

# Congregational Courier

**THOUGHTS FROM BOB LIVINGSTON**

**SENIOR MINISTER**

Dear Friends:

You most likely noticed a change in your Courier this month! We are experimenting with producing a two-month Courier, covering the program months of February and March. We will also be producing an April-May Courier, followed by our regular June, July, and August summer edition. We are doing this for two reasons. First, fewer and fewer people are receiving their monthly Courier by mail. In fact, most people receive their monthly Courier by email. Additionally, more and more people are looking to the church website, the Sunday worship bulletins, and the weekly Friday emails for their day-to-day information about church programs, events, and schedules. Secondly, moving to a two-month Courier publication will almost cut in half the amount of staff-time hours needed to produce the Courier and thus will save on staff and mailing costs. We will reevaluate this decision during the summer months, so please give me your input and feedback on this change. By the way, you can also access your Courier online at [www.fccannarbor.org](http://www.fccannarbor.org), under the "Connect" tab.

I would also like to highlight the wonderful outreach commitment of our Church, as for the fifth year in a row we host the daytime Warming Shelter in Pilgrim Hall during the month of February. Under the visionary leadership of Pam Dabbs, chair of our Missions and Outreach Committee, our church will once again open our doors and our hearts to our community from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Our mission is to provide a warm, nurturing, and welcoming place for people to gather, eat, and socialize—persons who otherwise would be left out in the cold to fend for themselves. Thank you, Pam, and your team of wonderful volunteers, for your service to FCC and to our wider community. You all are truly a beacon of God's love and care!

Affectionately yours,



Bob Livingston  
Senior Minister

P.S. The liturgical season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6. Easter is on Sunday, April 21. Please watch your Friday emails for week-to-week programming and your April-May Courier for the Holy Week and Easter special events and activities.



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*FCC Vision Statement:  
We strive to be a joyous  
Spiritual home,  
Welcoming and valuing  
all people,  
Embracing God's word  
and enriching lives.*

**Whatever Your Story, You're Welcome Here**



## DARCY CRAIN MINISTER

### The Kingdom of Heaven

**T**he kingdom of heaven is spoken of countless times in the gospel, especially in the gospel of Matthew. It is a vision and yet a reality; there are glimpses of its success and metaphors of what it will be like. The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed: it is the tiniest of all the seeds and yet when it takes root it grows to a size beyond our expectations. The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field (Matthew 5:34). The kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind

(Matthew 5:47). The examples open our minds to the possibilities; they guide us to understand the kingdom of heaven as diverse, as valued, as something that can start small and become bigger than we'd ever imagined.

Jesus would proclaim things like: The kingdom of heaven is among you! It is within you! Reading these promises made me look over my shoulder as if to say, really? Where? It made me look in the mirror and think, you must have me confused with someone else.

And yet God is persistent. I have seen glimpses of the kingdom of heaven in the most surprising of places. The first time I saw this beautiful glimpse was at a living memorial service for two members of our community. Both were highly involved in communities with mentally ill and homeless people. One was previously homeless and the other was a social worker. Both were diagnosed with terminal illnesses and given less than three months to live, and so our church decided to have a living memorial service. The two men were able to hear the kind words of others, spoken about them while they were still alive.

That day our church looked like the metaphor of the kingdom of heaven as a net thrown into the sea that caught fish of every kind. The mayor was there and spoke. So did the chronically homeless man who came in with his dog. The place was filled with social workers and business professionals, homeless and mentally ill people. People wore hoodies and suits and sat next to one another on our pews. No one was judged. Everyone was equalized. I walked up into the pulpit and looked out and clear as day, I saw the kingdom of heaven. It was among us and within us. It was before us and in these very pews, and it was beautiful.

Once I realized how to spot it, I have been able to see glimpses of the kingdom far more often. The other day, during the weekday, we heard a small cry saying, "Help! Will someone help me?" Robbie was here volunteering and heard the voice. We rushed to the back door and found an elderly woman in a wheelchair, crying. She was unable to get into that door with a wheelchair and was in need of hygiene products. She was cold and desperate. We didn't have the exact product she needed but within seconds, our admin Sandra grabbed a \$5 bill from her wallet, I found some cash in my desk, and Robbie had some as well. We had enough to buy what she needed, and she released tears of gratitude. Robbie reached down to hug her and comfort her and in these moments I saw the kingdom of heaven among us again.

I see it in the members who silently bring in donations, and I see it when other members arrive and haul the donations to the various organizations that need them. I see the kingdom in the glow of candlelight on Christmas Eve and in the joy of this year's baby Jesus as she sat up and smiled at everyone from the manger during our pageant. I hear it when there is a collective clink as we place our emptied communion cups in the pews after we have all shared in the holy meal. The kingdom of heaven is indeed among us and within us. It is around us if we but open our eyes and ears and are open to experience it.

During these next few months, as the grey of Michigan weather is at its all-time high, open your eyes to recognize the kingdom of heaven that is here and among us. It is more powerful and persevering than we could ever imagine.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darcy".

## RACHEL DUDLEY DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### Trip to Israel

I'm going to Israel! Yes, from March 21<sup>st</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> I will be exploring the land of Bible stories! I'm excited to experience in a whole new way many places that I've grown up reading about. The guided tour that I will be on will start when I arrive in Tel Aviv and proceed through a long list of historical cities and sites. As I travel I will be keeping a journal and taking oodles of pictures. When I return I will be presenting on my trip (date yet to be determined). Below is a list of some of the places that I will be visiting and Bible stories that are connected to those locations. Feel free to read along with me as I travel!



Rachel

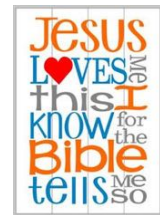
Date	Location	Bible Story	Passage
Friday, March 22	Arrive in Tel Aviv		
Saturday, March 23	Jaffa (Joppa)	Jonah	Jonah 1-4:11
	Nazareth	Birth of Jesus Foretold	Luke 1:26-38
Sunday, March 24	Sea of Galilee	Miraculous Catch of Fish	John 21:1-14
	Cana	Jesus' First Miracle	John 2:1-11
Monday, March 25	Damascus Road	Conversion of Saul	Acts 9:1-19
	Mt. Hermon	Transfiguration	Mark 9:2-13
Tuesday, March 26	Jericho	The Fall of Jericho	Joshua 5:13-6:27
	Jordan River	Jesus Baptized by John	Matthew 3:13-17
Wednesday, March 27	Tel Sheva (Beersheba)	The Treaty of Beersheba	Genesis 21:22-34
Thursday, March 28	Temple Mount	The Boy Jesus at the Temple	Luke 2:41-52
	Garden Tomb	Jesus' Burial & Resurrection	Matthew 27:57-28:10
Friday, March 29	Jerusalem	David Conquers Jerusalem	2 Samuel 5:4-12
Saturday, March 30	Mount of Olives & Gethsemane	Jesus Prays and Is Arrested	Mark 14:26-50
	Upper Room	Last Supper	Mark 14:12-25
Sunday, March 31	Return to U.S.		

## YOUTH MINISTRIES CONFIRMATION

Our confirmation class is growing closer in fellowship and faith as we explore the gospel of Mark and the depth of questions our faith calls us to ask. We gather on the following Sundays after our 10 a.m. worship: Feb 10, Feb 24, and March 10. Because of AAPS spring break, we only have one gathering in March. If you are able, make sure to use the extra time to get those meetings in with your mentor!

## BOARD of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ELLEN RAMBO

February is the month of love! Church school will kick off their next musical lesson learning the song “Jesus Loves Me” and how to navigate a hymnal. Students will also create special Valentines to take home.



In March, all families are invited to our Family Easter Celebration (Previously Lenten Workshop) after the 10 a.m. service on March 17 in Pilgrim Hall. While Easter is in late April, the church school is going to get an early start celebrating! Join us for fun, food and friendship! It would be most helpful if you could RSVP to Rachel Dudley, Director of Children’s Ministry at [rachel@fccannarbor.org](mailto:rachel@fccannarbor.org).



Improvements are in the works to maintain the safety of our church school participants: two new doors to exterior stairwells have been installed. Windows will be replaced in the preschool and nursery rooms on both sides of the hallway; one new window has been installed if you would like to see it. Ultimately, each classroom will contain a window egress with a ladder or step system.



## HISTORIAN'S CORNER

### BETTY BISHOP



Over the Christmas holidays I visited Charleston, South Carolina, and had a chance to see the Circular Congregational Church, established there in 1681. It was founded by English Congregationalists, Scots Presbyterians, and French Huguenots, who were all considered “dissenters” by the Anglican/Episcopal church of the time. The first church on the site was called a Meeting House. The burial grounds by the church date from 1691 and are the oldest in Charleston. The church got its present name in 1804 when

a very large circular structure was designed by Robert Mills, the leading architect of the time in Charleston. The building was modeled after the Pantheon in Rome and could accommodate 2000 worshippers on the main floor and in the gallery.

A great fire swept over most of Charleston on December 11, 1861, leaving the Circular Church in ruins. After the Civil War, it was a much reduced congregation that gathered bricks from the ruins to build the current church in 1890. This building combines the exterior circle, reminiscent of the former church and symbol of eternity and wholeness, and the interior Greek Cross, a Christian symbol of death and resurrection. Circular Church joined the United Church of Christ in 1954. Today the congregation is known in Charleston for its inclusiveness, openness, and community outreach.

Of interest is the fact that John Newton worshipped there on several Sundays in the spring of 1749, when he was in Charleston as part of the slave trade. He was described as being on “his road to conversion.” After he returned to England, eventually becoming an Anglican priest, he wrote one of the best known hymns, “Amazing Grace”.



## CHURCH COUNCIL

### CHRIS VERMEULEN

#### **Elected Positions**

Church Council Chair: Dick Mitchell  
Church Council Vice-Chair: Lynda Norton  
Secretary: Chris Vermeulen  
Treasurer: Mike Dabbs  
Clerk: Peg Jacobs  
Historian: Betty Bishop

#### **Remaining Positions Filled by Board and Committee Positions**

Board of Deacons Co-Chairs Mitchell Dudley and Nancy Vermeulen  
Board of Trustees Chair Mark Foster  
Board of Christian Education Chair Ellen Rambo  
Director of Children's Ministry Rachel Dudley  
Missions and Outreach Committee Chair Pam Dabbs  
Music Committee Chair Mj Quigley-Young  
Nominating Committee Co-Chairs Rich Muhs and Kristy Stoneburner  
Activities and Fellowship Chair Robbie Sawitski  
Contemporary Issues Committee Chair Sara Holmes  
Ministers Bob Livingston and Darcy Crain

#### **Current Activities**

##### **Review of By-Laws:**

A group will review the By-Laws and make suggestions for updating various sections to meet the current needs of the Church organization.

##### **Review of Staff Handbook:**

A group will review the current staff handbook and make suggestions for updating to meet the current needs of the Church organization.

##### **Budget:**

The various Boards and Committees are beginning the budget process for the Annual meeting.

##### **Contact Information**

Feel free to contact any member of the Church Council with questions, comments, or concerns. We appreciate your feedback on the activities of the Church.

##### **Next Scheduled Meetings**

February 18, 2019

March 18, 2019

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DESIGN COMMITTEE REPORT

### DAN JACOBS

#### Next Steps in the Capital Campaign and Improvement Process

Now that the initial phase of the Capital Campaign fundraising has wrapped up, we need to align what we can do with what members have agreed to contribute to make our campaign a success. The original target was close to \$2M, and we are now close to \$1.6M in pledges to the campaign. While fundraising will continue in hopes of getting closer to our original target, we need to proceed with developing a revised scope of work that aligns more closely with the \$1.6M amount, so that we can meet our timeline goal for improvements to be completed.

In order to do this, the Trustees have approved a process that seeks input from a number of work groups, each focusing on a different area of the church corresponding to our original focus areas of Safety and Security, Accessibility, Stewardship, Worship Spaces, Office Space, and Fellowship Spaces. Each work group is being asked to help prioritize potential projects and reduce the original scope of work by 20%, which is the amount our overall budget estimate of \$2M has changed. By doing it this way, all areas of the original scope will still receive focused attention, within a somewhat reduced budget. In addition to the revised scope of work, two or three alternate plans will also be prepared, in hopes that, if fundraising generates additional funds by the time we go out for bids, we will be ready to do more.

Once each work group has completed its task, their priorities and recommendations will be presented to the Trustees for approval, followed by the Church Council, and then the congregation. We are planning an information session on the revised scope of work for the congregation following the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday March 31, in the sanctuary, and then calling a meeting of the congregation to vote on the revised scope of work on Sunday, April 7, after the 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. After the revised scope of work is approved, the architects from Kingscott will begin the design process.

If you are asked to participate in one the work groups, we hope you will accept the invitation. Each work group will be made up of five to seven members who have an affinity for a particular area or effort. For instance, individuals who are frequent users of the Pilgrim Hall kitchen are being asked for their input on the Pilgrim Hall kitchen work group, and so on. Once work groups are formed, the members' names will be shared with everyone, so that, if anyone has a special concern, they can share it with a member of that work group.

We are making progress! Thank you for your collective interest and support.

**Congregation information meeting to present our thoughts on the scope of our future renovations: Sunday, March 31, 2019, 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary**

**Congregation meeting to vote on and approve the proposed scope of work for the capital campaign: Sunday, April 7, 2019, 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary**

## **MARKETING REPORT**

### **BRIAN CONNELLY**

Your FCC Marketing Committee is alive and well and operating efficiently. To bring you up to date, with the resignation from the committee of Sarah Outslay and Michael Spath, we added a new member, Theron Tingstad, a digital marketing expert who is a manager at Google here in Ann Arbor.

Plus, we now have an intern -- Madeleine Livingston who is providing us with knowledge, input, and some programming for our website. She is our new webmaster and along with Darcy, Sandra, and our agency representative, Sean, they have gotten our website humming along wonderfully. After many false starts, infusions of money, and two years of frustration, the site is finally working right. Check it out for yourself at [fccannarbor.org](http://fccannarbor.org).

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

### **MIKE DABBS**

We have completed the first six months (half) of our Fiscal Year as of December 31, 2018. Pledge payments received remained on pace with the annual budget, which has been a big help for our cash flow. Thank you to all members for your payments! We have received payments from a number of members for the capital campaign, which are reflected in the report. These funds will be transferred to our new BOAA account for the Capital Campaign in early 2019. The Gifts and Other Income Category stayed slightly behind the annual budget. Expense categories, too, remain less than the budget. The exception was Christian Education's total expenses, which are slightly greater than the budget; however, they had Vacation Bible School and the start-up expenses of the fall program year, which appears to have caused this overage and should balance out prior to the end of the year.

The audit firm UHY, LLP has nearly completed their work at the church and are preparing the Financial Review that will be presented to the Trustees at their February Meeting. We had hoped for this to have been done in January; however, we had some delays in getting information to UHY, as well as the holidays adding to the delay. For members who are interested in UHY's report, a copy can be obtained by contacting Nancy Sauve ([nancy@fccannarbor.org](mailto:nancy@fccannarbor.org)) or Michael Dabbs ([mfdabbs10@gmail.com](mailto:mfdabbs10@gmail.com)), as of March 1.



**First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor**  
**2018–2019 SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

December 31, 2018

			<b>ACTUAL 12/31/18</b>	<b>APPROVED BUDGET 7/1/18 - 6/30/19</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>					
	Pledges		\$276,108	\$525,000	1
	Capital Pledges		\$208,405		2
	Gifts - Operations		\$29,264	\$48,000	
	Other Income		\$11,396	\$33,250	
	<b>Total Earned Revenue</b>		<b>\$525,173</b>	<b>\$606,250</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
	Ministry		\$109,392	\$229,900	
	Administrative/Office		\$133,669	\$323,160	
	Christian Education		\$29,664	\$56,950	
	Music		\$35,223	\$69,200	
	Missions & Outreach		\$1,674	\$34,500	
	Maintenance & Utilities		\$45,789	\$92,050	3
	<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$355,411</b>	<b>\$805,760</b>	
<b>NET REVENUE</b>			<b>\$169,762</b>	<b>\$(199,510)</b>	
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>			<b>-\$51,215</b>		4
	Mortgage Principal & Annual Repairs		-\$27,627	-\$40,000	5
<b>TRUST FUND DISTRIBUTION</b>			<b>+\$ 30,000</b>	<b>+\$240,000</b>	6
	Gifts Transfer		-\$105,936		7
	<b>BALANCE</b>		<b>\$14,984</b>	<b>\$490</b>	8
<b>Notes</b>					
1	2018 - 19 Actual Pledges Total was \$523,246.				
2	Capital Campaign Funds received being temporarily held in Operating Account pending establishment of BOAA Capital Campaign Account. New account has been opened and funds are expected to be transferred in 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019.				
3	Reduced Maintenance & Utilities line by \$12,691 for capital expense repairs. This was added below (see Note 5). Will reclassify these expenses from Maintenance & Utilities to Capital Expenditures.				
4	Capital Expenditures includes all costs associated with the capital campaign and expenses that are part of the capital campaign projects (e.g., security, and windows).				
5	YTD Mortgage Principal payments are \$14,936 (Annual will be \$30,231) added to \$12,691 (Note 3 above). Capital Campaign will contribute \$40,000 for capital repair expenses, and mortgage principal payments.				
6	2018–19 Budget distribution is 5.5%, but a lower absolute amount than last year.				
7	Capital Campaign & Operating Gifts transfer in-process from Donors				
8	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.				

## STEWARDSHIP MARK SCHIRMER

### Stewardship 2019: A Different Campaign!

The next FCC stewardship campaign will officially kick off in April. As we've noted before, the annual stewardship campaign is a critical part of the ministry of the church, because it helps us fund all activities and programing for the year ahead. The money raised and the commitments secured during stewardship support everything we do as a church. And we do a lot.

**This year, however, we are proposing a new approach to the annual campaign. Here's how and why:**

First, we know that this is an exciting time for The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor. We've just completed a wonderfully successful capital campaign that will transform our historic home. As we approach our 175th Anniversary, this work will be more important than ever. The generosity shown by our membership during the campaign has been amazing. We are blessed indeed.

We were also blessed by the successful stewardship campaign held last year. On the financial side, we raised nearly \$525,000 to support our many ministries and operating costs. It was our most successful campaign ever. Now, recognizing that we've spent the last few months raising capital, our Trustees are committed to delivering a no-increase operating budget to be voted on by Council and membership. **In other words, the goal of the 2019 campaign will be to equal the support we secured last year.**

Traditionally, each and every year we've asked every member to make a new, increased pledge to FCC. This year, to make the process easier, we are proposing a different tack.

**If you pledged last year**, we will renew your generous pledge. No action on your part is required. Just maintain your level of support in the coming year. Your commitment is wonderfully appreciated.

**If your situation has changed**, and you are able to increase your support or need to reduce your pledge, that is fine as well. In April, during Pledge Month, we will make it easy for you to contact the church or change your pledge online.

**If you have not pledged in the past**, now's the time to begin. Remember, April is Pledge Month and that is your chance to begin financially supporting the church. We will share more details on pledging then.

We are fortunate; the FCC family is stronger and more enthusiastic than ever. The physical changes we will be making to our building will help make it even more accessible and more welcoming to our community.

At the same time, our ministries are doing wonderful work. In February, for example, we will be opening our doors to those who need a warm place, three days a week, throughout the month. We're demonstrating what it means to be Christian. This excellent service is made possible by our stewardship contributions—members donating their time and their treasure. Remember, we're all stewards of our Church and the Ann Arbor community. Together, we make a difference!

**If you have questions about the upcoming stewardship campaign and how we are proposing to run it, please feel free to ask them. You can talk with church leadership or reach out to me directly (1960bird@gmail.com). We are happy to answer any questions you may have. More information will be forthcoming.**

As always, thank you for your commitment and unwavering support of FCC of Ann Arbor. Thank you for helping make our Church a beacon of God's hope, love and Christian freedom shine brightly.

## MISSION & OUTREACH

### PAM DABBS

February is the month for the daytime Warming Shelter, when we host people experiencing homelessness from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Meals and crafts are provided in Pilgrim Hall during these days. We can't tell you how thankful we are for all our volunteers and donations of food and supplies—it really makes us feel like we are "all in this together." Truly, as a congregation, we are making a difference in this world, one project at a time!

Another very important mission will take place on **Sunday, February 17th at 2:00 p.m.** at **The Gilbert Residence**, 203 S. Huron, Ypsilanti, Michigan. Historically, "Sing and Serve" missions have involved singing in our Sunday worship at church in the morning and then going out to serve people in our community in the afternoon. This time we will be visiting with residents, playing board games, and doing some art work together. We are hoping that many of you will want to participate in this mission, giving residents an event to look forward to and some company on a Sunday afternoon. February can be pretty dreary, cold outside, and a lonely time inside for the elderly. This mission is one that families with children can do together and a way for children to experience immediately how "giving of themselves" can lift the spirits of other people. Everyone is welcome to bring a game they enjoy and teach it to others. We will plan to meet at The Gilbert Residence. Please contact Pam ([pamdabbs12@gmail.com](mailto:pamdabbs12@gmail.com)) if you have any transportation needs or questions.



In late March or early April, we will be once again put up our **Easter Egg Giving Tree**. Eggs hanging from the tree will name items that are needed by refugees being resettled and sponsored by Jewish Family Services. JFS is the resettlement agency in Washtenaw County contracted by the Department of State to resettle refugees. Its program serves a predominantly Muslim clientele, offering wraparound services for refugees designed to promote personal dignity, self-respect, and increased self-sufficiency. A high priority is to provide one-on-one and community welcoming and hospitality. Assistance is provided with housing and furnishings, obtaining new clothing and household goods, etc. English language and citizenship classes are offered. There is also help with psychosocial health, physical health, education, and other needs. We hope you will be able to help with donating some of the household items refugees need to begin their lives in the U.S.

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES—2ND SUNDAYS

### SARA HOLMES

#### February Presentation

##### **Carbon Fee and Dividend: Effective Option for Addressing Climate Change**

The topic of climate change will be an important topic for the foreseeable future. Many people worry about what can be done. Climate change and how to reduce it is a topic that responsible people should learn about. On February 10, you will have an opportunity to get a better understanding not only of climate change but also what some experts believe to be the most effective solution: a non-partisan carbon fee and dividend. Steve Kolk, a climate science actuary, and Clark McCall, a member of Citizens Climate Lobby and a member of our church will be the presenters. Steve Kolk is president of a risk-analysis consulting firm that deploys data mining, predictive modeling, and geospatial technology to support business planning. Clark is an engineer who talks to legislators and civic groups about climate change and climate-change solutions. You will learn why climate change is so important, what a carbon fee and dividend is, why it can work, why it is fair, and come away knowing why we have reason for hope for addressing climate change. In a hundred years, people will study what we in the developed world chose to do in the next ten years and realize either that we were effective stewards of the planet or that we let them down.

February 10, 11 a.m., Mayflower Room

#### March Presentation

##### **Cass Community Social Services in Detroit: Tiny Houses and More**

In addition to being a guest preacher at FCC on March 10<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Faith Fowler, Senior Pastor of Cass Community United Methodist Church and Executive Director of Cass Community Social Services (CCSS), will present a program on the Tiny House Community in Detroit and more. Cass Community Social Services (CCSS) was established as a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) in 2002. Prior to that many of its programs started as part of Cass Community United Methodist Church. To date, CCSS has built 13 tiny homes, and foundations are going in for six more houses to be built this spring. Rev. Fowler will discuss her vision for a campus of homes, stores, and social services that is already creating a viable community in an impoverished area of Detroit. In addition, Rev. Fowler, along with FCC members, Bob and Sara Holmes, will discuss the CCSS meal program and the new Freight Farm (an indoor farm) to grow fresh greens. Please join us for this exciting program.

March 10, 11 a.m., Mayflower Room

For more detailed information about CCSS, see their website: [www.casscommunity.org](http://www.casscommunity.org)



## ACTIVITIES AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

### ROBBIE SAWITSKI

It is with a humble heart that I offer a **Great Big Mea Culpa** to our congregation! It was at the Christmas Un-decorating event that I was made aware that I had purchased a dessert with NUTS in it. I was so pleased that I found a delicious carrot cake that was both vegan *and* gluten-free that I forgot all about checking for nuts. *It is with this in mind that I am reminding ALL OF US that we are a nut-free facility. This means that all nuts, including pine nuts and coconut, are not to be brought into the church. With gluten-free cooking, it is important to remember to avoid all nut flours and oils as well.* My mistake provides the perfect opportunity for me to request some help from our congregation. I am looking for church chefs who specialize in vegan and/or gluten-free cooking who would be willing to be called on now and then to provide a side dish or a dessert for AFC events or other all-church functions. If you are interested in helping in this way, please text your name, phone #, and food specialty to Robbie at 734-507-0418. I will be forever grateful!

February is typically a slow month for your AFC. However, we are currently considering an opportunity to raise as much as \$7,000.00 for our church this July during the Art Fair. The State Street Association gives the opportunity to local businesses and churches to handle the trash and recycle pick-up for our area of the fair. Our church did this last year with very few volunteers and very little pre-planning. That is not to say that there weren't problems or obstacles to overcome, but rather, that a few were able to do it without too much wear and tear. Those of us who did participate found out that it was a lot easier and cleaner than we thought it might be. And, it would be even easier if more volunteers were to come forward. You may or may not know that our Dave Steiner has been the Garbage Czar at the Willow Run Air Show for years. He is a real pro when it comes to organizing and setting up this kind of project and has graciously volunteered to oversee and organize the volunteers for this project. There will be jobs that don't involve trash and recyclables. **The most important part of this is that we have until February 21 to let the State Street Association know that we will commit to this endeavor.** We are trying to discern if we would have enough volunteers to pull it off. The number of volunteers that come forward will determine whether we can do one, two, three, or all four days of the fair. If you think you might like to help earn this amazing amount of money for our church, or if you have any questions, please call or text Robbie at 734-507-0418 or e-mail Dave at [dranodavec47@gmail.com](mailto:dranodavec47@gmail.com). Thank you for considering giving ANY amount of time to this project. The more the merrier!!

Finally, our next special event will be on Sunday, March 24, when we celebrate the 172<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of our church after the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Our friendship time will be enhanced by extra-special treats as we recognize our long-time members with membership certificates and share our time, memories, friendship, and future dreams for the life and growth of our beloved church.

***Our Mission: We are a beacon of God's love, hope, and Christian freedom.***

## MUSIC COMMITTEE

MICHELLE JOHNS and MJ QUIGLEY-YOUNG

Our Music Committee is focused on exploring and planning new projects that will enhance the music in our worship during our services. In addition, we are formulating a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement that will guide and direct us as we proceed forward.

Through our supportive efforts, our music staff is now including more historical information about organ, choral, and solo pieces each week in our Sunday bulletin for the congregation's edification and in-depth appreciation.

We have identified many of our youth who play musical instruments, and we would like to reach out to them and their parents to encourage their participation in the offering of their musical gifts in our worship services, both Contemporary and Traditional.

Musical plans are formulating for Lent, Palm Sunday, and Easter Sunday. The Hand Chimes Choir will be performing in the Lent/pre-Easter season, directed by Cindy Bylsma. Our Chancel Choir with orchestra, directed by Shohei Kobayashi, will be presenting excerpts from Mozart's *Coronation Mass* for Easter Sunday, including brass and timpani for a magnificent Resurrection celebration.



The Music Committee is developing more ways in which we can support our Chancel Choir and its connection to the congregation. A group picture has been taken, and will soon be released with the names of each member. Stay tuned ... more to come. We encourage all singers to get on board and join this exciting and dynamic group. Shohei, our outstanding choral director, gives of his vast knowledge and experience each week and welcomes anyone interested in joining.

As our capital campaign project develops, we, as a committee, will be making more creative use of the new features in the Sanctuary, Douglas Chapel, and Pilgrim Hall.

*"Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."*

—Victor Hugo

## BEACON OF HOPE MINI-MISSION WORKDAY

**Saturday, March 30 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at FCC**

This year, because of the absence of a clear call to travel to a distant location, we have decided to do a one-day mini-mission workday at FCC on Saturday, March 30, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. If you have never attended one of our longer mission work trips to Louisiana, Alabama, or West Virginia, you will now have an opportunity to experience what such a trip experience is really like, on a mini one-day basis.

We will begin our day with breakfast in Pilgrim Hall at 9 a.m., followed by a brief time of getting to know one another, singing some camp-type songs, and having a “day-starting” devotional. After the opening exercises, we will break into teams and head off into different parts of the church to do some minor repair, organizational, and painting tasks. Around 12:30 p.m., we will take a break to enjoy a make-your-own lunch before returning to our work projects for the afternoon. Around 4:30 p.m., after we complete our various tasks, we will return to Pilgrim Hall for appetizers and refreshments, followed by a delicious dinner. After dinner and clean-up, we will gather once again as a group for check-ins (sharing our “roses and thorns”) and then finish the day with a lively and entertaining euchre tournament—something everyone can learn and do. We plan to conclude the day’s activities no later than 9 p.m.

We sincerely hope you will consider joining us on the 30<sup>th</sup>! Since this mini-mission workday will happen during Ann Arbor Public Schools’ spring break week, we hope both families and individuals will consider joining us, from middle school age (with their parent(s)) through senior high youth and adult.

Please watch for more specific details about the workday in upcoming Friday emails. If you have any questions about the mini workday, or would like to hear more about details of the event, please contact one of our mini workday leaders: Bob Livingston ([bob@fccannarbor.org](mailto:bob@fccannarbor.org)), Bill Bowers ([wabowers@comcast.net](mailto:wabowers@comcast.net)), or Janet and Scott Allen ([jchallen9713@gmail.com](mailto:jchallen9713@gmail.com)). We are asking those planning to attend to please RSVP to Bob Livingston ([bob@fccannarbor.org](mailto:bob@fccannarbor.org)) by Sunday, March 10. We sincerely hope you will make a full-day commitment so you can participate in the full scope of the experience. We would hate to have you miss any part of the fun!

## GROUPS

### Weather Cancellation Policy for Groups and Events

Hopefully, we won't have another cold snap like the one we had the last week of January, but if you wonder whether an FCC event or small group meeting will be cancelled due to weather, please contact the group leader.

The Text Breakfast, Mind and Spirit, and 20–40 Groups have agreed to follow the Ann Arbor Public Schools on cancellations, so, if AAPS schools are closed, these groups will not be meeting.



### 20–40 GROUP

We have finished our book exploring the politics of the Ten Commandments. We will share in a Bible study for the remaining months of our programming year. If you would like to be included on our mailing list, you will be notified of what the Bible reading is each week. Please contact Darcy ([darcy@fccannarbor.org](mailto:darcy@fccannarbor.org)) if you have questions or are interested in checking out the group. Childcare is provided weekly during our Wednesday night meetings, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at FCC.

### TEXT BREAKFAST

We gather informally with senior minister Bob Livingston every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. at the Classic Cup Café (4389 Jackson Road) for lively discussion. We typically discuss the scripture for the upcoming Sunday sermon, sharing our understanding, insights, and our questions. We wrap up our morning about 10 a.m. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday mornings! Please join us.



## MIND AND SPIRIT BOOK GROUP

The Mind and Spirit Book Group is a community of women of all ages who 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. In February, we will finish reading *The Book of Mercy* by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. We will also begin *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. 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. Questions? Please contact Gail Haynes ([gehaynes@aol.com](mailto:gehaynes@aol.com)).

## TUESDAY NIGHT STUDY GROUP (TNS)

This group meets weekly on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. in the Mayflower Room. In upcoming weeks, we will be viewing parts of the *Saving Jesus Redux* series, looking together at topics including Jesus through the Ages, Who Was Jesus?, The Teachings of Jesus: Wisdom Tradition, Jesus' Ministry of Compassion, The Atonement, and The Resurrection of Jesus. Rev. Bob Livingston is our facilitator. Please join us for this interesting and relevant series. All are welcome!

## 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. In February and March, we will meet on the 25th, at 11:30 a.m. at Knight's on Dexter Rd. 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!



## Great Lakes Scrip Program

Thank you for our best Christmas selling season yet! You purchased nearly \$15,000 in scrip cards over the holidays. With an average of 5% rebate on the cards, that's about \$750 more dollars to add to the mission/work trip fund for our senior high and intergenerational trips. Well done! Many thanks go our dedicated Scrip Team who have faithfully coordinated and been



available to sell the cards on Sunday mornings. Let's not let the momentum stop! Remember, cards are good for everything: many restaurants, gas, retailers, groceries, visa cards, and travel. My new favorite—Disney cards for cruises or the parks—are available for order too! I would encourage everyone to go to [shopwithscrip.com](http://shopwithscrip.com) to learn how you can make the program even more lucrative to support our mission/work trips. I have been using the mobile app, sometimes when I'm in a store shopping. Very easy! For more information, feel free to contact me, Nancy Sauve (734-926-0560).

## HEALING SPACE

**Where music, meditation and prayer meet**  
**Sunday, February 17th, 7–8 p.m.**  
**Mayflower Room**

Would you like to seek spiritual growth, serenity and wholeness in your life? Are you seeking healing and transformation for yourself, others or the world? Would you like to deepen your prayer life, nurture your soul and participate in a supportive community with others? If so, please join others by participating in the "Healing Space." This monthly meditation service is held on the third Sunday of each month, from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Mayflower Room. All are welcome!



The February Healing Space will be held on Sunday, February 17. The focus this month will be on Love and Servanthood. There will be time for music, meditation, and prayer. Please come and experience this group practice of God's presence in our lives. If you need further information, please contact Gail Haynes ([gehaynes@aol.com](mailto:gehaynes@aol.com)).



THE WILLIS C. PATTERSON  
**OUR OWN THING CHORALE**  
*in association with GEORGE SHIRLEY presents*

**Justice Resounding: An Evening with Bishop Yvette Flunder**

A Benefit Concert and Lecture Event



Gospel artist,  
social justice activist, and  
Presiding Bishop of  
The Fellowship of Affirming  
Ministries.

**Tuesday, February 26, 2019**  
**7:00 pm**

**The First Congregational Church**  
608 E William St  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

**HOST COMMITTEE:**

The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor and  
The Church of the Good Shepherd, Ann Arbor

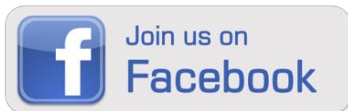
With support from Madonna University Gospel Choir  
and The Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Students, Children & Seniors - \$5  
General Admission - \$10  
All seats at the door - \$15

To purchase tickets or make an additional donation, visit [www.wcpoolc.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.wcpoolc.brownpapertickets.com).  
For more information contact Janet Haynes, at  
[43jhaynes04@gmail.com](mailto:43jhaynes04@gmail.com). Proceeds to support  
Extended Outreach Ministry Initiatives in Flint, MI.



608 E. William Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104



## FCC Office Hours

**Mon. — Fri.**

**9 a.m. — 3 p.m.**

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734-926-0554

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*Embracing God's  
word and  
enriching lives*

## 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

## FEBRUARY–MARCH, 2019 CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Feb 5 7:00 p.m. TNS, Mayflower Room (every Tuesday evening)
- Feb 6 8:30 a.m. Text Breakfast, Classic Cup Café (every Wednesday morning)
- 9–3 Warming Shelter, Pilgrim Hall (M, W, and F in February)
- 10:15 a.m. Mind and Spirit Group, Mayflower Room (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday mornings)
- 6:30 p.m. 20–40 Group, Meeting Room (every Wednesday evening)
- Feb 10 NEW MEMBER SUNDAY
- 11:00 a.m. BOCE meeting, Meeting Room
- 11:10 a.m. "Carbon Fee and Dividend," Mayflower Room
- Feb 11 6:00 p.m. Trustees meeting, Meeting Room
- Feb 17 11:00 a.m. Activities and Fellowship Committee, Mayflower Rm
- 2:00 p.m. Community Service Outing (aka Sing & Serve), Gilbert Residence, Ypsilanti MI
- 7:00 p.m. Healing Space, Mayflower Room
- Feb 18 5:30 p.m. Executive Committee, Mayflower Room
- Feb 20 1:00 p.m. Contemporary Issues Series meeting, Mayflower Rm
- Feb 24 11:00 a.m. Music Committee, Mayflower Room
- Feb 25 12:00 p.m. Knights Luncheon Group, Knights on Dexter Rd.
- Feb 26 7:00 p.m. Justice Resounding: Benefit Concert and Lecture, Sanctuary
- Mar 3 11:00 a.m. OWL meeting, Mayflower Room
- Mar 6 ASH WEDNESDAY
- Mar 10 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
- 11:10 a.m. "Tiny Houses and More," Mayflower Room
- Mar 11 6:00 p.m. Trustees meeting, Meeting Room
- Mar 17 SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
- 11:00 a.m. Lenten Workshop for Church School Families, Pilgrim Hall
- 11:00 a.m. Activities and Fellowship Committee, Mayflower Room
- 7:00 p.m. Healing Space, Mayflower Room
- Mar 18 7:00 p.m. Council meeting, Mayflower Room
- Mar 24 THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
- FCC ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY
- 11:00 a.m. Anniversary Celebration, Pilgrim Hall
- Mar 30 9–9 MINI-MISSION DAY
- Mar 31 11:00 a.m. Information meeting for CC Priorities, Sanctuary
- Apr 7 11:00 a.m. Congregational Vote on the CC Priorities, Sanctuary