



3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224  
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[www.firstchristianstow.org](http://www.firstchristianstow.org)

## **PATHWAYS**

### **OCTOBER 2024**

*You show me the path of life. In  
your presence there is fullness of joy.*  
Psalm 16:11

Find us on social  
media @FCCStow!

### **Trunk or Treat**

**Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 3-5 p.m.**

Bring your creative costumes and your biggest trunk! We will have families from all over the community visiting the church to have fun and go home with plenty of treats! This is an important part of our presence in the community when many families are looking for ways to give their children a fun day without breaking the bank. We hope you can help share in the fun!

### **Consecration Campaign** **Sundays in October**

During October, we will be hearing from groups that use the church space and organizations that we fulfill as important parts of God's Kingdom. Please read the end of the newsletter for a letter from the Jim Hindel, the Stewardship chair, to prepare our hearts and minds for this year's campaign.

### **Loaves & Fishes + Pantry (& September's Report)** **Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 4-6 p.m.**

Please consider sharing your time and ability with this critical ministry! This meal will include cups of chili and sides. Additionally, read below for September's report, showing the significant impact this ministry makes in our community!

### **Youth Group October Schedule!** **This Month's Theme: "A Little Jesus"**

See inside for Youth's upcoming activities! We have Big Volleyball and some important conversations about finding "A little Jesus!"

### **Relay for Life Craft Bazaar** **Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Don't forget to shop and support local small business ahead of this holiday season! This is a great event to support both the American Cancer Society and see some of the local talent on display. See below for more information.

**October 2024**

**Pastor's Pen**

*“Daily we should take account and ask: What have I done today to alleviate the anguish, to mitigate the evil, to prevent humiliation? Our concern must be expressed not symbolically, but literally; not only publicly, but also privately; not only occasionally, but regularly. What we need is the involvement of every one of us as individuals.” ~ Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel*

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Recently I read, *“There is a poverty happening around us. Not just poverty of money, although that is certainly a reality. But there is a poverty of food, family, safety, and most of all, a poverty of hope.”* What do you think? Is this statement true? Is there some credibility to it? I'll admit I think there is a lot of truth in this statement, and a lot of credibility. And if such is true, what then is a faithful response to this *“poverty of hope”*? How do we respond to this kind of poverty that can make a meaningful and lasting impact?

For starters, I think, we begin by doing as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel implores us. We ask ourselves questions like... What have we done to alleviate the anguish that leads to a poverty of hope? What have we done to mitigate the evil that looms large around us, to prevent humiliation so many risks having thrust upon them that leads to a poverty of hope?

Yes, here I go again, asking big questions so we are forced to take an introspective look at ourselves. And while I believe taking an introspective look at ourselves is always good, where I am going with this primarily is this... First Christian Church of Stow is literally, publicly, privately, and regularly involved in alleviating anguish, mitigating evil, preventing humiliation, and working to help others find new and renewed hope! We are a church that strives to meet, greet, and welcome all people, wherever they are in their spiritual walk. We are a church of grace, where we understand no one is perfect, but through the perfect love of Jesus Christ we can always draw closer and closer to the Divine. We are a church driven by what God is calling us to do—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked,

raising up others in faithfulness, and being a living presence of hope, peace, joy, and love in our community. We are a church that offers safe and affirming space for deep faith exploration, wrestling, and discovery, and where no question is off-limits. We are a church that gathers together, in person and across the miles, to give and sing our praise and worship to God our Creator and Christ Jesus our Savior, and then gathers around our Lord's table where all are welcome to come and receive the bread of life and the cup of salvation. And I have no doubt all of this is having a meaningful and lasting impact.

We are this church, and yet, we are still so much more. And I am writing this to remind us that this is who we are and that we are undoubtedly involved in the kind of work Rabbi Heschel implores all to do, and we are undoubtedly responding to the call God has given to us as a church. It is good and faithful work, and we should be proud of what we are doing here at First Christian Church of Stow, and for what we are doing beyond the walls of our church building.

Yes, it is good and right to do the introspective work and ask ourselves hard questions about how we are living out our faith and our call. And it is just as good and right to look deeply at all we are doing, and all we have done, see the meaningful and lasting impact our work has had, and then *celebrate* that work because we have faithfully partnered with God and literally got involved within God's work!

God is using us, First Christian Church of Stow, to help those who are afflicted with a poverty of hope to see and know that through God's good work, there is an abundance of hope to be discovered and experienced, there is an abundance of joy to be embraced, and there is an abundance of love for all. And because of it all, I am honored and proud to be your pastor. Thank you for your faithfulness and your willingness to be this kind of church—a church that has a meaningful, lasting, faithful, and loving impact and brings to all an abundance of hope.

Your Pastor and Friend,  
Jonathan

**Trunk or Treat**  
**Sunday, October 13, 3-5pm**

Join us Sunday October 13 from 3-5pm! Wear your costume and trick or treat in the church parking lot! We are in need of volunteers to make this event successful, see below on how you can help.

— Host a Trunk! Decorate your trunk and bring candy for 75-100 trick or treaters. Sign up in the Gathering Area or email [christianed@firstchristianstow.org](mailto:christianed@firstchristianstow.org)

— Candy Donations! There will be in a bin in the Gathering Area for candy donations (individually wrapped candy, please)

Contact Anna or Richelle for questions/more information.

**Relay For Life Craft Bazaar**  
**Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Join us for the Annual Relay for Life Craft Bazaar! The bazaar will be held in the lower level of the church. Bazaar will feature local crafters & vendors. Space is still available. This is a great opportunity to shop ahead of the holidays and support local small business!

Parking & admission is free. You can call the following people if you have any questions or would like to sign up and host a space!

Contact Becky@ 330.221.0632

Donna@ 330.815.0877

Pam@ 330.688.7317

All proceeds benefit American Cancer Society.

**Consecration Campaign 2025**  
**Sundays in October**

October is the month in which we as a congregation begin to think, look, and pray about all God is calling us to be and do in the coming year, and how we as followers of Christ can respond faithfully to God's call. And once again we will be led through our "Devoted to Generosity" consecration campaign that will include our narrative budget that will allow us to hear about the impact our annual giving has not just within our church, but beyond our walls as well. This, and much more, is intended to encourage us to continue to do the good and faithful ministry God has called us to do, and to continue to be a church devoted to

generosity by being the difference makers God calls us to be.

On Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, during one combined time of worship at 10:30 a.m., we will conclude our 2025 Devoted to Generosity consecration campaign through the making of our estimated pledge of giving for next year. As living expressions of God's generosity may our pledge to God be in response to all God has given us. Together we are witnesses to the abundant life we know in Jesus Christ. May our giving be an act of joy, generosity, and faithfulness to all God has done, and continues to do for us.

**World Communion Sunday**  
**October 6<sup>th</sup>**

On the first Sunday of October Christians around the world, in every culture, break bread and pour the cup to remember and affirm Christ as the Head of the Church. World Communion Sunday and offers a distinct opportunity to experience Holy Communion in the context of the global community of faith, reminding us how we are part of the whole body of believers, all while celebrating the communion liturgy in as many ways as there are congregations. And though there is diversity in how we all come to the table of our Lord, we know all still partake of the bread of life and the cup of salvation—the gifts of God for the children of God.

World Communion Sunday is a profound worship experience and a time for intentionally considering more deeply our wider community of faith that encompasses not just Stow, not just Ohio, not just the United States. It encompasses the entire world. We are all God's children, and we are all invited to our Lord's Table. Come eat the bread. Come drink the cup. Come share the Lord.

**Loaves & Fishes + Pantry**  
**September 15<sup>th</sup>, 4-6 p.m.**

The October meal is on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 4-6p.m. Come pick up a cup or two of delicious chili with sides. All are welcome to serve this important ministry! We've had more calls into the office asking for assistance this summer than we've had in a very long time—Every serving hand at Loaves & Fishes + Pantry is another work of our compassion for the needy in our community. Please consider sharing your time to this important ministry!

**Coffee and Connections**  
**Sundays, October 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.**

“So what is your church all about?” This is a rather “big” question, isn’t it? A question that can be answered in a quick “elevator pitch” kind of way but would still leave out so much still to be shared. Which is why we want to provide a time when this question can be unpacked a little bit further because we understand finding a church home can be a challenging process. After all, only so much can be gleaned from websites, social media, or even a Sunday worship service, leaving aspects yet to be discovered and questions left unanswered.

This *Coffee and Connections Series* is for visitors, guests, and even newer members to come and receive a broader perspective of First Christian Church by providing insight about our vision, call, and numerous ministries. You will get to meet and greet the Pastor and learn about the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination, our heritage, and what our mission is as a church denomination. Also, you will meet both long time and newer members and hear their stories about what it has meant to be part of the First Christian Church family. And most importantly, you will have a chance to ask your questions.

And lastly, one question we always address is how a person moves from guest to member, which is not as complicated as some think. It can happen on any Sunday morning, during worship, through a confession of faith or a reaffirmation of faith. Or it can be done any time outside of worship if you are not comfortable “*getting up in front of all those people*” including at the end of this series, in the small confines of our gathering.

This two-part series *Coffee and Connections Series* will be held on **Sundays, October 20<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>** during our Sunday School period from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. in the church library. No reservations needed, just come and learn more about what God is doing here at First Christian Church of Stow!

**Loaves & Fishes + Pantry**  
**September Recap**

40 Families came through Loaves & Fishes + Pantry on Sunday September 15. These families represented 101 different people. 42 of these people were adults. That means that 59 of them were either seniors or children, our most vulnerable citizens.

Everybody got a delicious spaghetti dinner with all the fixings.

Our pantry give-a-way included hot and cold cereal, regular and chocolate milk, veggies, bread, Entenmann’s treats, stew, canned fruit, mac & cheese, apples, and other goodies.

We always give away a bag containing a roll of paper towels and four rolls of toilet paper. Everybody loves this bag. Remember, paper products are not eligible for food stamps so this is a big help for families strapped for cash.

Our next Loaves & Fishes + Pantry is scheduled for Sunday, October 20.

**Youth Group October Schedule**

Youth group has a lot to look forward to! See below for October’s schedule, and keep in touch with Director of Youth Emily Sanko to let her know if you can make it!

October 6<sup>th</sup>:

-Big Volleyball & Discussion (Where is our Little Jesus?)

October 13<sup>th</sup>

-Trunk Or Treat!

October 27<sup>th</sup>

-Activity TBD

-Discussion: Sneaky Jesus!

**Coffee Fellowship Opportunities**  
**After Both Services in the Library**

Just a reminder for those who aren’t yet in the know-- Coffee Fellowship will be happening *between* services for the summer at 9:30 and will be available after second service as well! Now you’re in the know!

There’s still plenty of slots ahead of this Sunday for volunteering to host coffee fellowship! Help connect and fellowship with your church family!

## **All Saints Sunday** **November 3<sup>rd</sup>**

On the first Sunday of November, we come together to celebrate All Saints Sunday—a special occasion that invites us to reflect on the lives of those who have walked in faith before us. This day is a poignant reminder of the communion of saints, uniting us with loved ones who have passed on and honoring the legacy they left behind.

All Saints Sunday, celebrated on the first Sunday after All Saints Day (November 1), is a time for remembrance and gratitude. It originated in the early Church to honor all saints, known and unknown, who have exemplified Christ's love and teachings. On this day, we not only remember the saints of old but also our own dear family members, friends, and church family who have moved from this life to life eternal.

During our worship service, we will read the names of those from our congregation who have gone to be with the Lord in the past year. Their contributions to our community and their steadfast faith continue to inspire us, so let us come to celebrate their memory, and let us take this opportunity to reflect on our own journeys of faith by asking: What does it mean to be a saint in today's world? How can we carry forward the lessons of those who have inspired us?

Come ready to celebrate through hymns, prayers, and heartfelt sharing as we honor the saints who have gone before us and commit ourselves to live out our faith in their memory. And may this All Saints Sunday deepen our appreciation for the richness of our shared faith and encourage us to continue the work of love and service in the world.

## **Acme Community Cash Back Program** **August Through December**

Save all your Acme Receipts from August 4<sup>th</sup> through December 25<sup>th</sup>! There will be a box in the sanctuary to deposit your receipts in on Sundays. Proceeds will benefit Dorcas Rebekah Guild, Mary Martha Guild, and our Blanket Ministry.

## **Christmas is coming....** **Ingathering Outreach Support Options**

The Outreach team is preparing for our biggest outreach project of the year: Ingathering.

### **Your help wanted and needed!**

Even though it is not yet Halloween, the outreach team is hard at work preparing for Christmas Ingathering. Ingathering is a huge and vital ministry for our church and community. Last year we served 44 families with children (food, coats and gifts) and 10 additional families with food assistance. It is a huge cooperative effort between businesses and organizations in the community, the Stow Munroe Falls City Schools and the generous and giving folks in this congregation. If you want to shop, wrap, make a donation, bake cookies, make phone calls, assist with excel program forms or want more information about the program, please see Ann Halpin or call 330-524-2228.

You can also help us prepare for this ministry by:

- 1) buying items that may be on sale now for the food boxes (please check expiration dates). Possible items can include cereal, pasta, canned tomato products, tuna, juice, canned meat, mac and cheese, jelly, peanut butter, and soup. I try to buy a little bit of something every couple of weeks when things are on sale, especially now when grocery prices are high.
- 2) Discuss with family members if you might, as a group, sponsor a family for Ingathering.
- 3) Discuss with your employer if they might like to make a donation or sponsor a family for Ingathering.
- 4) Consider donating new or used/ in good condition, household items. Families are often grateful for that lamp you no longer need, children's toys that your children have outgrown, holiday decorations, photo frames, pet supplies, folding chairs, unused candles, and women's purses to name a few. Tools, command strips, cleaners and cleaning supplies, laundry soap and plastic storage bins are also much appreciated.

Thank you for your support of this ministry!!! Any questions- contact Ann Halpin 330-524-2228.

## **2024 Chalice Grant Recipient Selected**

In December 2017 the Congregation approved a Budget that included a special Chalice Grant of \$10,000 to be presented to a local non-profit organization in 2018. In order to have the Grant available we needed to exceed our budgeted income by 3% in any given year. Applicants for the Grant need to show an immediate need and show how many people in the community will benefit from it. In 2018 we presented the first Chalice Grant to Family Promise of Summit County. In 2019 the Congregation exceeded our budgeted income by the required amount once again triggering the Chalice Grant for 2020. We all know what happened in 2020 and we never completed the process of selecting a Chalice Grant recipient. This year the Stewardship Team decided it was time to present that Chalice Grant for 2024. On Wednesday September 25th The Chalice Grant Committee met to review the applications for the 2024 Grant. Members included Ann Halpin, Rae Howard, Jim Hindel, Rev. Rumburg, Sue Naylor, and Al Naylor. After reviewing the applications and listening to input from all members of the team, we decided to present the \$11,000.00 Grant to the Battered Women's Shelter aka Hope and Healing Survivor Resource Center, and on Sunday October 27th representatives from the organization will be present during the service to share information about the work they do in our community and to receive the Chalice Grant.

## **Chapel Restoration Update From John McCreight**

At long last the Chapel Restoration work should be starting this week! We don't have a date for completion yet. There is a lot of work to be done.

- New ceiling framed in, insulated and drywalled
- Electrical wiring, and fire alarm wiring, reworked
- New windows
- Patch the walls where the old vinyl wallpaper (who knew)
- Resurface the wooden floor

- Patch/repair wood trim/molding that was damaged
- Inspections by Stow Building Dept (and maybe Fire Dept)
- Painting it all
- Window treatments
- Install the pews
- Move the piano & chairs out of the chancel area, then put them back once all is ready

I'm sure I'm missing items, but you can see it is a lengthy list.

They say a journey starts with one step, so hopefully our first step starts this week and our journey is successful!

John McCreight – Trustee Chair.

## **Fall Hiking Spree in Cuyahoga Falls Invite a friend and take a hike!**

Residents of Summit County can earn rewards for their hiking in Summit Metro Parks through November 30<sup>th</sup>! (Out-of-County hikers can pay \$10 for their first-year hiking, and \$5 for returning hikers). All you have to do is sign up on <https://www.summitmetroparks.org/hiking-sprees.aspx>, download the participant form, and complete at least *eight* of the designated trails between September 1<sup>st</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> to receive rewards! You can update your form as you hike your chosen trails, and when you've completed the minimum of 8, stop by or send the form to the Summit Metro Park offices to receive your rewards! There's a total of 13 different trails available for hiking in the Summit Metro Parks network—Check out the map on the Spree webpage to find your best hiking options.

## **Bulldog Bags Donation Items**

Any donations can be placed in the Bulldog Bin in the Gathering Area.

<u>Due Date:</u>	<u>Item:</u>
Oct. 6th:	Mac and Cheese Cup
Nov. 3rd:	Cup of Soup
Dec. 8 <sup>th</sup> :	Hot Chocolate Packets

## *Faith*

**By Dorothy Robinson**

*Dorothy wrote this poem as a reflection and focus for the Women's Retreat, shared here for all of us to reflect, contemplate, and prayerfully think on as well.*

When we are God's people  
We are God's hands  
Of hope, love, joy, peace  
And his strength.

To love each other  
As God loves us  
To see people being your hands and your feet  
And be God's ears and his words

When we go in God's name  
We go by faith  
We go in hope  
To see where God is leading us for his plan—

A plan to show love,  
Grace, not fear,  
To keep everything in the hands of the God  
Who made us all

### **Costume Drive for Summit County CPS** **From Julie Rumburg**

Julie Rumburg and her employer are collecting new or gently used Halloween costumes that will be distributed to Summit County Children's Services and Summit County Continuum of Care. This is a great chance to pass on any size costumes (even big kid costumes) to children that can use them. Thank you! (See the image in the top right!)



### **Think – Pray – Connect** **Families from September**

**09/08/24**

## **Joan Williams**

Box 231, Munroe Falls OH 44262

*Joan returned home Thursday after spending several days in the hospital—please send her well-wishes!*

**09/15/24**

## **Marjorie Howard**

Mulberry Gardens Memory Care Rm. #1008 47  
Steeplechase Ln, Munroe Falls OH 44262

*Please keep in your prayers and keep contact with our homebound church family!*

**09/22/24**

## **Donna Maynard**

3070 Kent Rd #206D, Stow OH 44224

*Donna recently had cataract surgery and will be having the other eye operated on soon for the same reason.*

**09/29/24**

## **Richard Sellers**

1925 Hawthorne, Stow OH 44224

*Please support and reach out to the Sellers as Richard was back in the hospital this week. He returned home on Thursday.*



**Stewardship is our faith in God's abundance  
even in times of scarcity, and willingness to  
bring abundance to others.**

Fall is officially here, and the Kick-off of our Annual Stewardship Campaign begins. While we realize this past year has continued to challenge in our daily lives, we are truly blessed by the fact that you have remained "Devoted to Generosity". As we continue our Christ journey, it is nice to be back to our new normalcy as we continue Sunday worshiping together, in person as well as on Facebook. Pastor Jonathan continues to move us forward, sharing life stories about God's word and devotion to us. The choirs and ensembles are back bringing spiritual messages, the youth group is again meeting, our Christian Education team continues to have Junior Church operating, and outside groups from within our community are using the building during the evening hours. Because of your devotion and generosity to the mission and ministry of our church, we continue to fulfill the ministries that are so important to so many, and to provide a place for organizations that rely on our church to meet and serve those in need.

Stewardship is not a program, it's not about percentages, and it is not simply a part of our faith. Stewardship connects to every single thing we do within our lives as followers of Jesus Christ. It draws us into deeper relationships with each other, with our community, and with God. To be good, faithful, and generous stewards, we need to have an awareness of the problems and scarcity around us. It requires us to have compassion and hope for everyone that needs help and redemption in our world, and there are many ways for us to step up even when we think we aren't quite ready, and be generous with gifts of time, talents, money, and other resources that God has blessed us with.

On Sunday October 6<sup>th</sup>, we invite you to join us as we begin this stewardship journey, during which, we will share stories that witness to the ministries God has entrusted to us and show how these ministries transform lives. These stories of our shared ministries grow out of God's love in Christ and our desire to give back a portion of the many blessings given to us. When we are good stewards, God is revealed! When we are faithful stewards, God's kingdom is revealed. When we are generous stewards, Jesus is glorified!

Watch for additional information coming soon, including a visual narrative budget that will focus on specific dollar amounts of our mission and ministries.

On Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup>, "Consecration Sunday", we will share our natural and grateful response to the generosity and salvation that God has worked in our lives. On that day we will accept your personal commitment cards during our service.

In Christian Fellowship,

*Jim*

Jim Hindel, Chairman of the Stewardship Team