



August 2021 Newsletter

The Pastor's Report

Pastor Dan Weyand-Geise

There are still plenty of folks around here who remember my first sabbatical in the summer of 2006. There was apprehension and uncertainty on both of our parts as to what it meant for me to be away for nine weeks. We had just come through the Synod resolution of marriage equality in which I served on the committee that endorsed it. It was a shaky time in the life of the church. Families weren't coming as often; long-time members were aging and dying; our youth were busier than ever and less present. "Was pastor Dan looking to go elsewhere?" "Did the church still want this kind, but misguided pastor to lead them?" Yet, when I returned, our commitment to one another deepened. It was an exciting time in ministry here as our local mission work evolved and my role in the interfaith community began to emerge. We had just celebrated our 150th year as a congregation; my time in Africa set the course for our participation with Global Partners. We were listening and responding to the Spirit.

Eight years later, my daughter Maddie was going to college. The church had again survived a bit of a crisis when there were some serious rifts regarding race, sexuality, and the sharing of our space with neighbors. Again, the sabbatical seemed to come at just the right time. I used the time to transition into a new stage of life not only with my family, but also as an established pastor here and in ministry overall. I stayed in D.C. and camped in Pennsylvania for July, August, and the start of September. First UCC rededicated itself to the Our Whole Lives program; we began to study what it meant to be an Open and Affirming congregation; we reimagined worship with music and the messages. Congregants were invited to visit other churches; I picked the brain of pastors who had served more than 15 years at their congregation and heard what made it successful and what pitfalls to notice. Again, upon my return, there was celebration and life in new ways with the ministry here and with my pastoral care and education. I took on the role as president of MARCC, then as moderator for SONKA. These connections served us well as First Church deepened our IHN ministry, Fishes and Loaves ministry, youth program, and local partnerships such as at Washington UCC. We would soon have our largest confirmation class in decades. It was an exciting time in our life together.

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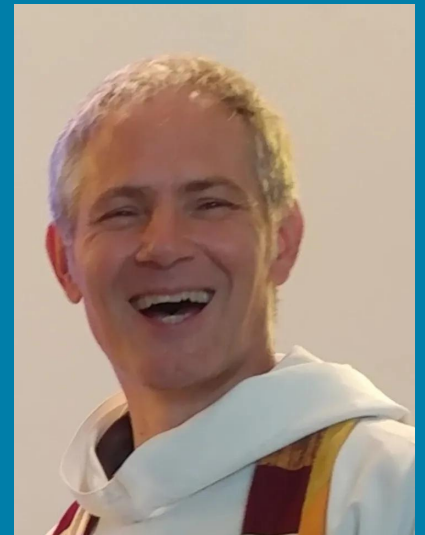


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The Pastor's Report

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Seven years later, sabbatical time is again here. The past 17 months leave churches and ministers wondering how church functions. Spirituality has never been more important and recognized; yet, how do the church and the pastor respond to the great needs that seem overwhelming: job insecurity, education woes, family stress, political divides, mistrust, anxiety, and fears? At first glance, I wonder what was I thinking of taking sabbatical now with all of this in the air. But, then, the more I talked with our church board, colleagues, and family, this is the ideal time for me to be away to gain perspective and reconnect with my pastoral calling and our covenant together. There is so much I still hold in my heart for the ministry here and for you.

First UCC is a relevant and an active place that is a balm for so many. We actually thrived during covid times with our on-line offerings and creative pastoral visitation and connections; we welcomed Jimmy Wiederhold full-time to offer ministry to the whole church and to our youth especially; our mission partners were vital in our ministry this past year. They needed us and we responded to individual and collective needs in faithful, joyful ways. We offer a welcome to the weary and unwelcomed souls. This congregation has emphatically said that no matter where you are on life's journey, you can come here and be.

Covid has taught us to prioritize relationships. Our relationships with the Spirit strengthen and empower us. During the month of August, I will be sharing more of what our time apart will look like. I have some marvelous ministers who will be bringing you the Word. We also have some possible retreat practices in store for the congregation. It will be a chance for you to listen to where the Spirit is calling us as a congregation in these days. As with my two previous sabbaticals, I trust that this will be a fruitful time for both you and me. Two decades have rolled by us. I remain in awe and wonder of the Holy works in and through our lives here at First UCC. Thanks be to God. And God will be with us 'til we meet again. Amen.

Pastor Dan

Musical Moment

Choir: The choir is off to a great start with rehearsals and will be performing all-new music starting August 29! If you have any interest in praising God through song, please see Jimmy. You can email him at james.firstucc@outlook.com. You do not have to read music to join and anyone from age 13 and up is welcome. **Choir rehearsals are moving to Mondays starting August 9.** Rehearsals are held in the choir room starting at 7:00pm. If the doors are locked, ring the bell and someone will come let you in!

Handbell Choir: Interest in the handbell choir is flourishing and Jimmy would like to get started sooner than later! Handbell choir rehearsal will be at 6:00 in the choir room on Monday evenings starting September 13. All ages are welcome! You do not have to read music to play. Either see Jimmy after the service or email to inform him of your interest.



Jimmy Wiederhold

Director of Music, Media, and Faith Formation



Anniversaries

08/18 – Bruce & Kathie Steinhard
 08/26 – Brett & Kelsey Buttelwerth
 08/27 – David & Jean Krebs

Birthdays

08/09 – Janet Copenhaver
 08/14 – Jeff Runck (50th)
 08/17 – Patty Baldwin
 08/21 – Anita Durrett
 08/22 – Kathie Steinhard
 08/23 – Amanda Krebs
 08/24 – Katie Rhodes
 08/27 – Lucille Geise



~ Please Keep in Prayer ~

The Family of Jackie Froman; The Wehman Family; Chuck Parmenter (friend of First Church); Dan Stevens (friend of The Kirkman's); Trista Manigault (neighbor of Christine Guillory); Sarah M. Stinebuck (great-granddaughter of Jackie Smith); The Family of Vera Fleshman (Steve Copenhaver's mother-in-law); Rob Rabalais (uncle of Christine Guillory); The Hauck Family at the death of Judy's brother, Bill Jesse; Mary Tires (friend of the Kirkman's); Chrissy (friend of the Kirkman's); Jackie Smith and Family at the death of her son, Gary; Ron, Brian and Suwanna Kirkman; John Buelsing (son-in-law of Jackie Smith); Charlene Jones (sister of Jackie Smith); Donald Jones (brother of Jackie Smith); Janet Roland (niece of Jackie Smith).



Our deepest condolences to the Froman family at the death of Grandma Jackie, who passed away on July 28. Services are pending.

Also, our prayers are with the Wehman family at the death of Butch Kolich on July 21st. He was the husband of Marylee (Wehman) and brother-in-law to Bernie and Boris.

Follow us!



@firstuccincy





Life of the Church

Phil's Place Dinner

On August 30, First UCC's Susie Cairns will organize the dinner at Phil's Place at CAIN. CAIN continues to offer this meal as a drive-through event. Susie will need help in setting up the dinners and transporting them down to CAIN. Thank you, Susie, for your volunteerism and service.

Mission Moments for August

Our mission partners at CAIN, Christ's Community, Washington UCC, and the UCC Mission Priority Board greatly appreciate our church's monthly contributions. I could go on and on about the ways that our donations make a difference. Ultimately, it is in the emergency assistance and the immediate partnership and trust that they have in us, and we in them. When I have a community person or a church member in need, I have resources and experts that I can turn to without hesitation. First UCC members, you make a difference with whatever amounts you designate to our mission groups. I am proud that our budget includes a mission allowance. Your offerings make this possible. The more we take in, the more we can share. Well-done. – Pastor Dan

Our IHN and Fishes and Loaves ministries also continue to benefit from your generosity. The Fishes and Loaves drive-through dinners are still totaling 100+ just about every week. We have been blessed by the partnership of our IHN congregations like Truth and Destiny, St. Paul Old Blue Rock, Pilgrim UCC, Good News Baptist, and the Resurrection Community. These groups get goodie-bags together for the IHN families. There are 35 individuals that we add a drink, snack, fruit, etc. to the F&L meal. We bring the meals to the hotel where the IHN families stay at 5 each Wednesday. The other F&L workers then finish up the meals for our church and community members. If you have a group that would like to do the goodie bags, there are plenty of weeks open. There is not a set amount of items needed. Whatever you put together will be received with great thanks. Financial donations are always appreciated, too. In fact, a blessing came from the many who remembered First Church member Jackie Smith's son Gary who died in July. Donations were directed to Fishes and Loaves. We are near \$1000 if not more at this point. This was a thoughtful gesture on Jackie's part to designate this ministry as the recipient of others generosity. Thank you. These are all some basic ways we live out our Christian witness and faith in action. – Pastor Dan

Mandery Baptism

Kyler Louis Mandery will be baptized on July 31. Kyler is the son of Travis and Jessica Mandery. He was born on May 4. Ron and Marilyn Mandery are the grandparents. The Manderys are a beautiful family who always bring great joy, laughter, and faith to First Church. It is probably a safe bet that Kyler has a Bengals onesie and some other sports paraphernalia. It is also a safe bet that the Manderys will refuse Pastor Dan's offer of a Terrible Towel.

Music in the Air, Sanctuary, Hallways...

For the week of August 2 – 6, Marion Peraza will have her music students here for camp. This is a week filled with lots of dedicated students and parents. They are here from 8:30 to 3:00 each day with a concert for the public on Friday at 1:00.



Gifts to the Church

Gift to Fishes and Loaves in Memory of Gary Smith, from:

Ladies Night Out	Ed and Bev Bosse
Linda Krebs	Maxine Day
John and Tille Biery	Darrell and Laura Copenhaver

Gift to the Ladies Guild in Memory of Gary Smith, from:

Janet Copenhaver
Jim and Carol Bitzenhofer

Donation made to the Team for the Need, from Linda Krebs

Donation made to the Team for the Need in support of Ron Kirkman, from:

Bill Henrich	Shirley Henrich
Bev and Ed Bosse	Wendy and Dave Hawkins
Mary and Steve Susong	Darrell and Laura Copenhaver
Virginia Krebs	

Gift to the Flower Fund in Memory of Gary Smith, from Ginny Kissel

Green Space and Parking Lot

Our parking lot project continues forward. We are very close to obtaining the city permit and look to begin soon. Rack Family Construction, which has been a family-owned business since 1932, is taking up the lot. Both Jim and Angie Rack have been helpful in the planning process and working with the city for the permit. Following their work, the rest of the lot will be repaved. Neyra Paving, out of Evendale and in business since 1965, will undertake that project. We thank everyone for their planning and patience.

Change of Address

Please note this change of address for Chris and Scot Armstrong:
6249 West Fork Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45247



Church Updates

June 2021

Council Meeting Minutes

First United Church of Christ Council Meeting

Date: June 14, 2021–Zoom & In Person

Attendees: Kathie Steinhard, Bill Henrich, Christine Guillory, Travis Mandery, Dan Luken, June Bronnert, Margie Spatz, Darrell Copenhaver, and Pastor Dan

Excused: Dave Krebs, Barry Jamison, Kendra Pressley, and Sarah Bilz

Guest: n/a

- I. Call to Order: Christine called meeting to order online.
- II. Devotions: Pastor Dan led the group in prayer.
- III. Acceptance/Approval of minutes from last meeting, financial secretary report, and treasurer reports
 - a. Review of May minutes:
 - i. Motion to accept: Travis
 - ii. Second to accept: Darrell
 - iii. All in favor-accepted
 - b. Financial secretary report:
 - i. Motion to accept: Darrell
 - ii. Second to accept: Travis
 - iii. All accepted: All in favor-accepted
 - c. Treasurer report:
 - i. Motion to accept: Margie
 - ii. Second to accept: Dan L
 - iii. All accepted: All in favor-accepted
- IV. Pastor's report: See pastor's report for full details, highlights are as follows:
 - a. Music mission festival planning for August 15th on the "Avenue". Application under review with College Hill officials. The church would be a back-up location if not approved for the "Avenue".
 - b. June 28th lifeline screening will occur (8 am to 5 pm)
 - c. Youth update: Jimmy will officially start in July.
 - d. Social Media: Facebook live continues to receive positive responses. Dan is now doing a pod cast.
 - e. Boy Scout garden day is occurring in June. The wardens and the boy scout leaders have met to discuss the trailers and their placement.
 - f. Washington UCC summer camp started this week. Good turnout of students and volunteers.
 - g. Kendra and Bernie are delegates for General Synod in July.
 - h. July 31st baptism planned.
 - i. Plans for sabbatical continue with the target dates of September through November.
 - j. Masks are optional but not required. Be aware of places and others who prefer masks.

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June 2021

Council Meeting Minutes

- V. Committee Reports:
- a. Facilities management:
 - i. Light bids sent out via email for review. Three were received for same services. Hoffman's bid was reasonable, and the church has used their services in the past.
 - ii. Motion to accept Hoffman's bid for lighting services: approved: Bill and Dan seconded
 - iii. Green space update:
 1. Meeting with boy scouts regarding trailers. One will be removed completely and other will be moved to another location on site but out of the parking lot. The church owns the boy scout trailer.
 2. Rumpke came out to discuss the dumpster location as they provided specific specifications regarding measurements and pad thickness. Ed Bosse, Darrell, and Pastor Dan are going to work on this issue.
 3. Rack company provided various specifications and there are various questions and concerns.
 4. Darrell will be point person to coordinate various discussions and bring information back to the council.
 5. Black top contract signed and start date is pending the green space work.
 - b. Youth ministry: Virtual programs to occur in July.
 - c. Mission and service: Hunger walk huge success. Big THANKS to church congregation. Team for Need is open for donations and can be specific members as desired. Church golf outing is still under discussion.
 - d. Health ministry: n/a
 - e. Open and affirming team: n/a
 - f. Music: Jimmy is coordinating for choir. The recommendation for congregation is still not to sing. The recommendation for choir is to continue to provide space.
 - g. Endowment: Raising to the full draw starting in July.
 - h. Social media and communication committee: see pastor's report.
 - i. Others: n/a
- VI. Old business:
- a. Still waiting on information from Hummel to provide recommendations on church foundation.
 - b. Jimmy will address the licenses for music streaming once he starts full time. Need a total of four licenses: one for Facebook from both companies and one for YouTube.
- VII. New business:
- a. Opening church:

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June 2021

Council Meeting Minutes

- i. Sunday fellowship: before and after fellowship to resume according to CDC guidelines.
 - ii. The fellowship hall will also be open for other social groups such as Senior Social or Ladies Guild per CDC Guidelines
 - iii. Need to communicate CDC recommendations for groups to return to use church.
 - iv. Motion as made by June with Dan Luken seconding the motion: Open fellowship hall to groups according to CDC guidelines. Current CDC guidelines are to wear a mask until 2 weeks from last date of vaccination.
 1. All in favor: 8
 2. Any opposed: 0
 - b. Communion and Sign of Peace are still on hold currently.
 - c. Rummage sale in fall will not occur but spring is still under consideration.
 - d. One bill is due before church council meets the second Monday of the month. Council approved paying this bill.
 - e. Dan's sabbatical plans: See letter for details. Endowment draw was not at full draw to prepare for sabbatical expenses. A motion made by Margie with Darrell seconding the motion to approve sabbatical plan.
 - i. All in favor: 8
 - ii. Any opposed: 0
 - f. Church facilities: Individuals and groups need to be responsible for locking and cleaning up the facilities after each use. When church is open again to other outside groups the list for cleaning up will be re-reviewed for all groups.
- VIII. Approval to pay current bills
- a. Motion to pay bills: Travis
 - b. Second to pay bills: Darrell
 - c. All accepted: All in favor-accepted
- IX. Adjournment-prayer:
- a. Motion to adjourn: Travis
 - b. Second to adjourn: Darrell
 - c. All accepted: All in favor-accepted
- X. Closed in Prayer



Our Covenant

We, the members of First United Church of Christ, welcome you:

If you are Asian, Black, Brown, Hispanic, Native American, or White;

If you are male, female, transgender, or gender non-conforming;

If you are 3 years old, 33 years old, or 103 years old;

If you are from just down the street, from across the country, or from another part of the globe;

If you grew up at Hoffner Church, were confirmed in the Catholic Church, got married in a non-denominational church, worshipped in a synagogue or mosque, or have never attended a religious service;

If you are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated, or partnered;

If you are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or unsure of your sexuality;

If you are a Democrat, Independent or Republican, affiliated with another political party or no party at all;

If you have, or have had, addictions, phobias, or a criminal record;

If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless;

If you were baptized at First Church, or are worshipping here for the first time;

If you attend services every week, once a month, or once a year;

If you have typical or atypical skills, no matter your abilities or disabilities.

However the rest of the world describes you, and however you describe yourself:

You are a beloved child of God and are welcome at First Church. Being fully welcome in our community here at First United Church of Christ means that as we keep the love of Christ at the center of all we do, our congregation will:

- **Always seek to affirm the person that you are with loving hearts and open minds.**
- **Follow the way of Christ Jesus with you in loving and being loved by both God and neighbor, with the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.**
- **Support and encourage you in your ongoing spiritual and religious journey.**
- **Love you for the person you are by living out our denomination's promise that "No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at First United Church of Christ."**



First United Church of Christ

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firstunitedchurchofchrist@gmail.com

Pastoral Team:

Dan Weyand-Geise - Pastor, Ext. 17

Jimmy Wiederhold - Director of Music, Media, and Faith Formation, Ext. 11

Kim Ogden - Pastoral Administrator, Ext. 10

Church Board:

Christine Guillory, President

Dan Luken, Vice-President

David Krebs, Financial Secretary

Kathie Steinhard, Treasurer

June Bronnert, Recording Secretary

Kendra Pressley, Assistant Recording Secretary

Sarah Bilz

Darrell Copenhaver

Bill Henrich

Barry Jamison

Travis Mandery

Margie Spatz



Keeping the love of Christ at the center of everything we do
so that all members will be empowered to become
Spirit-Led Servant Leaders.

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