

Message from the Pastor:



OUR LIFE TOGETHER: MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS

The church is all about meetings. We've been meeting for three weeks now. The first to meet my family and me were those five who helped unload the truck, Bob, Austin, Zack, Tom and Whitney. Moderator, Will, and Marge Adams greeted my daughter, Sarah, and me with a dinner meeting. I am grateful to Kathy Lessman for the many ways she has and is enabling meetings for all of us through the church office. And I am grateful to Lea Bissell for the pictures which have helped me to know you more quickly when we meet. Some of you have stopped in for office visits.

The Knitwitters meet not only to "spin yarns" but to enjoy fellowship as they make and send gifts of love which support ministries here and abroad. Stan Jewell has trimmed and cleared the front of the church. The Seekers followed up with weeding before their meeting. At the heart of their life together, the Seekers share prayers with and for others and create the shawls that wrap those prayers around the ones who receive them. Dottie Oliver has helped me meet a church neighbor and her dog. In addition, she pointed out some routes on both land and water while meeting some of her colleagues in the travel business. Some of you have accompanied me in meeting some of our members who are homebound or in care facilities. Others have met me in conversation about Sunday's scripture or the church's history. There have been meetings with Lay Readers or those of you doing the Children's Sermons. I have met Chrissy Sterling, our Music Director, and Sarah Chin, our new organist. And then there have been the phone calls from those who want to meet, needing assistance with food or housing. Of course, there were the church meetings: Trustees, Deacons, Music, Stewardship and Church Council so far.

Oh yes, and there was the meeting at the ball field. It rained and we had played just long enough for the umpire to call the game with Christ the King having won. I think we could have won if we could have played those last innings. But if we're going to lose, I could believe that Christ, the King would have the appropriate edge.

Meetings can be full of drudgery or they can be full of the promise that we will be met by the One who called us together. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus promises, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20 In such meetings, we might experience a moment of sacred time—time that is blessed and made holy because we have come together in the name of Jesus Christ.

Blessings,
Kay Krejci, pastor

WHAT IS OCWM or OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION?

Included in the annual budget each year of First Congregational is an amount for OCWM, this year \$4,000. The Benevolence Committee has chosen September to focus on and educate the congregation about OCWM.

Through our churches and other UCC churches contributions to Our Churches Wider Mission, the national and international mission of the United Church of Christ and the work of UCC conferences and associations including pastoral placement, leadership development, Christian education, youth ministry, and more are funded. Through these funds, the UCC obeys the mandates of the Gospel to spread the Good News, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless in the US and in over 70 countries worldwide.

In addition to our annual pledge of OCWM, First Congregational is a "5 for 5 church" because of our gifts through the special offerings for:

One Great Hour of Sharing -held in the spring each year

The Christmas Fund – December

Strengthen the Church – observed in August on the church's anniversary Sunday

Neighbors in Need – October 26 this year

It is only through YOUR contributions to the church that that FCC is able to support the work of the greater church through OCWM. THANK YOU!

ON GOING COLLECTIONS AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL...

--Non perishable food items for the North Summit Emergency Center, which reaches out to those in the northern Summit County area including Twinsburg. These items may be left in the collection box located in the downstairs hall by the kitchen entry or in the church narthex. Thanks to Geo and Marge Richner for regularly delivering the items to the center located in Macedonia. Any non-perishable items are welcome but always in need are: peanut butter and jelly, cereal, quick meals such as macaroni and cheese, tuna helper, etc. Check the grocery ads for sales! Please check for expiration dates.

--Eye glasses, pop can tabs, and Campbell soup labels are distributed through Church Women United. These items may be left on the table near the office or in the church narthex.

Women's Fellowship News . . .

Women's Fellowship luncheon and meeting begin again
Thursday, September 4, 2008 12:00 Noon Pot Luck lunch

Bring food to share and table service

President: Marge Roberts

Hostesses: Dorothy Bascombe, Louisa Anderson, Mary Lou Sheller

Devotions: Vi Downer

Program: Pastor Kay Krejci

The Fall Worship Schedule will resume on Sunday, September 7th. It will begin at 9:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall featuring a delicious continental breakfast and many friendly people. This is a great time to meet our fabulous Sunday school teachers. There are classes for children and adults. Come see what Christian Education has to offer you. We're looking forward to another inspirational year with our church friends. Worship service will then begin at 10:30 a.m. The Children's Choir will practice in the choir room after the Children's Sermon. They will sing on the last Sunday of the month. The Adult Choir will resume singing during the worship service on Sunday, September 14.. Youth group will also begin on September 14 with a canoe trip after worship. Youth group is open to grades 6 - 12. They usually meet at the church. Information regarding meetings, times and places will be posted in the Tower and in the bulletin.

2008 MS Pedal to the Point Wrap up

The 2008 Pedal to the Point is now history. On August 16st & 17^{thd} over 2750 cyclists participated in the 2008 version of the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society's Pedal to the Point benefit ride. This year we experienced very nice weather. Many have asked how long it takes me of *actual* riding time. According to my bikes computer the ride to Sandusky took 5 hours and 31 minutes . The trip back to Berea on Sunday took 5 hours and 32 minutes. How about that for consistency. These times do not count 5 rest stops plus the lunch stop rather only while on the bike.

The number of cyclists was up again approximately 300 from last year. Preliminary figures estimate that the \$1,000,000 goal should be close that was raised to promote research toward finding a cure for this dreaded disease.

Again, the success of this tour is greatly, not because of the cyclists, like myself, that rode but because of the many people such as yourselves, my church family. You were willing to open up your hearts and purses to lend support, both emotionally, spiritually and financially to make my ride a success. For this I am ever grateful and thank you all so very, very much.

I also want to again thank my pedaling partners, my nephews Larry and Doug Verbic who rode with me again this year. Doug is now 14 and is a real veteran MS Bike Tour rider. Actually, Larry and I were not able to keep up with Doug this year as he got a road bike that I think has wings. When you see him he really deserves a great big pat on the back for his great ride. I think football practice really pays off.

God willing we will be back for the 2009 Tour. Again thank you all very, very much and God Bless you,

Dick Sheller

Thank You!

To the Knitwitters:

I wanted to let you know that we sent all of the crocheted baby blankets and hats to a medical mission group in Mali, Africa. They were so thrilled to be able to take these items to the moms of the newborns at their maternal-infant clinic.

Mimi Hable

Director of Operations

MedWish International

Dear Ladies, (Knitwitters)

Thank you for the beautiful afghan! It reminds me of Joseph's "coat of many colors". I will treasure it an our fellowship in service to our Lord, Jesus Christ, and to his brothers and sisters in need of comfort.

God bless you all!

Jim Link

P.S.—I'll miss your laughter on Thursday mornings.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the gift you are and the fits you gave to my family and me. We are looking forward to our trip to Cedar Pint; we will continue to look back at all your kindnesses and find good courage to serve the Lord, with you, in the world that lies ahead. Remember that Jesus Christ is with you always! God Bless!

Jim Link

To the Congregation,

Thank you for all of your prayers, cards and concerns during my surgery and recuperation. It meant a lot to me and my family.

Thank you,

Marge Heston

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to service on the Altar Guild. The schedule is rotated on a monthly basis. Responsibilities include:

1. Keep the candles filled with oil.
2. Keep the candelabrum clean.
3. Keep the communion cloths clean and repaired.
4. Change the paraments as needed, following the church liturgical calendar year.

Please see Louise Jackson if you have any questions, or call the office if you are interested.

Relay for Life Update

Once again our very own Footsteps team has received the platinum award. This means they raised more than \$10,000. Their total to date is \$11,310.50. The current captain, Marge Roberts, received a notice from the American Cancer Society noting the accomplishment. Please congratulate the team on this great accomplishment. Marge will be handing over the captain's reigns to Gayle Davet. Good luck to the team in the coming year. Anyone interested in joining the team, please see Gayle Davet.



Chime Choir

Chime choir will be starting shortly for the Fall Season. There is a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall. There will be a regular chime choir and also a junior chime choir. Experience is helpful, but not necessary. If you have any questions, please see Chrissy Sterling. Practice times and performance times will be forth coming.

Hi everyone!!!!

Missed last month as I was visiting with my Uncle Mickey down at Disney World. I needed a vacation. So, I came back and there is someone new in the Pastor's office. This new woman, Kay, is very nice. She has shared her lunch with me several times. (I wonder if she knows it?)



It's always nice to see the church so busy in the summer. First I was very impressed with Vacation Bible School. I had a picnic of my own as you can well imagine. Thank goodness for children. Debbie, Julie, Denice, Lisa and Carol did such a great job. The helpers were wonderful too. I wonder what next year will bring.

I was in church last Sunday and was very surprised to see what a good job Mark H. did with the service. I especially like the duet he sang with his father. Is this the same kid I see running around the church after service? Can't be!!!!

The baptism a few weeks ago for the Murch grandtwins was so much fun. I hope when my mousekins are born they get walked around the church to meet everyone. Did you know there will be more of my family soon? Kathy, remember these are just little ones so don't get too rambunctious with the traps.

Must go. I have to get ready for choir practice in a few weeks. I've been working at those hymns.

The Church Mouse

Christian Women's Fellowship Retreat
Shaw Retreat Center Camp Asbury
September 26-28, 2008

It is not too early to start planning for the annual retreat at Camp Asbury in Hiram, Ohio. The theme is **There's a hole in my boat—now what?** *“Depend on the Lord; trust Him, and He will take care of you.”* Psalm 37:5 (NCV) Some of the topics to cover related to the theme will be “my boat has a slow leak, or is it deterioration?”, “my boat has a hole”, “my boat is sinking”, “different boats” and “S.O.S.S. (sailing on smooth seas)” It should be an outstanding time of prayer and praise for our Lord and Savior. The total cost is \$80.00, which includes 5 meals and 2 nights lodging. Everyone must prepay! The registration deadline is September 14. Send registration fees and forms to: Dana Flenner, 11977 Waywood Drive, Twinsburg, Ohio. Registration blanks and information are available from Marge Roberts. Any questions, please see Marge Roberts or email Dana Flenner at flenner@roadrunner.com.

2008 VBS Update

This summer we had an action-packed week of music, stories, games, crafts, kid-friendly activities and adventures in God's BIG BACKYARD. But, God's BIG BACKYARD was not your typical Vacation Bible School (VBS)! It was all about service. Through activities and projects, 26 kids & two part-time guests learned to serve their families, friends, neighbors, community, and Jesus! Kids were challenged each day to complete individual acts of service at home, called Its Your Serve!

Because this year's VBS mission theme centered on serving others, we partnered with The United Service Organization (USO). On a year round basis, the USO sends the troops, or deployed service members, care packages. These care packages contain items requested by the troops. We gathered items to donate for USO care packages and, at last count, we were fortunate enough to collect **63 full and/or family sized items, 318 trial and/or trial-sized items, 56 personal hygiene items, 85 food/snack items, 45 VBS coloring pages, and 10 hand-signed (by the kids) cards.** Thank you for helping our church and this agency show God's love and help to those in service of our country.

Friends and family helped us celebrate at a Post-VBS picnic on Friday, June 27, 2008 at 7:00 PM. After enjoying 'Servant Sundaes' and the traditional piñata, the day wrapped up with a group photo as we headed back into the sanctuary for the final daily, as well as weekly, recap! At that time, the kids performed their VBS program in the sanctuary. Lastly, we celebrated Jesus' love together in worship during service on Sunday, June 29, 2008 at 9:30 AM when the children performed their VBS program for the congregation!

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31 was the God's BIG BACKYARD Bible Theme Verse. In God's BIG BACKYARD, everyone was invited to learn what it meant to look over the fence, and discover how rewarding service can be! Of course, the congregation First Congregational Church of Twinsburg (FCC) provided numerous examples of folks that lovingly, generously, and unselfishly donate their time and talents to those in need. In addition to the USO, we were incredibly blessed to have folks from our congregation and the surrounding community speak to the kids each day about their acts of service and included the following: Louise Jackson, Knitwitters; the Twinsburg EMS/Fire Department - John Khaus, Mike Lange and Dennis Raggins; and Tom Adams, US Marine Corp. I would like to humbly thank each and every one of the speakers and volunteers, and the entire congregation who contributed in any way to VBS by so generously volunteering your time, talents, resources, donations, and spiritual gifts to and for participating in the 2008 God's BIG BACKYARD Vacation Bible School. May God continue to bless you as you have blessed others.

Cont'd on page 7

Please look at the 2008 God's BIG BACKYARD Vacation Bible School scrapbook in Fellowship Hall. This is my gift to you ~ Enjoy!

Finally, I'd personally like to acknowledge this year's God's BIG BACKYARD VBS Crew:

Tom Adams	Lori Bencie	Kayla Bencie	Ashley Bissell
Terri Bissell	Gayle Davet	Carol Doe	Debbie Dolfi
Troy Dolfi	Lisa Downor	Alex Downor	Gabby Downor
Mark Holzwarth	Louise Jackson	Stacy Koller	Kathy Lessman
Pastor Jim Link	Julie Miller	Madison Miller	Diane Powell
Ashley Pratt	Judy Richner	Gwen Richner	Denice Sheehan
Caitlin Sheehan	Tara Shilling	Chrissy Sterling	Jane Weiss
Philip Weiss	Vivian Weiss	The Christian Ed Committee	
The Congregation of FCC		The United Service Organization (USO)	
Twinsburg Fire/EMS Dept.			

Yours in God's BIG BACKYARD,

Debbie Dolfi
2008 Vacation Bible School Director
First Congregational Church of Twinsburg



Lockup Trustee for the month of September - Terri Bissell

On Monday evening, September 29, at 7:30, Church Women United will recognizing outstanding teenagers in the various congregations. Two young females from our congregation will be recognized, Gwen Richner and Vivian Weiss. The service will be held at the Mount Olive Baptist Church here in Twinsburg. Everyone is welcome to attend. Any questions, please see Marge Roberts.

ATTENDANCE		
	Sunday School	Worship Service
August 3 rd	None	89
August 10 th	None	85
August 17 th	None	74
August 24 th	None	89

I need your help!
From Andrea Bissell

As some of you already know (and some are just learning), this October, I'll be participating in a very special event called the Breast Cancer 3-Day.

I'll walk 60 miles over the course of three days with thousands of other women and men. The net proceeds will support breast cancer research, education, screening and treatment through Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund.

I am participating in the Breast Cancer 3-Day in Washington, D.C. which is October 3-5, 2008. I know that still leave a little over a month for fundraising but I just wanted to send out a plea for help. We have all be en affected by breast cancer in one way or another, and any support you can offer is greatly appreciated. I appreciate everyone's support while I attempt to participate in this great event.

I've agreed to raise at least \$2,200 in donations. It is my goal to raise even more than that but I know I have my work cut out for me. So I need your help. Would you please consider making a donation of any amount? Keep in mind how far I'm walking - and how hard I'll have to train. You can give online at www.The3Day.org. Just follow the link below to visit my personal fundraising webpage and make a donation. You can also call 800.996.3DAY to donate over the phone.

At that website you are also able to print out a form that could be mailed in (or if you prefer to donate by mail just let me know and I will send you a form). I really appreciate it.

I am doing this in honor and memory of all of those people in my life that have fought against this disease (or another form of cancer). If you have someone special in mind that you want me to walk for just let me know, a good friend of mine is going to make me a shirt with some those names on it (for me to wear in the event).

According to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, approximately 200,000 American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and nearly 40,000 will die from the disease. That's why I'm walking so far. To do something bold about t breast cancer. I hope that you'll share this incredible adventure with me - by supporting me in my fundraising efforts.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Sincerely,
Andrea

P.S. Ask your employer if they will double your donation through a matching gift program!



Member News

Happy Birthday to:

Elaine Mueller

09/01/08

Nancy Wolff

09/01/08

Chrissy Delgado

09/02/08

Liz Murch

09/03/08

Lea Bissell

09/03/08

Stan Cook

09/06/08

Matt Schmidt

09/06/08

Charla Bissell

09/09/08

Richard Barnes

09/11/08

Kevin Powell

09/13/08

David Schilling

09/16/08

Cory Smeallie

09/19/08

Annetta Muir

09/19/08

Don Irvin

09/22/08

Adda Reihl

09/26/08

Oliver Mayer

09/27/08

Karen Holzwarth

09/30/08

Esther Corbett

09/30/08



Happy Anniversary to:

Don & Luvette Irvin

09/01/2002

Terry & Carol Neal

09/06/1971

Dick & Mary Lou Sheller

09/10/1955

Dan & Judy Richner

09/11/1993

Dave & Liz Murch

09/12/1970

Patrick & Erin Hooper

09/14/2002

Rick & Denice Sheehan

09/16/1978

Will & Marge Adams

09/18/2004

Troy & Debbie Dolfi

09/24/1994



If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office so we can update our records.

Youth Group Schedule

Sept. 14—Canoeing after Worship Service



Scrap Booking

Friday,

September 19

6:00 p.m.—midnight
in the Fellowship Hall

Communion Servers

Dave Schilling
Aaron Mayer
Ken Prentice
Judy Turk
Bonnie Williams
Dan Richner - Bread
Rick Sheehan - Greeters



**Communion will be
Sunday, September 7th
this month**

Lay Reader's Schedule

September 7—Ariel Bissell
September 14—Joel Pietrantozzi
September 21—Tara Schilling
September 28—Jane Weiss

Children's Sermon Schedule

September 7—Joel Pietrantozzi
September 14—Will Adams
September 21—Gayle Davet
September 28—Karen Holzwarth

If there are any changes to this, please let the office know so that it can be correct in the bulletin.

Adult Choir practice resumes on Thursday, September 4. Practices are held on Thursday evenings beginning at 7:30 p.m. The choir will resume singing on Sunday, September 14. Everyone is welcome to join.

Acolytes Schedule

September 7, 2008

Andrew Prentice
Sophie Keith

September 21, 2008

Madelyn Sokolowski
David Schilling

September 14, 2008

Bryan Bensie
Brianna Pratt

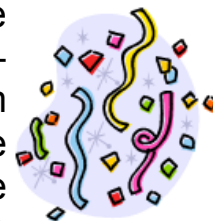
September 28, 2008

Kayla Bensie
Gwen Richner

The families of the names in **bold** have Acolyte Coordinator Duty and should light the sticks and assist the acolytes. Please see the instruction sheet posted on the wall next to the sticks. *If you are unable to serve on your assigned week*, please find a replacement and notify the church office of the change. Thank you!

First Congregational Fall Fling

Please plan to join us for the Fall Fling to be held on Saturday, September 6 from 5—10 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. It will be held at the British American Club, 8564 Ravenna Road. The cost is \$15.00 per person. The menu will include baked lasagna, baked Italian chicken, green bean almandine, tossed salad and rolls. There will be a dessert contest, so plan on entering your favorite dessert. There will be a cash beer bar. BYOB (wash provided). Tickets are available from Dave Powell, Cameron Buckland, or Phil Weiss. Any questions, please see Dave Powell. This event has traditionally been held in the Spring, but was decided to be held in the Fall this year.



Surely the days have become noticeably shorter, and the late summer night critters are more boisterous. The seeds planted in gardens and fields are maturing and yielding their special bounties. This summer of '08 is almost a memory.

Just like the gardeners and farmers, we as a church family planted a seed on June first when we voted to call Kay Krejci as our Pastor. Now we see a new face and hear a new voice in our pulpit. The seed we planted in the spring has matured. Farmers and gardeners alike recognize that harvest is not an end, merely a step in the cycle. It is truly a promise in and for the future. We've made a promise to one another, ourselves and mostly to God. Good for us.

Just as surely as summer winds down, so the work at church seems to crank up. Quite a few things have come flying at us over the past couple of months, and I have kept promising to address them in September, well, guess what....

I shall present each concern in order, as they have been presented to me.

Our constitution provides that we will have a Pastoral Relations committee. Since we now have a called Pastor this seems like a good idea. The Pastoral search committee will morph into that responsibility, at least until the next annual meeting.

The Altr Guild has asked to become a regular committee, with all committee responsibilities, including but not limited to, council representation, and rotating and renewing membership. The very least this will entail is a constitutional amendment, as committees are named in that document. The most it will entail is folks to step up to the plate and fill the positions created. Neither is impossible, or really very difficult.

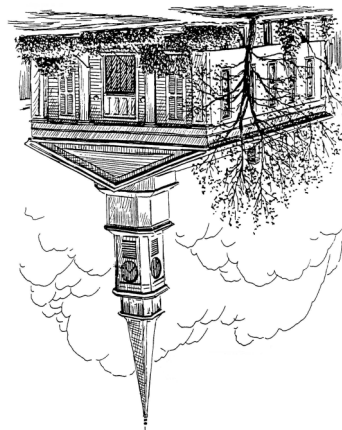
The constitution also states that we must have an installation service within six months of calling a new Pastor. I have discussed the matter with Kay, and we are planning the service for January, for a variety of reasons. Planning will begin as soon as all our committees are back into the swing of monthly meetings.

Finally, let's remember to remember to thank God for all we are and have. We've no battles or hurricanes from which to run. We sleep soundly knowing that there are folks waiting to come to our aid, and still more who are pledged to defend us and our country. We are free, and we are saved forever. We have our Savior.

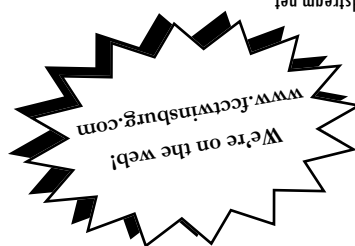
Thanks to God

Will

On the square in Twinsburg
since 1848



Dated Material—
Please Rush!



e-mail: firstcongregational.church@windstream.net

Church: 330-425-2181
fax: 330-425-1759

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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Inside this issue:

Message from the Pastor	1
Benevolence News	2
Church News	3
Thank You!; Relay For Life news	4
Church Mouse; Women's Retreat	5
VBS Update	6-7
Breast Cancer Event	8
Member News	9
September Schedules	10
Message from the Moderator	11
September Calendar	Insert



Come worship with us
and bring a friend!
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Tower Submissions

Articles for the *Tower* may be e-mailed directly to the church at firstcongregational.church@windstream.net. Hard copies, CD's, or diskettes may be dropped off at the office.

Tower deadlines are posted on the monthly calendar and in the Sunday worship bulletin. For questions, or to be added to or taken off the mailing list, please send an e-mail or call the church office at 330-425-2181.