



Chronicle

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

Rooted in Christ • Fostering Justice • Celebrating Diversity



SACRED SNAPSHOTS:

A CHRONICLE OF CHERISHED MEMORIES IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

AS WRITTEN AND TOLD BY CHRIS GODARD

In celebration of FCC's 190th Anniversary, longtime member Chris Godard generously offered to share some of his favorite memories of our church. The following is the second installment of Chris' recollection of times past. More to come in future editions of the Chronicle.

MUSIC

Music has always played a key role in my life and the life of the church. I remember folks like Fran Crawford way back in the late '50s through the '60s, singing soprano much like our present-day dear A. J. Abbott. There were a lot of wonderful singers under the leadership of former organist, Richard Warner, followed by Akron University's Dr. Farley Hutchins. They both played the majestic Casavant organ, built a year before I was born in 1951. Here's something I will never forget: These organists were magicians – at the end of each postlude, they would pull a Houdini and disappear.

Where, you ask? Why, down a secret staircase below the organ. I went up and down that staircase a few times as a kid. I have been a church choir member since 1980; and some during my summer back from college. The Chancel Choir and I just keep on singing with joy.

CHURCH DINNERS

One short story from the cobwebs of my mind. As you go down the steps from the narthex to Fellowship Hall and turn right, you now have a set of bathrooms. Years ago, that was a center hallway with crib rooms on either side. At the end of that hallway, there was a nursery with four walls. Today, one of those walls is gone. The hallway is now storage for the tables and chairs. How we ever had the huge dinners without that extra space, I'll never know. Back then, every long table was filled with a boisterous crowd of folks—young, old, and in between. The women worked hard in the kitchen with our cook and custodian, Prince Biggs, and his good friend, Edith Armour. Prince was known for baked chicken and dinner rolls. Harold Hibbard would yell out, "Pie anyone, pie anyone?" The pies were baked by Osman Pies. Good to the last morsel!

TIME CAPSULE IN THE CORNER- STONE

A thought occurred to me recently while I was reflecting on the 190th celebration. There was a time when we, as kids, were asked to write about our lives in the church and save it for a special occasion. What kind of writing, you ask? Well, the far right corner of the church supposedly houses the cornerstone. As kids, we were asked to place our thoughts and reflections, whatever came to our young minds, into a time capsule of sorts. I vividly recall going to that corner and observing an older gentleman placing our memorabilia, along with contributions from other members, into a box. The box was then deposited into this cavernous space in the corner of the church. Wouldn't it be exciting to open that cornerstone for our 200th celebration? I hope to still be around!

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS...

Woman of the Year



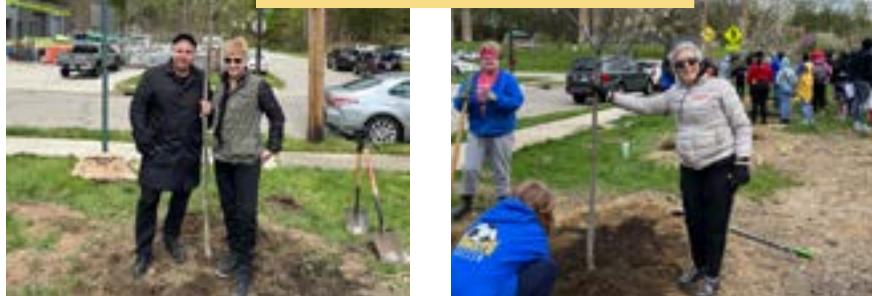
Sarah Vradenburg received the 2024 Woman of the Year award for Integrity from the Women's History Project of Akron. Supporting Sarah at her recognition luncheon were some members from our First Church family, including Janis Worley, our Finance and Communications Manager, who was a 2022 recipient of the same award!



Salad Sundays



Tree of Life Event



Eclipse Party



Silver Lining Luncheon

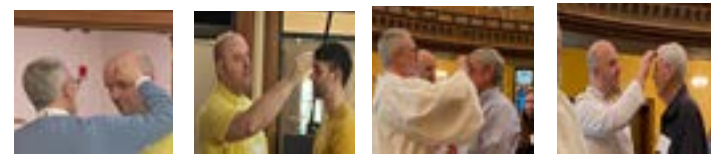


Celebration of Sacraments

Sunday, April 7, our congregation came together in a service of celebration, filled with profound sacraments, communal affirmations, and a spirit of renewal. It was a day that we saw the grace of God flowing abundantly among us. We had the privilege of witnessing seven baptisms. Each baptism symbolized not only a commitment to Christ but also the welcoming embrace of our church community. Following the baptisms, we shared in communion.



One of the most heartening moments of the service was when an overwhelming majority of the congregation came forward for the affirmation of faith. It was a powerful demonstration of our collective commitment to our beliefs and values, as well as a reaffirmation of our dedication to living out the teachings of Christ in our daily lives.



Everyone also took the opportunity to make new nametags—a simple yet symbolic gesture of fostering connection and community within our church family.



Truly, it was a wonderful service — one filled with joy, reverence, and a deep sense of belonging.

B&G Workday



Poptabs



Our poptab contributions totaled 16 lbs! Thank you to everyone who donated!

Generous Hearts

Our Events Manager, Patrice, has been hard at work curating an array of events and weddings! One couple, Chad and Lauren, stands out for their exceptional generosity. Set to tie the knot at Akron FCC on June 1, they've chosen to make a meaningful impact by supporting our PB&J program. In lieu of traditional wedding favors, they've



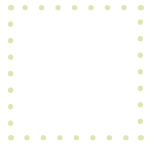
graciously donated to PB&J and extended the invitation to their guests. With a simple scan of a QR code, their guests can join in this act of kindness. Let's celebrate love that not only binds hearts but also uplifts communities!

New Staff

We welcome Logan Robinson as our Custodial Assistant. Logan will be working on Sundays to assist with building needs during services, and will be here through the week assisting with facility, events and ministry needs.

Appreciation

The Peanut Butter and Jelly Backpack Ministry for Mason CLC volunteers would like to thank the generosity of our congregation for including PB & J in the Easter offering. Your gifts have made it possible to provide assistance to more Mason students, giving them adequate food for weekends and holidays.



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Upcoming Events

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING - MAY 5

The 2024 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting will be following one combined 10am worship service. Plan to stay after the meeting for a retirement reception for Debbie Riley, our Food Service and Cleaning Coordinator.

HUNGER WALK - MAY 5

Registration begins at 2pm; the walk starts at 3pm. The walk is at Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron, 3300 Morewood Road, Fairlawn.

PLANT SALE & MAKERS MARKET

The annual First Church plant sale and Makers Market will be on Saturday, May 18, from 10am - 4pm and Sunday, May 19, from noon to 3pm, right here in the First Church parking lot.

GARDEN PARTY AND TEA - JUNE 8

All members of First Church are welcome to come to our annual Tea event! A light lunch and desserts will be served, along with some games and a whole lot of fun! Tickets are \$5 per person, and to reserve a table of 8 please contact Patrice at events@akronfcc.org. This event will run from 11am - 1pm. All are welcome! Bring a friend!

SOJOURNER TRUTH

CELEBRATING SOJOURNER! MAY 18

The church and community are invited to join us Saturday, May 18 at 4:30pm for a multimedia performance that promises to inspire and uplift. Experience a profound rendition of Sojourner Truth's historic speech, published author and keynote speaker, Denise Jenkins-Agurs, a children's choir and more. Light refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to the public.



SOJOURNER TRUTH STATUE UNVEILING MAY 29

Mark your calendars for the Sojourner Truth Legacy Plaza Celebration and Unveiling from 5:30-7:30pm. In 2022, First Church made a \$25,000 donation to help bring this vision to fruition, so we expect to see a great turnout of church members.