

Congregational Courier

THOUGHTS FROM BOB LIVINGSTON SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Friends:

November is the month of Thanksgiving. No one ever said being thankful was easy. I remember having lunch at a local restaurant around Thanksgiving one year and overhearing someone at a neighboring table saying, in a rather cynical tone, "You know, I can't think of anything I'm thankful for this year!" I must admit the comment piqued my curiosity. I wondered what it was that led this person to feel this way. Why couldn't she be thankful ... especially at Thanksgiving time ... at least about something?

Now, I suppose, I shouldn't be that surprised. After all, there are days when thankfulness doesn't flow from my heart all that easily either. Perhaps we sometimes have a difficult time tuning in to the abundance that is around us and the daily graces and blessings that enfold us. Maybe our Thanksgiving radar needs some adjustment!

Some time ago, I read a story about Alben Barkley who was the 35th Vice-President of the United States when Harry Truman was President. Apparently when Alben was a nine-year-old boy, his family home was burned to the ground. Alben and his dad rushed in from the field where they were working when they saw the fire. However, sadly, they were too late to save anything. Everything had been destroyed. In describing the emotional trauma of this event in his autobiography, Mr. Barkley recalled, "Father was a strong man, but he leaned against a tree and wept at the sight, as he realized the magnitude of the loss."

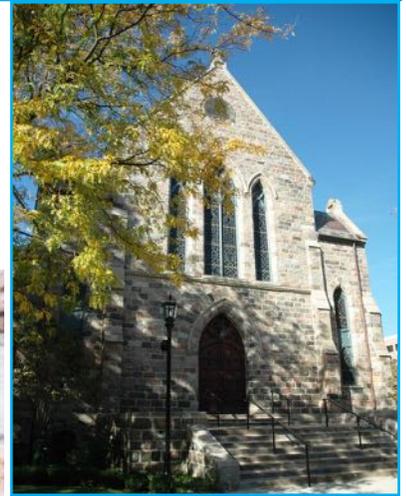
But then, neighbors came to their aid. A house was found for them. They were given clothes, and food, and utensils, and furnishings . . . all that they needed.

When Alben's dad saw the generosity of his friends and neighbors, he leaned against the same tree on which he had wept before, and he wept again, praying, "I thank thee, Lord . . . for they have given thy servant more than he ever had."

You see, like the person at the restaurant, we sometimes take God's gifts and blessings for granted. Yet, I would suggest, we have only to count our gifts and blessings to realize how fortunate we have been and are.

Let's do that in November!

Affectionately,

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*Embracing God's
word and
enriching lives*

Whatever Your Story, You're Welcome Here



DARCY CRAIN MINISTER

Snow Days

Bob called the kids up for children's circle on October 14 and asked them how many of them were hoping for snow. Most of the hands shot up. The adults in the pews had a far different response. Snow brings an element of wonder and surprise and inconvenience to all of our lives, and living in Michigan, it brings these gifts often.

It made me think of the last snow day we had. The snow storm worsened overnight and about 6 a.m. my phone buzzed to alert me that Ann Arbor Public Schools had cancelled all classes and after school activities due to the snow. Most of our staff couldn't safely get to work on the roads, so the church office was also shut down. It was a mandatory day of Sabbath. The kids and I played in the backyard and built snowmen. We ate grilled cheese and applesauce, and scrounged through the pantry and freezer for dinner. I had planned to go to the store that day and reload the groceries but the weather had other plans. Still, we had more than enough to eat and drink and honestly, it was as if God gave us a "get out of duty" free card for 24 hours. It was wonderful. It was as if the world shut down for a day, and I didn't even have to feel guilty about it!

Turns out that God gives us snow days once a week. They're not only gifts; they're commands. We're supposed to take a Sabbath. Most of us don't. Even your pastors struggle with this. Because the thought of it is daunting. I try to take Sabbath by not working in my job, you know, only answering emails of the emergency-type, but instead spending the day bustling around cleaning, doing laundry, running errands, working out, and barely fitting that all in before the kids get out of school. It turns out that those things are still work, just a different kind. I didn't feel rested. I felt productive. Turns out that God isn't really interested in how productive we are. God is interested in our human ability to not act as slaves to our own habits of doing and consuming but instead enjoy this world and these people we have been blessed with.



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DARCY CRAIN (CONTINUED)

If you need to imagine what you do during the Sabbath, think of what you do during a snow day. You play. You linger around the dinner table. You don't run errands because you simply can't. Perhaps Sabbath is a law because we need that kind of legal boundary in order to actually adhere to it. If there was no snow impeding my travels, I would've trekked to the store, run errands, tried to be productive, and so on. But because I literally was unable to, I didn't. I had a snow day Sabbath. And I can't wait for the next one.

In the book the 20-40 group is currently studying, *No Other Gods: The Politics of the Ten Commandments*, Ana Levy-Lyons brilliantly points out that, "the goal of a Sabbath practice is not to give us a joy ride and then patch us up and send us back out to the rat race. It is to represent in the now what freedom feels like, what connection with others feels like, what reverence for the earth feels like, and what *enough* feels like."

This month take the time to experience what it is to have enough. Connect with others. Take a snow day. A no-exceptions, no-errands, no-just one email, type of Sabbath snow day. As we devote a month to considering our gratitude, the law of the Sabbath seems like a great place to start.



HISTORIAN'S CORNER BETTY BISHOP

Have you ever wondered if the First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor had a parsonage? Well, we did have one in the past but only for a rather short period of time. On July 18, 1919 the church purchased a house at 1402 Hill St. to serve as a parsonage for Rev. Dr. Lloyd Douglas, probably the most famous minister to serve at FCC. He had been at FCC since 1915 and was getting well-known for his sermons. The property on Hill St. was purchased from Mrs. Jean Vallette, a widow, for \$11,000. Payment of \$1000 was made at the time of purchase and the mortgage called for annual payments of \$500 plus appropriate interest. There was a question of a special five-year subscription to cover the cost of the parsonage but this was deferred by the Trustees in late 1919 and not reconsidered later. A garage for the property was built in early 1921 at a cost of \$500. Unfortunately for FCC, Rev. Dr. Douglas was already thinking of moving on to a new position. In July 1921 he resigned to accept an offer from a Congregational church in Akron, Ohio. He felt this would give him a wider field of opportunity for service. Many efforts were made, unsuccessfully, to try to keep him in Ann Arbor ,but he left. He continued to be very supportive of FCC and made significant financial contributions over the years which culminated in major assistance with the building of the Douglas Chapel in 1951.

What happened to the parsonage on Hill St.? The house is still standing, and you will hear more about this next month.

RACHEL DUDLEY
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Friday, November 9th, there will be a family game night at church. Please feel free to come and go as you please between 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Snacks and games will be provided, but families are encouraged to bring their favorite game to teach others.

No RSVPs are needed. Hope to see you there!

Our church school program has been blessed with wonderful volunteers who make the program possible! We are in search of additional volunteers who are willing to be on our substitute teacher list. A substitute teacher fills in for one of the two teachers in the class when one of the teachers needs to be out. There are always two adults in a class which means a substitute teacher is never alone with a class. Our awesome substitute teachers are made aware of a need by receiving a group email. If they are available, they respond to the group to claim the open position. There are no minimum number of times you must volunteer or mandatory assignments. A quick online background check is required. Contact Rachel for additional information.



The Christmas Pageant is a fun and exciting time at FCC! Each year we welcome all kids to join in and take part in the pageant. To make the pageant a success, we need many volunteers to assist in different roles. Please contact Rachel if you are interested in heading up a part of the Christmas Pageant. We are currently looking for people to be in charge of costumes, props, scripts, and to sit by and assist groups of kids at the pageant.



Rachel

YOUTH MINISTRIES JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH

Cultural Connections Youth Group Outing

On Sunday, October 7th, the junior high and high school students had an opportunity to learn and experience something about how people all around the world live. The experience took place at the Heifer Global Village at the Howell Nature Center. Our group visited five examples of homes from around the world. The first home that we visited was an example of a home from Zimbabwe. The home was round so that no evil spirits can find corners to lurk in, as local cultural tradition believes they like to. We learned about the construction and materials of the home, and a story of a day in the life of a kid from Zimbabwe was read. Our students noted that there was no door or window in the openings on the home.



The second house that we visited was an example of a home from Thailand. The house is built up off the ground so that water does not come in when heavy rains occur. The space under the home is also where many families keep any animals that a family might have to care for. The students discussed how the home was constructed and the similarities and differences between the previous house. They also learned and discussed what a day in the life in a person in Thailand may be like.

A shanty was our third stop. The uncertainty of daily life for those who live in shanties, in slums all around the world, was discussed while our group huddled inside. Would you feel safe in a house like this?



An example of a home from Peru that would be found up in the mountains was our fourth home visit. Here we discussed the ways of life of those who live up in the mountains in Peru.

Continued on page 6

YOUTH MINISTRIES (CONTINUED)

Since potatoes are one of the main crops cultivated there, we took time to play a game. Each person was given a potato to put on their spoon. The goal was to be the first person to knock off your competitor's potato from their spoon. Our students and leaders had a great time challenging each other!



Our fifth and final home we visited was an example of a home that may be found in the Appalachian Mountains. We were reminded that we have people who are in need here in the US too. At the final home the

students were assigned duties for preparing lunch. The adult leaders were only allowed to be asked for advice and oversee the propane cooking stove and the fire while the students did everything else. The students were assigned roles in their village and they got to work!



We enjoyed the food the students prepared! After the students did the dishes, we wrapped up with a time of sharing different things



that stuck with us throughout the day and ideas about how we could have a positive influence in other people's lives. We closed with a challenge from our leader, Beth, to each do one of the ideas we had discussed. We now want to ask you to join us in this challenge and also to do one thing this year that will have a positive impact on another person's life.

—Rachel Dudley

YOUTH MINISTRIES SENIOR HIGH

Senior High Mission Trip

The 2019 Summer Mission trip will be going to the D (Detroit), honoring our neighbors by serving those local to us. We will be staying at the Methodist Church on Woodward and serving alongside other high school youth groups during our week mission trip, which will take place the week after school is finished, from June 16 (leaving in the evening) to June 22 (returning in the morning). A deposit of \$50 for the trip is due this month, so if you have not yet thought about your summer plans, now is the time! These trips change the lives of the students who experience them. Don't miss your opportunity!



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ELLEN RAMBO

Thank you to parents who provide informal feedback to our church school teachers and to Rachel. We have received very positive feedback about curriculum and lessons and how much students enjoy church school. Students will complete their unit about the life of Moses before transitioning to learning the story of Christmas.

*Save
the
Date*

Please mark your calendar for December 9, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., for the church school Christmas Party, when we join together in fellowship to make gingerbread houses and Christmas decorations and eat lunch together in Pilgrim Hall.

DEACONS MITCHELL DUDLEY AND NANCY VERMUELEN

The Board of Deacons is looking for a few members to join our ranks. Currently, we have six vacancies within the Board. The Board of Deacons' primary role is to ensure that services run smoothly at FCC. We are the ushers, coffee brewers, communion servers, and greeters for each service. Each deacon is asked to serve once every five weeks, so the commitment is easy. Would you like to join us in serving one another? If you are interested in being a deacon or want more information, then please contact Nancy Vermeulen (cnverm@aol.com) or Mitchell Dudley (Mitchell.dudley@gmail.com).

To our current deacons: Thank you for being flexible, for filling the gaps, and for serving the Church! Your service is invaluable!!

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT

MIKE DABBS

The kick-off of our Capital Campaign occurred on September 30th. Members enjoyed a wonderful continental breakfast and saw a campaign video that summarized the key elements of the campaign, namely: safety and security, access for all, stewardship of our building, enhancing our worship environment, and creating more engaging fellowship spaces.



In October, we began meetings at members' homes and at church. The purpose of these meetings is to build a community spirit and answer questions that members may have regarding the campaign. At these meetings, we provide members with a pledge form for them to take home and consider how they will support the campaign. These meetings will continue to occur throughout November. We will also be distributing pledge forms to all members. Additional campaign vignette videos will be shown on occasion, and Campaign Couriers will be distributed. If you have not yet signed up for a gathering, please call the church office and ask for Kayla Gonyon, who is our Campaign Assistant. Kayla can get you scheduled for a meeting or help you with other campaign needs. Additionally, please feel free to contact any member of our Campaign Leadership Team: Mike Dabbs, Debbie Bourque, Judy Hallberg, Dan Jacobs, Ken Nisbet, and Jean Wedemeyer.

As you think about your pledge that will help us achieve our campaign goal of \$2,000,000, let me ask you to consider these words from two of our Honorary Campaign Chairpersons, Bill and Sally Martin, "Every generation of the First Congregational Church family has the unique responsibility to preserve and nourish the traditions of our church while addressing the realities of today. It is our turn to resolve the critical physical challenges of our church. Please join with us as we all do our part."

What will OUR legacy be, and how will YOU play a role?

PROGRESS ON SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES

DAN JACOBS

We are excited to have the first piece of our improved safety and security systems in place. Security cameras have been installed and now allow our staff to see who and where people are present in our building. The next step is to add the audio component to be able to speak to guests when they arrive, to teachers in need of help, and allow us to alert everyone should we have an incident that needs immediate attention.

The one frustrating thing is that, like many others looking to get work done, we are at the mercy of the limited number of contractors available to do the work. Fortunately, we have good relations with a select group of sub-contractors who have assisted FCC in the past. Our challenge is that most of them have a long backlog of projects already on their schedule, so we have to wait our turn. Contracts

for window ladders, door replacement, and the north hallway wall and door project have been signed. More projects are in progress, and we are anxiously awaiting our turn.

One of our other projects for this Fall is to replace the inside door to the south entry, the one that exits out to the driveway from the stair and elevator tower. Replacing this door will allow us to install our new entry system. This door will have an electronic door opener system, allowing us to give committee members access codes to that door so they can come and go to meetings without having to leave the door, and therefore the building, unlocked and open.

We hope all of you will attend one of the gatherings being set up by the Capital Campaign Fundraising Committee so you can learn more about all the projects we hope to undertake to improve the safety and security, accessibility, energy efficiency, water conservation, and general improvements of our church. All of these projects enhance the welcoming nature of our church. If we all contribute what we can, hopefully we will be able to get to most of these projects.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES GAE MILLER

The Board of Trustees met on Monday, October 8, 2018. The following items were discussed:

- The Treasurer reported that the monthly revenue and expenses were pretty much in line with the budget. For those that weren't, there were good reasons.
- A cash flow spreadsheet will be presented at the November meeting.
- The Trust Funds will be rebalanced before the new budget is created.
- A checking account will be opened for the Capital Campaign monies and arrangements made to invest the monies received prior to needing to spend them.
- The Stewardship Campaign will be held from March 17 to April 30 in 2019.
- Building and Grounds— There is a leak near the capstones at the front of the church that will be repaired; window bids are in process; bids for new doors in the lower level are being sought, as is an estimate for sealing the parking lot.
- A 4-year spreadsheet with many details of the Capital Campaign was shared. Safety projects will receive the first attention.
- An Investment Report on performance was reviewed. The General Investment Fund is up about 3% since we moved them to the Bank of Ann Arbor.
- A review of the bylaws will be conducted in the near future.
- The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, November 12.

STEWARDSHIP

MARK SCHIRMER

The next FCC stewardship campaign won't kick off until the spring of 2019, but it's important we keep stewardship in mind throughout the year, remembering that we're all stewards of a wonderful institution in the heart of Ann Arbor. FCC makes a significant difference in countless lives and has been doing so for nearly 175 years. As we roll into November, a month to give thanks, it is perhaps proper for us all to give thanks for the First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor.

As we have said before many times, there are countless ways to be a good steward. Volunteering time to join a committee or board is extremely important, as the time and expertise of our members is the fuel that makes our church run. Each week, FCC relies on countless members who give of their time and effort to keep our operations running. They are the heroes of FCC.

Financial support is important as well. The church's operational budget is almost entirely sustained by the generosity of our members. Our most recent stewardship campaign saw a record level of commitment. As stewardship chair, I can tell you that I am very thankful for that. I'm truly thankful for everyone who supports stewardship.

We will continue to share our thoughts on the importance of stewardship throughout the year. Next month, in December, we will offer advice on how to think about your financial support in a way that can maximize your allowable tax deduction. There is no reason not to be smart while being generous.

Let me close by saying THANK YOU to everyone who financially supports and generously donates their time and talents to help make FCC all it can be. You all make a difference and your generosity is appreciated.

TREASURER'S REPORT

MIKE DABBS

The first quarter of our fiscal year came to a close on September 30th. Pledge payments received were ahead of the quarterly budget, which was a big help for our cash flow. Thank you to all members for your contributions! The gifts and other income category was slightly behind quarterly budget, which is understandable given the summer months of July and August being typically a slow period. Expense categories were less than budget for the quarter. The exception was Christian Education, which is slightly greater than the quarterly budget. However, they had Vacation Bible School and the start-up expenses of the fall program year during this past quarter. I would expect that as the year progresses, we will see their actual expenses even out to the annual budget.

The Investment Committee met with our investment Advisor from Bank of Ann Arbor in early October to review the performance of our trust and endowment accounts. Overall the committee was satisfied with the performance of the accounts, which were meeting the prescribed benchmarks. The committee anticipates meeting with the advisor on a semi-annual basis.

TREASURER'S REPORT MIKE DABBS

First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor
2018 - 2019 SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT
September 30, 2018

	ACTUAL 9/30/18	APPROVED BUDGET 7/1/18 - 6/30/19	NOTES
REVENUE			
Pledges	\$133,701	\$525,000	1
Gifts - Operations	\$7,720	\$48,000	
Other Income	\$6,685	\$33,250	
Total Earned Revenue	\$148,106	\$606,250	
EXPENSES			
Ministry	\$48,580	\$229,900	
Administrative/Office	\$68,886	\$323,160	
Christian Education	\$17,539	\$56,950	
Music	\$11,895	\$69,200	
Missions & Outreach	\$ (732)	\$34,500	
Maintenance & Utilities	\$22,081	\$92,050	
Total Expenses	\$168,249	\$805,760	
NET REVENUE	\$ (20,143)	\$(199,510)	
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$8,989	\$ -	2
TRUST FUND DISTRIBUTION	\$17,096		
	\$30,000	\$200,000	3, 4
BALANCE	\$(16,228)	\$490	

Notes

- 1 2018 - 19 Actual Pledges Total was \$523,246.

- 2 2018-19 budget includes capital campaign expenses and mortgage principal payments. Capital campaign will contribute \$40,000 for costs of capital expenses, mortgage principal payments, and maintenance and repairs.

- 3 2018 - 19 Budget distribution is 5.5%, but a lower absolute amount than last year.

- 4 If additional funds are received from stewardship, they will go to reduce trust fund withdrawals, add to office staff and M&O in that order.

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

PAM DABBS

Annual Coat Collection

Our annual coat collection will begin on Sunday, November 4th and will run through November 11th. Please bring your coat donations to the church service of your choice. They will be collected from you as the worship service begins. The coats will be going to **The House by the Side of the Road** and our own **FCC Warming Shelter**.

CAN Christmas Wish Tree

The children and teenagers at Community Action Network are looking forward to the gifts "Santa" will distribute at their annual holiday parties with eager anticipation! In order for us to have enough time for members to take tags and return their gifts, we must have the tree ready to go by November 18th. The last day to return the purchased gifts to the Mayflower Lobby will be December 9th. Please **wrap** or **gift bag** your gift and **attach the "TAG"** you removed from the tree to the gift. **PLEASE, PLEASE** try to stay close to the gift limit of \$25.00 per tag. Each tag has *two* gift IDEAS...this *does not mean* that you should purchase both—they are just options to *choose* from. We have very kind and generous members at our church and when five or six gift buyers spend way more than \$25.00, it makes it difficult for the children at the parties to see a friend open something that is a lot more than what they have received. It is natural for children to feel this way, so if we all try to stay close to \$25.00 per gift, it will work out for the best all around! Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Bus Tokens

At the end of our fiscal year, M&O usually has a little money left from what has been allocated in the budget. At the end of June, 2018, we used this money to buy 500 bus tokens to distribute to eight community organizations to help make getting to and from their places of operation a little easier for their clients. We packaged them in a plastic snap envelope with our logo on the front. We included a note to let them know we care about them. This turned out to be a perfect way to spend our money because all of the groups we visited couldn't believe they were getting at least 60 bus tokens each. In fact, when the **Hope Clinic** envelope was delivered, the social worker exclaimed that we must have been "guided" to come to them because they only had two tokens left and their clients need them! She was so excited that she jumped up and down and ran off with the envelope to show other staff members. Talk about simple gifts, ones we often don't think about giving but end up, by chance or even divine intervention, being the most valued. Wow! Thank you all for your yearly donations to our budget. You, no, WE together make a difference!

Organizations Receiving tokens: Hope Clinic, House by the Side of the Road, SafeHouse, Alpha House, Jewish Family Services, Warming Shelters, SOS Community Services, and Packard Health.

GREAT LAKES SCRIP

Many thanks to all those who are using the Great Lakes Scrip program! There's a new shipment of gift cards with many low denominations, perfect for teacher gifts, hostess gifts, any gift. We have cards for every occasion, restaurants, retail, gas, groceries, Amazon and Visa. Please stop by the Scrip table located in the Mayflower Lobby near the elevator on Sunday mornings or call the office during the week. All profits go toward mission/work trips from FCC!

CROP WALK 2018

Thank you to all of our generous FCC donors who supported this year's CROP Hunger Walk for Washtenaw-Ann Arbor, which was held on September 30th. We delivered donations made at church and on-line totaling \$1,085. We also brought a bag and a box full of donated food to the event held at St. Claire's Episcopal Church on Packard Rd. in Ann Arbor. This is another example of the giving spirit of our church members toward causes local and international. The donated funds will be used to support the international agencies who work with Church World Service providing farm materials and clean water to promote self-sufficient food production to reduce hunger in poor communities. Twenty-five percent of the funds raised will go to ten local food relief non-profits. Your help will make a big difference in the lives of many.

This year, FCC Walk organizers, Mary Mostaghim and Suzanne Price, were pleased to have a big team of 11 FCC members, including two families with children (four in total) register for the Walk. Thank you to Rachel Dudley, FCC Director of Children's Ministry, who helped recruit the Eggleston and Bentley families, for joining us. It was a beautiful afternoon to walk together along Packard, East Stadium, and Brockman Blvd. for the 1.5 mile walk. After the walk, we enjoyed a selection of soups



and BIG cookies provided by the Washtenaw-Ann Arbor CROP Walk committee at St. Claire's. What a great way to have fun and get to know one another better by participating in this community charity event!

COMTEMPORARY ISSUES – SECOND SUNDAY SERIES

SARA HOLMES

- Sunday, November 11 **Russia: Heading to Another Cold War?**
Michael Makin, D.Phil. Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan and FCC member
- Sunday, December 9 **Threshold Singers:
Bedside Songs for Hospice and Healing**
Karen Chalmer
- Sunday, January 13 **Interfaith Wisdom:
Women Creating Alliances for Friendship and Peace**
A panel of five women from different faith backgrounds
- Sunday, February 10 **Carbon Fee and Dividend:
Effective option for addressing climate change**
Steve Kolk, ACAS, MAAA, climate actuarial expert, Evan Murray, UM BS-Climate & Atmospheric Science
- Sunday, March 10 **Cass Community Social Services in Detroit:
Tiny houses and more**
Rev. Faith Fowler, M.Div., M.P.A. Pastor of Cass Community United Methodist Church and Executive Director of Cass Community Social Services.
- Sunday, April 14 **Ann Arbor's Bicycling/Walking Infrastructure:
Now and In the Future**
Raymond Hess, City of Ann Arbor Transportation Manager

MEMBERSHIP

New Member Orientation Brunch Rescheduled

Due to scheduling conflicts, the new member orientation brunch has been rescheduled for January 27th. Please put this date on your calendar if you are considering membership in FCCA2. We hope you will join us. At the brunch, you will have the opportunity to hear about various ministries and opportunities at FCC and get to know others who are joining as well. It is a fun and informative gathering.

Please contact Laura Livingston (laural88@att.net) if you have any questions.

ACTIVITIES AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE ROBBIE SAWITSKI

All-Church Decorating Event

There certainly is a hint of Fall in the air. Crisp, sunny days with the splendor of the changing leaves, bright pumpkins everywhere, and of course, evidence of the Christmas season popping up here and there. What better time for us to begin planning for the glorious Advent and Christmas season at FCC? We all delight in the beauty and inspiration of our grand old lady radiating the spirit of Christmas. Please mark your calendars now for the FCC All-Church Decorating Party on Sunday, November 25, after the 10:00 a.m. worship service. If ever the adage, "many hands make light work" applied, it is at *this annual event*. Let's all consider taking a little time to help with this special gathering of friends.



By the way, the Christmas UNdecorating Party and lunch will be held on January 6 after the 10 a.m. service. Please stay tuned for details.

Attention Church Ladies . . . Have you heard?

The Advent Women's Evening (AWE) is returning this year! This is a time set aside during Advent for women to come together for a festive evening. We can catch our collective breath, relax, be entertained with live, seasonal music, enjoy a tasty dinner, and spend some special holiday time with friends and loved ones. AWE will take place on Thursday, December 6, from 6 to 8 p.m. The cost is \$10 per person. This event is limited to 80 participants. Childcare will be provided by prior request only. Please RSVP to Nancy Sauve (nancy@fccannarbor.org) to hostess a table or simply to come and enjoy the evening.

If you have any questions, please call Robbie at 517-764-2519 or speak with her at church.

Please look for additional details about these two AFC events in upcoming Sunday bulletins and Friday e-mails.



MUSIC COMMITTEE MJ QUIGLEY-YOUNG

The Music Committee participated in the **Ministry Festival**, October 7th, in Pilgrim Hall, displaying all the different facets of our Music Ministry here at First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor. Our table display gave folks another chance to welcome our new Chancel Choir Director, Shohei Kobayashi, peruse past programs, learn about our Wilhelm Organ (“*The Jewel of Ann Arbor*”), experience our Hand Chimes LIVE, and read about our contemporary worship music, led by Terry Farmer, as well as eat some cookies!

This year, we are experiencing a restructuring of the opening of our traditional worship service (10:00 a.m.). Announcements will occur prior to the service, thus allowing the organ preludes, carefully selected and performed by Dr. Timothy Huth, our church organist, to assist us in preparing us for the worship experience. As the congregation gathers, meeting and greeting each other prior to the service, Tim will continue to welcome us with music.

For the Advent season, a special large musical presentation by the Chancel Choir, with organ and orchestra, is being planned. We are continuously thankful to Charles and Alva Sink for their establishment of *The Charles and Alva Sink Fund*, which specifically supports these large music presentations each year for the glory of God through our best musical efforts.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our Chancel Choir, please contact our Chancel Choir Director, Shohei Kobayashi, or come to rehearsals at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings downstairs in the Chancel Choir room.

For our annual Christmas Eve Service, both our Hand Chimes Choir, directed by Cindy Bylsma, and our String Quartet will perform with our Chancel Choir. Members of our String Quartet are Barbara Sturgis-Everett, Mike Overdier, Carolyn Tarzia, and Mj Quigley-Young.

MUSIC MESSAGE TIMOTHY HUTH

We All Share the Ministry of Music

God’s goodness is all around us and within us. All of creation sings. We come to church to celebrate who we are as God’s people and share the Good News through our presence as a community, in God’s word and preaching, and through our music!

We are looking for young people who sing or play a musical instrument to share their talents in worship. If your child is a musician and would like to make music with us, please contact Timothy Huth (timothyhuth@gmail.com), Shohei Kobayoshi (shohei@fccannarbor.org), or Marijean Quigley-Young (mjquigleyy@gmail.com). It would help us to know the age, instrument, and approximate level of proficiency and experience of the young person. The ministry of music is God’s gift to us to share. May we sing with the psalmist: “Awake my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn” (Psalms 57:8).

WITH GRATITUDE



Since I came onboard as your Administrative Assistant for FCC late in September, I have been touched by the many gestures of welcome I have received. On my first Monday of work in the FCC office, I found a lovely note from Dorothy Lenz. It brought tears to my eyes to receive such kind words from someone I had never met! So many people have called to say hello or come in to introduce themselves to me. Everyone smiles and wishes me well in my new position. My colleagues in the office and many people who have sat at my desk over the years have helped me learn the many aspects of this job with wonderful clarity and abundant patience. Thanks to

everyone for making me feel so welcome in this community!

—Sandra Beals

Annual Bake Sale

It's not too early to start preparing for the annual Christmas Bake Sale, which will take place on Sunday, December 10, in the Mayflower Lobby after the 9 and 10 a.m. worship services.

Calling all bakers, canners, and gatherers! Now is the time to prepare what you will donate to the bake sale. This is a fun and festive affair. All kinds of baked goods, candies, soups, mixes, herbs, relishes, jams, and jellies will be for sale. Be a part of the fun by bringing your festive goodies to be sold.

As Ann is not writing this article, I'd like to give a big thank you to Ann Graves and her team. Ann organizes this event year after year—and also contributes an amazing variety of jams, relishes, and sauces. Get there early to purchase her fantastic homemade wonders!

The money earned from the sale is used to cover the cost of the Christmas evergreen roping that decorates the outside of the church and other church activities. Thank you for your support!

—Nancy Sauve

HEALING SPACE

Where music, meditation and prayer meet

Healing Space, a monthly meditation service, will meet on Sunday, November 18th, from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Mayflower Room. Healing Space is held on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Each session includes music, both silent and guided meditations, a themed reflection, and a time for group prayer. Our theme for November will be Gratitude. All are welcome. Come and experience this group practice of God's presence in our lives. If you would like further information or have input to offer, please contact Gail Haynes (gehaynes@aol.com).





Interfaith Round Table
of Washtenaw County

24th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration



Interfaith Round Table
Supporting Congregations

- Ann Arbor Friends Meeting
- Baha'i Spiritual Assembly
- Beth Israel Congregation
- Bethlehem United Church of Christ
- Blue Ocean Faith
- Chinmaya Mission
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Church of Scientology
- First Baptist Church
- First Church of Christ, Scientist
- First Congregational Church
- First Presbyterian Church
- First United Methodist Church
- Lord of Light Lutheran Church
- King of Kings Lutheran Church
- Muslim Community Association
- Shalom Community Church
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
- St. Clare's Episcopal Church
- St. Paul's United Church of Christ
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- Unity on Campus Ministry
- Zen Buddhist Temple
- Zion Lutheran Church

Sunday November 18 7 pm*

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
423-4th Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Celebrating Compassion & Beauty

Join us as we give thanks with readings, music, and meditations from a wide variety of faith traditions around the theme of "Celebrating Compassion & Beauty." Refreshments following the celebration. Donations accepted for non-perishable food or turkey money to help those in need in our community. 2019 Interfaith Calendars also available.

*6 pm Bethlehem UCC Open House
with Rev. John Kennedy

irtwc.org

For more information, call Rev. George Lambrides
at 734-424-1535 or email gbrides@umich.edu.

MIND AND SPIRIT BOOK GROUP

The Mind and Spirit Book Group is a community of women of all ages. We enjoy reading and sharing our life stories as a means of personal and spiritual growth. We read books that deal with spiritual or social justice issues. Our book for the Fall is *God's Hotel: A Doctor, a Hospital and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine* by Victoria Sweet. The book group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 10:15 to 11:45 a.m. in the Mayflower Room. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 7. Questions? Please contact Gail Haynes (gehaynes@aol.com).

20/40 GROUP

This small group is enjoying a lively attendance for our discussions on Levy-Lyons book, *No Other Gods: The Politics of the Ten Commandments*. We will meet to discuss chapters six–eight in November.

We will not be gathering on November 21 as it is the day before Thanksgiving and many in our group will be traveling or with family. Meetings take place weekly on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Childcare is provided during group meetings, and please feel free to bring your dinner along with you!

KNIGHT'S LUNCH GROUP

Please join us on the FOURTH Monday of the month for monthly lunch get-togethers with Bob Livingston and other FCC friends. This month, we are meeting on November 26 at 11:30 a.m. at Knight's on Dexter Avenue. Our lunch gatherings are highly informal and lots of fun, with welcoming and wide-ranging conversations. Everyone is welcome! We hope you can join us!

TUESDAY NIGHT STUDY GROUP

Please join us for the Tuesday Night Study Group, which meets from 7–8:30 p.m. in the Mayflower Room. We are currently viewing a potpourri of videos by a variety of lecturers.

Our last session before recessing for the holidays will be on Tuesday, November 13. All are welcome!

TEXT BREAKFAST

We gather every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. with Bob Livingston at the Classic Cup Café (4389 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor) for a lively discussion of the week's sermon text(s). We wrap up our morning about 10 a.m. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesdays!

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Circle of Friends connects church members who are experiencing life transitions, such as moving, a job change, retirement, caregiving, divorce, grief, injury, illness, surgery, and decreased mobility with other church members in a one-to-one relationship. Friends get together with friends once a month to share a caring connection and to deepen their relationship. We value caring at FCC, and we take that value seriously!

Our next meeting, on Sunday, November 12th will feature a speaker, Sara Eggleston, who will explain how she measures adults for wheelchairs, so they can have the most comfortable fit. We will also be planning Christmas gifts for our friends.

If you would like to join us, please call Mary Ann Marquardt at [313-303-1989](tel:313-303-1989).





608 E. William Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 662-1679



FCC Office Hours
Mon. – Fri.
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Robert Livingston
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Darcy Crain
Minister
734-926-0552
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Sandra Beals
Administrative Asst.
734-926-0550
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*Whatever Your
Story, You're
Welcome Here*

REGULAR SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- 8:30 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room
- 8:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast, Pilgrim Hall
- 9:00 a.m. Change of Pace Service, Pilgrim Hall
- 9:30 a.m. Communion Service, Douglas Memorial Chapel
- 10:00 a.m. Traditional Service, Sanctuary
(Church School during 10:00 a.m. service)
- 11:00 a.m. Friendship Time, Pilgrim Hall

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NOVEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

- | | | |
|--------|------------|---|
| Nov 4 | 11:00 a.m. | Music Committee, Meeting Room |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Capital Campaign Gathering, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 6 | 7:00 p.m. | TNS, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 7 | 8:30 a.m. | Text Breakfast, Classic Cup Café |
| | 10:15 a.m. | Mind & Spirit Book Group, Mayflower Room |
| | 12 noon | Capital Campaign Leadership Meeting, Mayflower Rm |
| | 6:30 p.m. | 20/40 Group, Meeting Room |
| Nov 9 | 5:30 p.m. | Family Game Night–Open House, Pilgrim Hall |
| Nov 11 | 9:00 a.m. | Circle of Friends, Meeting Room |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Contemporary Issues, "Russia," Meeting Room |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Safe Sanctuary Training |
| Nov 12 | 6:00 p.m. | Trustees Meeting, Meeting Room |
| Nov 13 | 7:00 p.m. | TNS, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 14 | 8:30 a.m. | Text Breakfast, Classic Cup Café |
| | 10:15 a.m. | Mind and Spirit book group, Mayflower Room |
| | 12 noon | Capital Campaign Committee, Mayflower Room |
| | 6:30 p.m. | 20/40, Meeting Room |
| Nov 16 | 7:00 p.m. | Women's Carillon Chorale, Sanctuary |
| Nov 18 | 11:00 a.m. | Activities & Fellowship Committee, Meeting Room |
| | 11:00 a.m. | Tax Law and Annual Giving, Mayflower Room |
| | 7:00 p.m. | Healing Space, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 19 | 7:00 p.m. | Council Meeting, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 21 | 12 noon | Marketing Committee, Mayflower Room |
| Nov 22 | | THANKSGIVING DAY |
| Nov 23 | | Church Office Closed |
| Nov 25 | 11:00a.m. | All-Church Decorating Party |
| Nov 26 | 11:30 a.m. | Knight's Luncheon Group, Knight's on Dexter Ave. |
| Nov 28 | 10:15 a.m. | Mind and Spirit Book Group, Mayflower Room |
| | 6:30 p.m. | 20/40 Group, Meeting Room |