



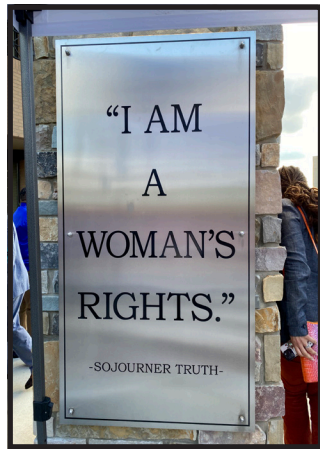
# Chronicle

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

Rooted in Christ • Fostering Justice • Celebrating Diversity

### HER NAME WAS TRUTH

On May 29, 2024, the Sojourner Truth Plaza dedication and statue unveiling took place in Downtown Akron. The plaza is now open to the public seven days a week, from dawn to dusk. A path winding through the plaza displays important dates in Truth's life. The plaza also features a mural inspired by a famous 1864 photograph of Truth. The mural occupies the southeast wall of the plaza, alongside a metal sculpture of an Impala Lily.



First Church members and staff attended the unveiling of the Sojourner Truth Statue at the Legacy Plaza in downtown Akron, honoring our Presenting Sponsorship of this important addition celebrating Akron's history.





# HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS...

May got off to a busy start with the Semi-Annual Meeting and retirement reception for Food Service and Cleaning Coordinator Debbie Riley. The annual First Church/Let's Grow Akron Plant Sale was again very successful, with just over \$6,300 raised. The coinciding Makers Market and Dress for Success events were also very busy, and all that participated appreciated the turnout. First Church created and hosted *Celebrating Sojourner*, a multi-media event celebrating Sojourner Truth's life and legacy through creative performances. Over 150 members of the community attended, and we received very positive feedback for this creative effort. The month wrapped up with First Church members and staff attending the unveiling of the Sojourner Truth Statue at the Legacy Plaza in downtown Akron, honoring our Presenting Sponsorship of this important addition celebrating Akron's history.

## SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING



## & RETIREMENT RECEPTION



## CELEBRATING SOJOURNER!



## PLANT SALE



## MAKER'S MARKET





## SACRED SNAPSHOTS



*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 third installment of Chris' recollection of times past.*

### **AS WRITTEN AND TOLD BY CHRIS GODARD**

I can remember when the church had a crazy but fun family event that went on for several years. We had a carnival upstairs in the present-day Upper Room. The cake walk was in the center of the floor, underneath all that carpeting, where there was a circular design. Beyond the cake walk, there were rooms on the first floor with fun activities. We fished for goldfish in bags on the ends of our hooks. Others bobbed for apples. Clowns were bopping around making faces, especially for us kids. They looked to me like old men under all that white, pasty makeup. Pink cheeks and red eyeliner filled out their faces. There was a crescent moon with a bench beside it. I have a

picture of my brother Geoff sitting right on that very bench with a red balloon in his hand. He watched the whole experience in awe.

At another carnival, a few years later, I won a pair of googly eyes made of metal. They were blue and white eyeballs with a metal nose piece. I believe I still have them today. I must have fought gallantly to have won them by knocking down the bottles.

Here's the best part: The stage in the Upper Room used to have a heavy black velvet curtain with a basketball area behind it. Guess what? It was also made into a spook house. Loved it! There were crazy old men walking around in there trying to scare the yell out of us. Well, they did just that! We screamed bloody murder until we figured it all out and came away laughing our butts off. All in all, it was a grand and fun event that captured the hearts of our members of all ages.



## IN GRATITUDE

From the Carson Family: *Thank you for the beautiful blanket we received from Akron General for our Mom. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.*

From Chad and Lauren Smith (married at First Church): *Patrice, We cannot thank you, First Congregational Church of Akron, and Pastor Bobby enough! From the moment I made contact with FCC of Akron and from there on forward, you all have been nothing but welcoming and inclusive. Our ceremony and whole wedding day experience at FCC of Akron has been nothing but absolutely wonderful. Chad and I will never forget our ceremony and agree that it was by far are most favorite part of the day; one we will cherish forever.*

*You are so joyful and kind. You worked so hard to make our day wonderful with all the behind the scenes work and we are eternally grateful! Our guests could not stop commenting on how amazing the ceremony was. They said the church was so beautiful and felt so intimate, as they could be seated close around us. They said Pastor Bobby was so genuine and joyful. They loved his reflection and how personal it was. They loved the vows. They commented on how lovely you were and my dad has been so grateful for you since meeting you when we toured. As we left he said, "If only every church had a Patrice who makes people feel so welcomed."*

*Words cannot express our sincere gratitude for FCC of Akron. We have no doubt God led us to you. We have plans to come up for a service and want to get more involved with the church and its ministries.*

## SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

On May 5, 2024 the members of the church gathered for our Semi-Annual meeting. Votes were taken at the meeting with the following results:

Vote to approve 2024-2025 Budget: passed

Vote to approve 2024-2025 Nominating Slate: passed

Vote to approve proposed changes to the Endowment Trust: passed

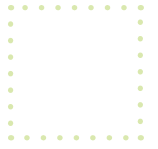
After the voting was completed, Pastor Jeff thanked all members who have participated in board leadership past and present. A retirement reception for Food Service and Cleaning Coordinator Debbie Riley then followed the meeting.



# Chronicle

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF AKRON

292 East Market St.  
Akron, OH 44308



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ONE COMBINED WORSHIP - JUNE 30

The fifth Sunday of June, we will unite for a special single combined worship service at 10am. Experience a live bluegrass band as we come together in joyous praise.

### CHURCH PICNIC

After our one combined 10am worship service on Sunday, July 21, everyone is invited to join us in the garden for a church picnic! The church will provide the main dish, we will circulate a sign-up sheet for side dishes and desserts. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy fellowship, food, and fun with our church family.

### ALLY SAFE SPACE TRAINING

FirstChurchwillbehostingSafeSpaceAllyTrainingonSaturday, August 10, 2024 from 9am-11am. Through this interactive training, participants will learn about bias, vocabulary, and best practices for handling gender and sexuality topics. The event is free and open to the public, however, registration in advance is required, and registration is limited to 60 participants. Please email [events@akronfcc.org](mailto:events@akronfcc.org) to register.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

### FOOD PANTRY CLIENT NUMBERS RISE

In April and May 2023, the Pantry had one week where we served more than 85 clients. In 2024, we exceeded 85 clients in 6 out of 8 weeks and twice served more than 100 families.

How You Can Help:

- Volunteer once a month to pick up the Montrose Panera donations on Monday morning, or on Saturday once a month to help pick up donations at the Arlington Road Walmart.
- Donate personal care or household items, or clean out your unused pots and pans — these are things we have trouble getting from the Foodbank.

For more info, contact Larry Becker at 330-696-6709

