

Message from the Pastor:



READY!

SET!

GROW!

It's challenging work! Last Wednesday evening, Charlene J. Smith led us in beginning a process of being renewed in life, vision and mission at First Congregational. She asked, "What do you love about your church?" Some of those things named:

Fellowship; family; the people; music; the potential; cooks; sharing joys and sorrows with one another; friends; history; compassion; cooperation; friendly; the building; enthusiasm; unique; the UCC relationship; diversity.

Charlene reminded us of the Purpose of the evening: *We are gathered to discern God's will for us as the church of today and the future. We do this through prayer, by relying on the Holy Spirit, by listening to one another, by listening to the still speaking God, and by taking action to move God's church forward.*

Then came Bible study – Philippians 3:12-21 – questions of the text and of ourselves:

What words, phrases or thoughts had the most impact on you? Is God speaking to our church through this passage? What is required of us?

We began the "Get Ready" phase of the process – To know where we are going, we have to know where we have been. It is important to name and claim our history. This allows us to move into the future and gives us permission to leave behind what no longer energizes us.

We named some accomplishments of the church: we were the first church in Twinsburg to call a woman pastor (1999); we are an open and diverse congregation; we engage in social ministries; we are community minded; we have endured through challenging times; we are a safe place; we welcome and are committed to and with youth; we welcome strangers; we help stranded travelers; we have come together to build the parsonage and a house for Habitat for Humanity; we are a health support network.

Describe our church – our strengths and our core values. Then name our present ministries.

Some of the words used to describe our church:

safe place; community minded; commitment to all people; faith-based; outreach; love.

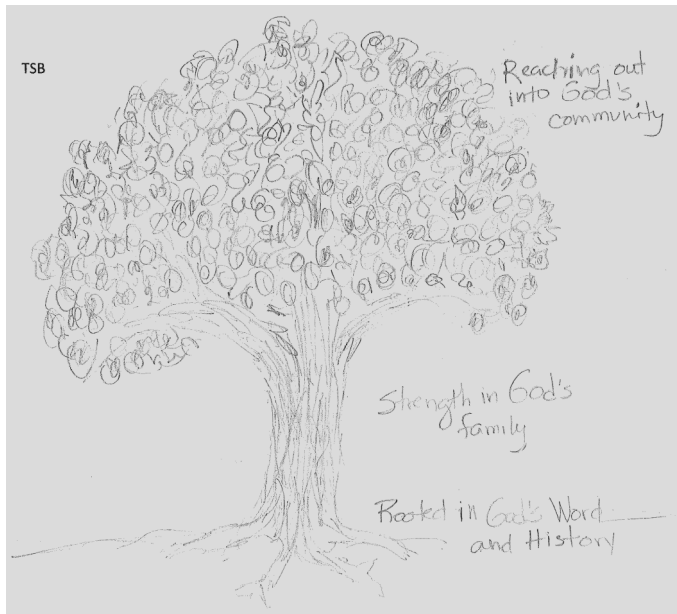
Strengths today: Women's Fellowship; the choir; loyalty; Sunday School and Vacation Bible School; Benevolence; youth group; volunteers; feeding and being fed; lay leaders; healthy relationships with other churches; memorials; empathy; Knitwitters; prayer shawl ministry; supporting one another through health concerns.

Core Values today: open to all people; faith; tradition; compassion; outreach; spiritual core; strong family ties.

Who is God calling us to be today?

This was just the beginning of a process that will take additional time and commitment before we name and claim a vision and mission of the church.

We are not finished with this work, but Terri Bissell's doodling yields an intriguing image, especially given the psalm in scripture designated for Sunday, May 24: Psalm 1: 1-3.



“...They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither.”

WATCH FOR THE NEXT VISION/MISSION EVENT!

CONFIRMATION CLASS 2009

On May 17, the following six young people offered their faith statements in worship: Tara Schilling, Doug Verbic, Justin Doe, Vivian Weiss, Joey Schulz, and Robert Hoyt. Please read their faith statements on pages 6, 7 and 8. Confirmation Sunday is May 31. At this time, these youth will make promises confirming their discipleship in following Jesus, the Christ.

MAY 31 -THIS IS PENTECOST SUNDAY, the birthday of the Christian Church. It is when the first disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit and began to spread the good news of Jesus Christ (Jesus' life, death and resurrection) for all people. It is a day full of celebration. Red is the symbolic color for the Holy Spirit in church tradition. **WEAR RED!**

FASHION SHOW and TEA

The May 17 fashion show was fun, fascinating and sold out. The fellowship hall was filled to capacity. The 17 models (adults, children and youth) and the over 70 dresses that were modeled made for a delight-filled afternoon. Dresses, from house to elegant evening-out, spanned the years from the 1890's to 1990's culminating in a bridal gown extravaganza also spanning the years. The dresses were modeled as KATHY LESSMAN accompanied on piano with “timely period” music. THANK YOU, DOTTIE OLIVER and your assistants, ANDREA BENNETT & CAROLYN RUTAN for organizing and collecting the dresses. THANK YOU to all of the MODELS who showed off the dresses with grace and style. THANK YOU BRUCE KREJCI for working the sound system and recording the event; THANK YOU to KEN RODDIE for working behind the scenes; THANK YOU RICH BISSELL for escorting the “Brides”. THANK YOU ELSIE PEEL, for coordinating the treats and tea (punch too). And thanks to the many of you who made the tea sandwiches and brought the many delectable sweets.

Blessings, Kay Krejci

WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO (Matthew 6:21)---and indeed your treasurers were shared during the One Great Hour of Sharing annual offering in May. Totals will be shared on the Benevolence Bulletin Board when the final remittance is made. A reminder that through this offering, we join nine other Christian denominations in responding to needs throughout the world---today in more than 100 countries. Special thanks to Rev. Kay for her extra support, to Kathy Lessman for the inspiring bulletin covers, and to Tom Holzwarth for the meaningful message during the Children's Sermon.

ONGOING COLLECTIONS

There is an official Lions collection box in Fellowship Hall for used eyeglasses. Through the efforts of Lions International, used eyeglasses are recycled and for less than 8 cents per pair and can be given to one of the 153 million people throughout the world in need of eyeglasses for simple vision improvement and an opportunity to improve their quality of life.

As a result of the recent economic conditions and with school children home more during the summer months, the Emergency Center serving northern Summit County including many families from Twinsburg is in great need for non perishable food items. **Please continue to respond to this ministry as you do your grocery shopping.** Although all food items are welcome, there is always a need for items like peanut butter and jelly, cereal, quick meals such as tuna helpers and macaroni and cheese.

ADMIRE THE FLOWERS PLANTED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH...

---First of all thanks to the Sunday School classes who were responsible for planting the pansies by the back entrance. They really add a nice touch.

---Thanks to a memorial donation for Barbara Roach and with some help from Women's Fellowship, additional flowers were planted and mulched in front of the church and also a pot of geraniums purchased for the back entrance. Special thanks to Rick and Gail Herrilko, Carol Zenisek, and Andrea Bennett for planting and spreading the mulch. Through out the summer a little TLC is always need to "deadhead" and weed.

Women's Fellowship News . . .

Greet summer and the picnic season with the daytime Women's Fellowship for an indoor picnic on Thursday, June 4, at noon. The meeting will combine Knitwitters, who meet at 10:00 the first and third Thursday of each month, and Women's Fellowship. All are invited; bring a salad or dessert to share (picnic food), Devotions and a brief meeting will follow the picnic; this will be the last gathering of the group until September. Knitwitters will continue to meet throughout the summer.

Don't forget to bring in your pennies! Women's Fellowship is still collecting pennies in order to purchase gift certificates for the raffle held during the Yankee Bazaar. There are containers for pennies on the table in Fellowship Hall.

The following people will be honored this year on Christian Education Sunday, June 7. Congratulations to everyone!

3rd Graders

Brooke Dolfi
William Sheehan
Kyla Sokolowski
Walter Sterling
Peter Weiss

Acolytes

Anthony Pietrantozzi
Kevin Powell

High School Graduates

Ariel Bissell
Karen Powell
Cayla Van Gilder
Cody Roberts

College Graduates

Heather Hoyt graduated in May from Bowling Green State University with a major in business and communication
Kathleen Prentice graduated in May from Kent State University with a major in Secondary Social Studies education
Jonathan Williams received a PhD in economics from the University of Virginia. He will be teaching economics at the University of Georgia starting in the fall.

Sunday School Teachers

Mary Lou Sheller	Phil Weiss	Judy Turk
Terri Bissell	Gayle Davet	Rich Bissell
Lisa Downor	Joel Pietrantozzi	

Youth Group News

We will be sending a total of 15 youth to Camp Christian This summer. Ten will be going to Senior Hi Camp, June 21-27 and 5 will be going to Jr. High camp in July.

The Youth group will be doing an all night "Rock-a-thon" on August 1-2 to help raise money towards the cost of camp. They will be looking for sponsors when the time gets closer. More information will be forthcoming in future Towers and the Sunday bulletins.

The youth group will be camping together locally sometime during the summer. The date is still to be determined. Please watch the Sunday bulletins for further details.

ATTENDANCE		
	Sunday School	Worship Service
Apr. 26 th	N/A	76
May 3 rd	N/A	92
May 10 th	N/A	106
May 17 th	N/A	92
May 24 th	N/A	79

**Lockup Trustee for the
month of June -
Dave Murch**

Statement of Faith - Robert Hoyt

I believe in the one and only God who gave His only Son to forgive us for our sins. God is like a shield which acts as a rock and protector of the good that has been created to lead us from the evil in the world. God allows us to be who we are, to do some good in the name of God, Our Shepherd and the overseer of life!

The Lord Jesus, the uncorrupted, devoted His love and dreams to lead us to the eternal life. He is the healer of the sick and the one who raises people from the dead, our guardian and guide. He reassures my confidence when I am afraid and when I am nervous. He lets my mind remove any doubt it may have. Jesus always shows me the way to safety. He is our Savior of humanity.

The Holy Spirit is the light that gives us strength, always giving me strength to make the right choice rather than the easy one, giving up and taking the easy way out. The Holy Spirit is the one who lives in us, the world's light and our eternal flame.

The church is like a safe haven. We can all worship freely without being judged. The church sends the youth to church camp. We discuss what we believe with people our own age. We spend the whole week getting closer to God!

Faith Statement—Joey Schultz

God, I feel that You are always watching over and protecting us, especially every time I go to church camp in the summer. It seems that You're there right next to us and keeping us safe. Without You, I would have no faith in myself.

Jesus, Shepherd, redeemer, you are my light, my role model. Through you I can learn to become a better Christian. Anytime I have to make a hard decision I think "What would Jesus do?", helping me to make the wiser choice.

Indwelt inside of me is the Holy Spirit, my counselor. You are the part of God that is shown through me, whether it be reading the Bible or even communicating with God through prayer.

God	Shepherd	Counselor
High above	You forgive	I am
Observer of man	You teach us	One with God
You are the One	We are your people	Indwelt in us all
Forever	Caretaker	Spirit

Attention Everyone!

The summer schedule for worship will begin on Sunday, June 14. Services will begin at 9:30 a.m. Communion will also be served on this Sunday. This will allow us to take advantage of the cooler morning air. Services will resume at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 13. Sunday School will also resume that day at 9:15 a.m.

Faith Statement Justin Doe

I believe in the Father,
 The Eternal One,
 The Guardian of our lives,
 He has the ability to comfort when feeling down.

I believe in the Son,
 The Great Savior,
 By taking part in Holy Communion,
 He acts to forgive us.
 He made the ultimate sacrifice,
 For the forgiveness of our sins.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 The feeling that fills us with life,
 And the presence of the Lord,
 Blowing in the wind all around us. Amen

The Church is a place where the community can come together and share in Holy Communion and worship God together as one. It is an excellent time and place to have conversations between people on their views of the Lord and the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is what the church is to me.

Faith Statement Vivian Weiss

I believe in God, who loves me and cares for me. Like the commandment You gave to your people, I believe You are the one and only God. Nothing else is as important or competes with You. You bring healing to Your creation, because You love everything You have made. You have been here and will be here forever. And You are here now. You are my Creator.

I believe in Jesus. You died on a cross, my Savior, and suffered everything I should suffer, even though You did nothing to deserve it. Then, You performed another one of your divine miracles. You woke from death and defied it, rising into heaven to show how our God is everlasting. This is the ultimate sacrifice, and I have done nothing to deserve the love I have been shown. You are the Messiah, Christ, Redeemer.

I believe in the Spirit. You are God's Breath, and also divine. You change defeat to victory, like a Jesus of today. You are working in and through people, in today's world. You are unseen, but still, you are Holy.

The church is significant because it provides the support I need to keep going. Also, it provides a community that is much-needed at times.

My Faith Statement Doug Verbic

Sitting down and trying to comprehend my own feelings on who God is and what he means to me has been quite difficult. I don't only come to church because I am forced to, or to see my friends, but because I feel comfortable at church. No one is demanding anything from me or forcing me to do anything. I feel at ease with myself as well as with everyone around me. After really sitting and thinking about this, I decided that my God is wonderful. He is the eternal light that keeps me going through the good times as well as the bad times. He is like a safety blanket that will never let me fail. He is always a sense of comfort. To really feel the benefits of believing in God, you must prove yourself to God by overcoming the problems and obstacles that he tests you with. I feel that I am beginning to become closer and closer to God everyday. And one of the best things about our creator is that he always is forgiving and understanding. He is always forgiving me as well as mankind of our sins as he understands that we realize we have sinned. Accept that you have sinned and you will be forgiven.

I feel the same amount of love and gratitude towards God as I feel towards his only son, Jesus. Jesus may be the only human being that has not sinned. He led a sinless life as our generous leader. He is responsible for spreading the word of God throughout our people. He relentlessly spread the love of God to people who wanted to hear what he had to say. Without Jesus, I would probably not be standing in front of all of you today in this church which would also most likely cease to exist. Then, on top of everything else Jesus has done, he paid for our sins. He peacefully walked to his death so that my sins, and mankind's sins would be forgiven. He made the ultimate sacrifice so that I could call myself a Christian. I would like to say that I would have done the same if I were him. Jesus was our Redeemer.

The Holy Spirit has really been hard for me to understand. I have never really thought it through. I just kind of accepted that the Holy Spirit was there and never really understood what it was. Now, I realize that the Holy Spirit is in everyone of us. The Holy Spirit is God's Presence. God is now anywhere and everywhere at once. God is always with me as he shares his vast knowledge and unbelievable wisdom with me. It is a really quite wonderful feeling to know that God and his Spirit are watching over me at all times during the day and night. I feel that I am never truly alone with the Holy Spirit in me as i can confide to God anytime that I need him. God's love is unconditional. God is the Holy Ghost.

The church is a place where I can worship and accept God. I can worship God as well as come to peace with myself. The Church is a really special place.

I don't think that it really matters who or what God is; the demonstrations of God's love is sufficient enough for me.

My Faith Statement Tara Schilling

I believe God is always there helping me through the day. He helps me make all the right decisions. He is always open to talk to and he will respond but on His own time. God is also like a parent to me. He watches over me, loves me. He gives me a home and a family in His church and feeds me through the Spirit of Communion. God is the Creator of the World; He made plants, animal, and humans. Because of God I have hope, joy, and humor. God comforts me during times of sorrow and He is a celebrant during times of joy.

I believe that because of Jesus I have salvation. Jesus died on the cross so that I could have eternal life. He loves me so much to give me life. When Jesus was living on earth He was a healer and a teacher. Jesus taught by example and stories found in the Bible.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is life. The Holy Spirit enlightens me to fulfill God's wishes. When filled with the Holy Spirit I feel that I can accomplish the things God wants. I believe that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit together all form a trinity. They all connect with each other to help me become a better Christian.

The church needs me. I learn a lot when I go. I am able to have a discussion about the things I've learned that Sunday with my friends before school, and to teach some friends that don't attend church and I tell them all about God. I try to spread the word of God around so more people will go to church and listen to the stories of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit every Sunday instead of just attending on Christmas, Easter or any special day. And this leads me to tell you why I need the church. I need the church. Without the church, I could not visualize what Christmas and Easter really mean. Each year that goes past I continue to learn more about those days and more about the Bible.

Summer Music

June 7—Children's Choir (last Sunday until Fall)

June 14—

June 21—VBS Kid's Songs

June 28—Elsie Peel

There are still Sundays open for the rest of the summer. Please be sure to sign up on the sheet in the Choir Room. You may sing or play an instrument. If you need help, see Chrissy Sterling.



Tickets are on sale for the baskets that have been gathered from the Relay For Life teams. There are 37 baskets, each one approximately \$100 in value. Our own Relay For Life team, Footsteps, has 2 baskets. One basket features a queen/king size handmade commemorative quilt and the other one is \$100 worth of scratch off lottery tickets. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 7 / \$5.00 and are available from Betty McKnight, Joyce Harney, Bev Hegedish, Mary Williams or any Footsteps team member or you may call the office. Brochures outlining the baskets available are on the table in Fellowship Hall. Help support the race for a cure.

Happy Birthday to:

Bethany Conway

06/05/09

Dorla Towslee

06/07/09

Chuck Geither

06/08/09

Shari Schultz

06/10/09

George Ficken

06/11/09

Kayla Bensie

06/12/09

Kyla Sokolowski

06/12/09

Mary Williams

06/15/09

Zoey Downer

06/17/09

Kenny Prentice

06/17/09

Ruth Prentice

06/19/09

Rick Herrilko

06/20/09

Melanie Merritt

06/21/09

Phil Weiss

06/24/09

Denise Sheehan

06/26/09

Caitlin Sheehan

06/27/09



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

Celebrating

An Anniversary This Month

Todd, Sr. & Lisa Downor 06/01/1994

Paul & Regina Munn 06/03/1983

Ken & Roni Prentice 06/06/1981

Jim & Elsie Peel 06/14/1969

George & Marge Richner 06/16/1956

Joel & Mikki Pietrantozzi 06/17/1989

Russ & Kathleen Roberts 06/18/1988

Ken & Ruth Prentice 06/19/1954

Mike & Annetta Muir 06/19/1976

Bob & Marianne Davet 06/20/1959

John & Dorla Towslee 06/20/1964

Tim & Lori Bensie 06/20/1992

Jim & Denise Link 06/20/1993

Jim & Marge Roberts 06/21/1958

John & Bonnie Williams 06/22/1974

Bob & Jan Hanzel 06/28/2003

Church Picnic

June 7, 2009



The Church Picnic will be held on June 7th this year. It will take place in the small pavilion at the rear of Chamberlin Park from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. There will be no coffee hour that day. There will be a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall for dessert, salads, or munchies. Meat / buns, condiments, ice and drinks will be provided. Come on out and join the fun.

Scrap Booking Friday

June 19, 2009

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



Servers—June 2009

Dave Schilling Aaron Mayer
Lynn Schmidt Diane Powell
Ken Prentice
Judy Turk - Bread
Rich Bissell - Greeters

**Communion will be
Sunday, June 14th this month**

Acolyte Schedule - June 2009

June 7— **Brooke Dolfi**
Jared Doe
June 14—**Andrew Prentice**
Jason Powell
June 21—**Peter Weiss**
Mark Holzwarth
June 28—**Madelyn Sokolowski**
David Schilling

Lay Reader's Schedule—June 2009

June 7— Christian Ed Sunday
June 14—Kathy Lessman
June 21—Mark Holzwarth
June 28—Chrissy Sterling

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.

**Children's Sermon Schedule
June 2009**

June 7— Christian Ed Sunday
June 14—Will Adams
June 21—Tom Holzwarth
June 28—Denice Sheehan

***If you are unable to serve as
Lay Reader, Children's Sermon,
or Acolyte on
your assigned week,
please find a replacement and
notify the church office of the
change. Thank you!***

Flower Schedule—June 2009

June 7—
June 14— Jim & Elsie Peel
June 21— Jim & Marge Roberts
June 28—

Coffee Hour Schedule—June 2009

June 7— No Coffee Hour
June 14—Christian Ed Committee
June 21—Fellowship Committee
June 28—

There are dates open for flowers and Coffee Hour. The sheets are posted downstairs in Fellowship Hall. Remember, flowers are now \$25.00. Please pay for them when you sign up. Make the check payable to "Women's Fellowship". You may put the check in the offering plate, or drop it off at the office. There are still people who have not paid for flowers from January—April. If you aren't sure, please check with the office.

Thank You!



A SPECIAL THANK YOU Church Family for all the loving support given through prayers, hugs, phone calls, cards, and encouraging words during my little detour in life's road. How blessed I am! ML
Sheller

To My Church Family & Friends,
I'd like to thank Dottie Oliver, coordinator and emcee; Kathy Lessman, our pianist; the beautiful models; the kitchen crew and all involved for making the 1st Vintage Fashion Show and Tea at our church such a wonderful success! It was not only interesting but fun to see all the fashions especially the wedding dresses of years gone by. For me, it brought back fond memories as I'm sure it did for many. Fellowship Hall was beautifully decorated and the Tea was equally as lovely.

Thanks again to everyone for the hard work and those in attendance who supported their efforts. I look forward to our next Fashion Show.

With much appreciation,
Elaine Mueller

Fund Raiser Update



The Pancake Breakfast held at the church on Saturday May 16 was a big success with an attendance of approximately 200-225 people. They were able to raise \$3000 with breakfast tickets, a 50/50 cash raffle and merchandise/service raffles (donated by many local companies). All net proceeds from the Pancake Breakfast will go to support the Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund.

This is a great time of the year. I was at church (where I always am) on the Sunday the confirmation kids made their statements. They were so good that I wasn't really sure they were the same people I see other Sundays. But I sat next to Joey so I was in on the action. Good job to all of you!!!

The most excitement occurred the Sunday afternoon of the Fashion Show and Tea. Oh, what a time. First, I was there the day before, practicing with the girls and I got to model my own gown. I had to come out in Ashley's pocket because I was afraid I couldn't be seen. Did you see me? I had on the bright pink ball gown. I think Dottie and the models and the tea ladies did a wonderful job. I'm so glad they invited me. I even won a cup and saucer but it is a bit too big for my home. Maybe I will make it my new home.

Speaking of homes, there were a few people working outside in the flower beds the other evening and Rick or Gail nearly dug up my summer home. Andrea saved me just in time. I'm getting it ready for the summer weather. But my front yard does look nicer. Thanks, folks.

Souper Supper was a great time, as usual. There were so many soups that I got to take some home with me. This time I had the tortellini soup. I've had it before but this day it was exceptionally good. I have a suggestion. Maybe in the summer we could have a salad bar. Doesn't that sound good? Maybe will thinks it's a good idea too.

I'm really looking forward to Vacation Bible School. It looks especially good this year. I'm signed up already. Are you????

Spring has arrived here on the banks of Tinkers Creek and there is no surer sign of that than confirmation and graduations happening all around us. We will welcome a new class of confirmands and watch several new grads receive their honors sometime between the time I write this and you read it. Please take a moment to welcome our new members, and congratulate our grads when you see them. I was particularly proud of our confirmation class when they shared their faith statements with us during worship. Joining the church is a big step which each of these young folks took prayerfully and diligently. Standing in front of the congregation proclaiming what and how you believe is a daunting task for the best of us and each member of our class did a great job.

This promises to be a busy summer. I don't yet know the outcome of the special meeting on May 24, but I think I have a good sense of where we stand and how we feel. I am looking forward to seeing this old building that we love get a fresh new look.

If you missed Charlene J Smith's work session at the special council meeting on May 20th, you not only missed a good selection on soup, salads, and goodies, but a worthwhile and enlightening evening. Charlene helped us think about who we are and hope to become. She held a mirror up and helped us to like what we see. She also pointed out some things that we didn't see even though we were looking. Remember the fun we had when the Solon church and Bainbridge church came to have dinner with us, and we sort of showed off who we are and what we do? It was kind of like that, but without the massive clean up later.

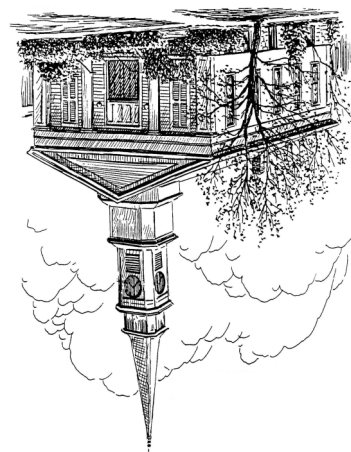
Speaking of the other two churches, Solon has asked the we postpone the yard party they had planned to host on June 26th. It seems a large number of their congregation will be vacationing either immediately prior to or during that time. We are not, by any means, giving up on another gathering, just not the one we planned.

Just one last thing. Remember last year, right after Twins Days when several of us said "Hey, why didn't we have a float in the parade? We should do that next year!" Well folks, it's next year and guess what-we have a wagon and a tractor to pull it. Now all we need to do is figure out how we want to present ourselves to the world. I'm seeking volunteers, and it is going to be fun. So step right up, don't be the last one on your street to say you were there.

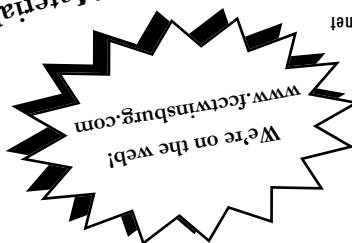
Also don't forget summer worship starts on June 14th. Meeting at 9:30 a.m. means we can have more of the day to enjoy this, our tiny part of God's creation, without a jacket. Remember, Thanksgiving is right around the corner.

I hope you can take time to feel God's love for you,

On the square in Twinsburg
since 1848



Dated Material—
Please Rush!



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9050 Church Street
Twinsburg, OH 44097
Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Church: 330-425-2181
fax: 330-425-1759
e-mail: firstcongregational.church@windstream.net

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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.