difference she shared, *"How is it then that the gift of a prayer blanket affects them so strongly? ... It is the human touch. It is the fact that we all need to be recognized and cared for."*

To take part in this ministry, contact Deborah Anderson. If you have a friend or loved one in need of a blanket, please contact Kasey Kalchert at kasey.kalchert@akronfcc.org or call the church office to make your request. Donations to support the work of this ministry are welcomed, be sure to make your check out to First Church and write "prayer blankets" on the memo line.



Advent Lunch and Workshop

The Advent Lunch and Workshop is on December 2, from 1-3pm in the Fellowship Hall. A lunch of Sloppy Joes sandwiches and salad will be served to attendees. Please sign up in the church office or contact Kasey Kalchert, Congregational Life Coordinator, with any questions.

First Church Hosts Food Sustainability Conference

On October 19, First Church hosted the Hands on Sustainability event, presented by Akron's Big Love Network and sponsored by Let's Grow Akron and the City of Akron. The eight hour conference included panelists, breakout workshops, and even a sheep shearing demonstration in the big parking lot! First Church is proud to host an event aligning so closely with our Food Justice ministry.



Sunday Mornings

9am-11am: Early Morning Childcare for age 4-7 is available on the 2nd floor from 9am until we transition to Church School with 11am worship.

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

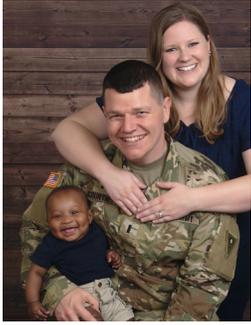
9:30am Worship: Children and youth are invited to attend worship with their families. There is an activity carpet available in the worship space.

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. Following the Children's Message, children from Pre-K through the 8th grade are invited to accompany our volunteer teachers to Church School for a fun and engaging experience.

Welcome to First Church!

Sunday, October 28 was New Member Sunday. Join us in welcoming our new members to the church family!

Andrew and Sarah Courtney



Sarah and Andrew joined First Church on August 26, 2018, at the 9:30am worship service. Having served the church as an ordained United Church pastor for five years, Andrew has transitioned to being an Offensive Computer Security Analyst for IBM and Chaplain to the 437th Military Police Battalion of the Army National Guard. Sarah is also an ordained United Church of Christ pastor, but is currently on leave to be a stay-at-home parent to their first child, Asher. Sarah serves as a regular Church School volunteer.

Arthur Clippinger

Art is a retired United Church of Christ minister living in Akron. He served the majority of his ministry in northeast Ohio: as the shared minister for Trinity UCC, Canal Fulton, and St. Peter's UCC, Clinton; as pastor of Grace UCC of Massillon and pastor at Denison Avenue UCC on the West Side of Cleveland. Most recently, in 2017 he served nine months as part-time interim at Grace UCC, Massillon. Art enjoys serious (as well as not so serious) reading.



Rachel Gilliams

Rachel grew up in Beckley, WV, and recently moved to the Akron area a few months ago with her husband, Jeremy, and found First Church through a social media search. Rachel has two dogs, Jackie and Rusty, and she works for The University of Akron and will be going to UA School of Law in the spring.



Nancy Livingston

Nancy rejoins First Church since, years ago, she used to attend with her family. Nancy takes pride in being "a great helper" and enjoys helping others. One of her favorite ways to spend time is with her craft group, where she is currently learning about ceramics.



Paul Martucci



Phillip is a retired school Administrator who has also worked with the University of Akron as a professor in the College of Education. Phil enjoys traveling, and painting. He lives at Tower 80 where he shares his love of cooking with neighbors.

Victoria White

Tori is pleased to be returning to her church home. She joined First Church by confirmation on June 6, 1979. Tori's parents, Robert and Ruth Burridge, were members here as were her siblings and her grandmother, Loretta Myers. Originally from Cuyahoga Falls, Tori now lives in Wadsworth.



Community Workshop

On November 17, the United Methodist Church 4 All People, in collaboration with the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church presents the Community Development is 4 All People at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. The workshop will center on community efforts to help make Akron neighborhoods a more vibrant and engaging place to live. The workshop will be at 50 N. Prospect Street in Akron, from 10am-4pm with lunch and snacks included. Please RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-development-is-4-all-people-tickets-45598102151> if you would like to attend.

Keep Calm and Carry Yarn

In collaboration with the nationwide nonprofit group, Warm Up America!, the Mansfield Correctional Institution formed a new therapy group as a tool 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. First Church is seeking donations of yarn to help with their cause! The yarn will be accepted in any form: remnants from other projects, leftovers from crafts, tangled balls- it's all needed! Please drop your donations in the church office. Thank you!



Help Us Help You Read!

Due to a recent generous gift, we are now able to consider the refurbishment of our Library. The Library is now located on our main floor, adjacent to the Food Pantry, across from Pastor Nanette's office. This room, which is available to all members, currently houses many books and has room for many more, but we need your help! What types of books would you like to be able to access in this room? Are there features you would like to see in this space to help it serve you, or perhaps your board or committee, better? Please send your thoughts to Janis Worley at janis.worley@akronfcc.org. Thank you!

Ecuador Scholarship Program

For over 25 years, the generous donations from the First Church congregation have provided funding to give many indigenous Ecuadorian students the opportunity to attend high school or university. This year, we would like to pay the tuition for one university student (\$800) and four high school students (\$350 each.)

If you would like more information, please contact Agneta Solomon via email at agnetauakron@aol.com or by phone at 330.239.0018, or Martha Vye via email at vye@uakron.edu or by phone at 330.644.7490. Please consider this long standing international outreach.

If you'd like to contribute, please make your check to First Church with "Ecuador" written on the memo line. The recipients of these scholarships are most appreciative of the support they receive from us. In the past, Sponsors have received letters of thanks, written in Spanish and translated by Agneta Solomon.

Sisterhood Art and Jewish Food Festival

Temple Israel of Akron is hosting a Sisterhood Art and Jewish Food Festival on November 4! Come and enjoy traditional Jewish food, and view beautiful Torahs and other ceremonial objects. You can hear the Cantor sing and meet Rabbi Joshua Brown, as well as check out over 30 local artists' work! For more information, please visit www.artfoodfest.com.

Holiday Office Closures

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the church office will close on November 21 at 1pm and be closed all day on November 22 and November 23.

Get Social!

First Church is on social media! Have you "liked" our Facebook page? You can find us at [FCCofAkron](https://www.facebook.com/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](https://twitter.com/1stChurchAkron).

Church Updates

Early service attendee, Todd Brown, has been working hard in the Upper Room, helping to improve the sound system for worship! Thank you, Todd!



T-Shirts Available

Show your First Church spirit with a T-shirt! You are able to pick one up from the office. We are accepting donations of up to \$10 for the shirts. A range of sizes are available for both children and adults.

Parish Nurse Ministry

Blood pressure and diabetes checks will be available on November 11 from 10am to 1pm in the Conference Room.

Sound Minds Training

Sound Minds, a First Church music-therapy program for dementia patients in local memory care facilities, has begun its work and is looking for volunteers to attend a training session on Thursday, November 8 at 6:30pm.

Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia. In its early stages, memory loss is mild, but with late-stage Alzheimer's, individuals lose the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to their environment. However, studies have shown that music, and its associated memories, are often preserved because key brain areas linked to musical memory are relatively undamaged by the disease.



Sound Minds volunteers visit patients in local area nursing homes. During the visit, the volunteers use MP3 players and headphones to allow patients to listen to a personalized selection of music that would have meaning to the person listening. The music helps stimulate these patients, often causing them to sing or talk, or open up to answering questions about the memories associated with a particular song. Even when old memories are not awakened, music has the power to soothe those who suffer from Sundowner's Syndrome, a common problem in memory care facilities, when people get agitated, anxious, and fearful in the evening.

Anyone interested in volunteering with this program is welcome to attend an information and training session. Attendees are asked to bring a pair of earbuds or headphones to the training. You can RSVP in the First Church office directly or call 330.253.5109.

Stewardship/Finance Report (unaudited)				
September 2018 - Final				
	September	YTD	YTD Budget	Percent to Budget
<u>INCOME</u>				
2018 Loyalty Campaign	17188	184048	187500	98.16%
Non-pledge Income	3790	30700	33750	90.96%
Special Ministries-incl. Spec. Offer.	1022	24993	33445	74.73%
Endowment, Sprowls Trust, Pollock	44276	410659	411984	99.68%
Other Income	<u>2425</u>	<u>20335</u>	<u>20641</u>	<u>98.52%</u>
TOTAL	68701	670735	687320	97.59%
<u>EXPENSES</u>				
Total Admin. & Support	5848	45707	51465	88.81%
Total Mission	4955	59896	73725	81.24%
Food Service Expense	1366	22663	20542	110.33%
Personnel	37763	296943	362702	81.87%
Property Expenses	<u>32881</u>	<u>206814</u>	<u>228770</u>	<u>90.40%</u>
TOTAL	82813	632023	737204	85.73%
* All Boards, Pastoral Care & Special Ministries				



In Sympathy

Our sympathy and prayers are with...

George Kostan and family as they mourn the sudden passing of Jan Rodefer-Kostan on October 18. Her family held a small gathering on October 20 at First Church with Pastor Nanette officiating. A public memorial service will be planned for later in the year.

The Noel family as they mourn the passing of Erna Noel on October 21, at 95 years old. Erna had been a member at First Church for 63 years.

In Our Prayers

Duane Angel, Joanna and Jim Gartner, Barbara Hansford, Joanne Mazzaferro, Lee Pritchard, Bill Rodefer, Lola Rothmann, Agneta Solomon, Art Wallach, and Doug Weyrick.

Love Truck

The Love Truck will serve a meal on Saturday, November 24 from 4:30-5:30pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Nathan Walder for more information at the.lovetruck@yahoo.com.

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 users personal hearing aid or we can provide an earphone. We ask that users return the devices to the office immediately following worship each week.

Worship Flowers

First Church requests donations of worship flowers for the following dates: Dec 2; Jan 6, 13, and 20; Feb 24; and Mar 3, 10, 24, and 31. If you would like to honor, celebrate, or remember a loved one on one of these dates, please contact Patty Durkos at 330.253.5109 ext. 110 to place an order.



Have you noticed the changes?

The Building & Grounds Board has been hard at work this fall making many improvements around the outside of our building. Our parking lots have had cracks filled and will have new paint applied to mark the spaces. As part of this process, the placement of the handicapped spots is being changed, moving them all closer to the Chapel entrance door. Two of the slots are being marked with signage to make them van accessible. Our large lot across the street has been cleared of weeds and overgrowth, and two dead street trees have been removed. In addition, stumps and small hedges were removed and replanted with grass seed, which will lower our maintenance costs and provide a cleaner look. Work continues to determine the source of the roof leaks, with even members of the Building & Grounds Board scaling the ladders to see for themselves what needs to be done. With the skilled assistance of Keep Akron Beautiful, two flower beds located between the Narthex doors have been replanted with low-growing perennials to provide a colorful display during the warmer months of the year. Thank you Buildings & Grounds Board for making First Church look as vibrant from the outside as it is from the inside.

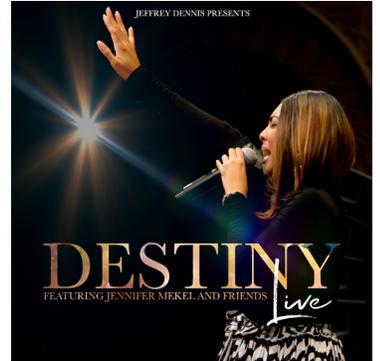


First Church Concert Series

Jennifer Mekel and Friends Gospel Choir is the next event in the First Church Free Music Series. Join us on November 15, from 7-9pm in the Meetinghouse for this free-and open to the public- event!

Who is Jennifer Mekel?

Akron native Jennifer Mekel brings her own style of singing and smooth vocals to gospel music. As Chorus Master, featured soloist, and guest conductor, Jennifer has performed with the renowned Akron Symphony Orchestra and at the Gospel Meets Symphony annual concert for several years. Being a singer, songwriter, composer, arranger, licensed and ordained minister, and a mental healthcare provider, Jennifer is considered a valuable gift to the community.



Next in the Concert Series

Paul Kovac's Big Grass Band

Thursday, January 17, 2019, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Learn more at www.paulkovac.com

The Akron Big Band

Thursday, February 21, 2019, 7:00pm - 9:00pm.

Learn more at www.theakronbigband.com

Celtic Rush

Thursday, March 7, 2019, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Learn more at www.celticrush.com

The Akron Pops Orchestra

Thursday, May 16, 2019, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Learn more at www.akronpops.org/concerts

Thank you!

Thank you to our October ushers: Jim Gartner, Bill Brandy, Liza Salchak, Ruth Ann & Christine Allison, and Don Lastocy.

Thank you to our Sunday Welcome Desk volunteers from the Membership Board and to all our our members and friends who help to make us a warm, friendly, and hospitable place for friend and stranger alike.

Thanks to your generosity sharing time and talent, we are able to be the face of Christ to others each week.



Rooted in Christ · Fostering Justice · Celebrating Diversity



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.