

The First Word



First Christian Church

Vol. 16 No. 2

Summer Issue

Finance & Leadership Team



This year the church finance and leadership teams knew that our church was facing financial difficulty to support a full time senior pastor. This situation was discussed at our small group meetings in April which some of you attended. In May, the finance team projected that the pastor's position could only be maintained as full time for a few more months. The leadership team and Pastor David agreed to end his contract on July 31st. It is with deep regret that we needed to come to this decision.

During the May 29th worship service, Pastor Zerby shared the news that his pastorate at First Christian Church would be ending soon.

We are grateful for Pastor Zerby's service and leadership here with his involvement with our congregation, shut-ins, community and church region.

We want to assure this congregation that we will continue to move forward as a faith community. We are in the process of consulting with Rev. Stephen Bentley, Regional Associate Minister, who will help us in the search for a part time minister.

We will continue to have our regular worship on Sunday. The elders and others will handle pastoral calls. We will need additional volunteers for the after-school and youth programs to continue as they have been.

You are encouraged to stay involved. If you have a question or want to suggest something please contact someone on the church leadership team (Sue Detrow, David Bell, Ellie Wells, Lana Bell, Ralph Wertz, Yvonne Kimball, Linda Gardner) or finance team (Kim Mercer, Linda Gardner, Tammy Repp, Sue Detrow)

We will have a special celebration on July 31st to honor and say goodbye to Pastor Zerby. Rev Bentley and other guests will be attending. We hope that you will be with us that day.

Pastor's Peace



I was initially called to serve this congregation for 18 months as an intentional transitional pastor. We recognized that there were many challenges as well as promising opportunities facing this church. I believe together that we have overcome many of the challenges during these past two years. We have also joined together to become more active in the larger community around us and have enjoyed welcoming new people into our faith family.

However, one of the challenges we have not been able to fully address has been the creation of a financial climate where a full time minister can be sustained into a foreseeable future. By making the decision to end my pastoral calling at the end of July we have afforded the congregation more time to work together to envision what comes next for this faith community.

I have shared with the Church Leadership Team my personal belief that the future of this congregation can indeed be bright. The joy that is experienced together during Sunday worship, the genuine way in which new and returning people are welcomed, the desire to reach out to the wider community...these all indicate a church that is healing and ready to thrive again.

I have been both honored and humbled to have served alongside you for more than two years. Over the next two months let us commit to pray and work together as we begin a new period of transition and as the church embarks on the next chapter of its storied history of faithfully serving Christ.

My final day as your pastor will be Sunday, July 31st. Between now and then I will be working closely with our Church Leadership Team to ensure a healthy and joy filled transition. Our Regional leadership will also be involved in providing guidance and assistance as the church moves forward.

My family and I have been truly blessed by our time here in Ashland. We thank God for having served alongside you in sharing the good news of God's love for all people.

I truly do believe that Love Always Wins!
Pastor David



Upcoming Youth Events



July 10—Family Fun/Appreciation Day

The youth will be preparing lunch for anyone in the congregation that would like to stay after church to eat and play games. Youth are asked to meet Amy in the kitchen at 9:00 a.m. to get things set up.



August 14—tubing at Mohican Adventures

Cost is \$ 15 per person. They will leave the church after the greeting and estimated return back to church is 5:30-6:00 p.m. The youth will need to pack a lunch to bring along to eat at one of the stops on the river. Youth may invite friends but Amy will need to know by August 7th who is going. Please refer to Mohican’s website on what to wear, bring, etc.

(www.mohicanadventures.com/river-trips/) All youth must bring a signed waiver and ALL youth will be required to wear their flotation device at all times, even if they can swim. This is **non-negotiable**.



September ?? - Hiking

Please let Amy know what dates work best to go hiking: September 11, 18 or 25.

Contact Amy (419) 651-8280 if you have questions, ideas for activities or want to join them on an activity.



July 4th Celebration

We will be hosting our July 4th celebration on the front lawn and in our pavilion. See Kim if you can help!

“Love Reception” for Pastor David

On Sunday, July 31st , following our worship service, we will have a reception to celebrate Pastor David’s time with us here. It will be a bitter/sweet celebration but one that I hope you won’t want to miss. Join us for David’s farewell service.



Total current giving income through May 2016 is \$39,967.59 and the expenses through May is \$62,216.38. As you can see our expenses are **\$22,248.79** more than our income. Our giving over the past year has decreased.

If you have any questions, and/or would like a copy of your giving statement, please see Kim Mercer after church or give her a call at 419-281-5644. If you want a copy of the monthly financial reports, please see Linda Gardner or Kim Mercer.



Outdoor Worship Service
July 3

Independence Day
Celebration & Fireworks
July 4

Ribbit Camp
July 6—9

Family Fun/Appreciation Day
July 10 (after worship)

Reception for Pastor David
July 31 (after worship)

Youth at Mohican
August 14

Youth Outing—Hiking
September ??

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