



ISSUE 7105—SEPTEMBER 2026

The Herald

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF TALLMADGE

United Church of Christ

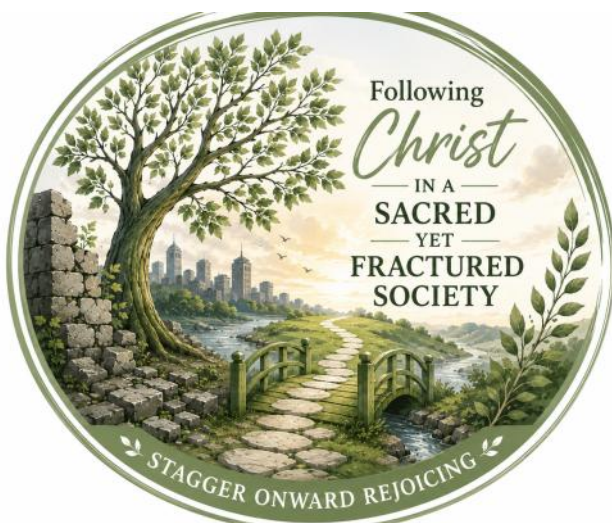
"Making God the Foundation of
Everyday Living"

"Stagger Onward Rejoicing"

On a recent Zoom meeting, a dear friend and colleague mentioned that she has been taking solace in a W.H. Auden poem entitled, "Atlantis." I found the poem, and I, too, find it quite illuminating. Basically, the poem pokes fun at the search of the fabled Atlantis. I think, however, it speaks of any searching that we might do.

We live in a world that is both breathtakingly sacred and painfully fractured. Every day reveals glimpses of God's beauty—in acts of kindness, courageous communities, unexpected generosity, and people refusing to surrender hope. Yet alongside these sacred moments are deep divisions, persistent injustice, political hostility, economic inequality, violence, loneliness, and fear.

Following Christ in such a world can be challenging.



Jesus never promised discipleship would protect us from tension. In fact, following Jesus often leads us directly into it. Jesus crossed boundaries others defended. He welcomed people that religion excluded. He challenged systems that benefited the powerful while burdening the vulnerable. He practiced compassion when others demanded judgment and proclaimed love when hostility seemed easier.

Our struggle is to do the same.

In a fractured society, we may be tempted to retreat into comfortable communities where everyone thinks like us. But Jesus continually calls us outward. Christian faith is not about escaping the world; it is about participating in God's healing of it.

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Tallmadge, OH 44278
Phone: 330.633.4931

That requires courage—and humility. After four stanzas of searching for Atlantis, the prescient part of Auden’s poem for me is:

*“Assuming you beach at last
Near Atlantis, and begin
That terrible trek inland
Through squalid woods and frozen
Tundras where all are soon lost;
If, forsaken then, you stand,
Dismissal everywhere,
Stone and now, silence and air,
O remember the great dead
And honor the fate you are,
Traveling and tormented,
Dialectic and bizarre.
Stagger onward rejoicing;”*

Stagger onward rejoicing and speaking against injustice while remembering that no political party possesses the fullness of God’s truth. Stagger onward rejoicing to defend human dignity without denying the humanity of those with whom we disagree. Stagger onward rejoicing to listen as passionately as we speak. Stagger onward remaining open to discovering that we, too, have something to learn.

Perhaps the sacredness of our society is found precisely here: God has not abandoned this fractured world. God remains present within it, inviting us to become partners in reconciliation.

Following Christ means believing division does not have the final word.

Love does.

Grace does.

Justice does.

Hope does.

And whenever we choose compassion over contempt, curiosity over certainty, community over division, and courageous love over comfortable silence, another small piece of our fractured world begins to heal. So, stagger onward rejoicing, my friends!

Grace for the journey,



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

AUG 23 13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:11-18, Mark 3:1-6

Message: “The Answer to Negativity is Hope”

AUG 30 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:8-12, Luke 18:10-14

Message: “The Answer to Arrogance is Openness”

SEP 6 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Galatians 3:25-29, Ephesians 4:25-32

Message: “The Answer to Division is Community”

SEP 13 16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Revelation 3:15-16, Matthew 5:13-15

Message: “The Answer to Passivity is Passion”

SEP 20 17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Exodus 16:2-15

Message: “Tensions in the Wilderness”

SEP 27 18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

GUEST PREACHER—Rev. Connie Stone

OCT 4 WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Message: “Wisdom for the Way”

OCT 11 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Message: “There Our Hearts Will Be: Where Our Hearts Are”

OCT 18 21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Proverbs 3:1-12

Message: “There Our Hearts Will Be: Fruitful Hearts”

OCT 25 REFORMATION SUNDAY

Scripture: John 14:1-14

Message: “There Our Hearts Will Be: Troubled Hearts”

THE PRAYER CHAIN CONNECTION

We pray for the names listed below and also for many other church members and their concerns, which remain confidential. You may call or text Diana Caldwell with your prayer concerns @ 330-265-5723.

Please remember in prayer:

Brian Allman	Jack and Helen McKee
Cindie Anderson	Donna Phillips
Debbie B.	Bob Poff
Brenda Bagnoli	Lt. John Norton
The Becking Family	Ensign 5 Kaylie Spear
Joyce Bojarski	Lt. Maxwell Spear
Margarete Boschert	Jeff Sullivan
Ryan Boylan	Richard and Karen
Jim Caplinger	Thomason
Matthew Chapman	Troy and Kara
Jane Charles	Kim and Noel Walters
Patty Conely	PO3 Kaitlyn Wetter
Jeffry Cotton	Don Woerz
Betty Cottrill	Alzheimer's Caregiver
Bob Davis	Support Group
Rylin Davis and family	
Susan Dean	
Sean and Sara Doty	
Ron Drake	
Elaine Engle	
Ron Evans	
Bonnie Fordham	
Darrell Goodson	
Eleanor Hall	
Jim Jackson	
Nancy Johnson	
Anita Kelly-Lahrmer	
The Klinginsmith Family	
Yvonne Larson	
Bill Laymon	
Roberta Lewis	
Kitty Maddox	
Carol McFarland	

*Blessed be
God who
did not
refuse me
the
kindness
I sought in
prayer.
Psalm 66:20*



You're Invited!

JOIN FCC BELL CHOIR

for the next year!

BE PART OF SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL.

- Make a joyful noise in worship
- Build community and lasting friendships
- Share your gifts and make a difference
- All are welcome—no experience needed!

REHEARSALS BEGIN
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3
6:00PM
IN THE SANCTUARY

QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE. *We can't wait to ring with you!*

CHOIR PRACTICE RESUMES

SEPTEMBER 3rd

The first choir rehearsal will be September 3rd, followed by dessert in the Fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in joining the choir is invited to join us in the Choir Room at 7:00 PM. The Chancel Choir will be back in worship on Sunday, September 14th.



Help Support Our Organization!

SHOP & EARN 5% CASH BACK

IT'S EASY!

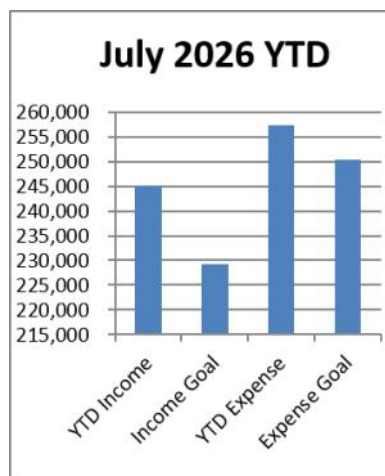
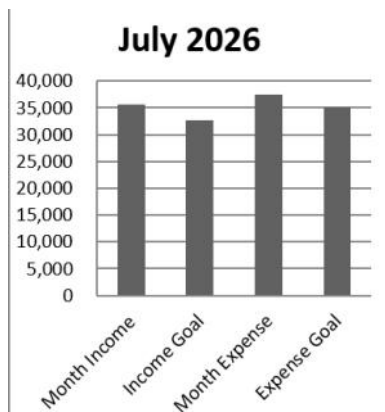
Save your Acme Fresh Market receipts dated August 1, 2026 – February 15, 2027 to help us raise money!

Earn 5% Back on Participating Brands!

Earn 5% Community Cash Back on these Participating Brands:

ACME Fresh Market, food club, TopCare, tippy toes, simply done, CIRCLE, Sweet P's, Paws Happy Life, WIDE AWAKE COFFEE CO., PURE HARMONY, THAT'S SMART!, Cape Covelte, Over the Top

MONTHLY FINANCIALS



July 2026 operating income of \$35,711 was \$2,961 **above** the monthly income need. Operating expenses for the month were \$37,574 resulting in a **deficit** of (\$1,862) in July and a YTD deficit of \$12,022. Income for July included prepaid pledges for the year and monthly "Faith Offerings" of about \$21,600. We continue to hope for a strong 2026 as we move toward the fall season in September with new and growing ministries, and we look forward in prayer to a theology of generosity and the ability to strengthen the growth of our ministries as we move through the year. Contact the Church office to find out how to sign up for automatic monthly giving. Offerings may also be made online through a link on our website, mailed to the Church or sent from your bank's online system.

EQUIPPING ADVOCACY AND JUSTICE MINISTRIES.



Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States.

When you give to Neighbors in Need, you help build a just world for all. Thank you! Learn more at www.ucc.org/nin



**Our annual Stewardship Campaign begins
Sunday, October 11th.**

THE CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE

God's Story. Our Story. One Story.

Understanding the Bible in the order of events helps us see the big picture of God's unfolding plan of redemption.

EARLY CHURCH
LAW & THE COVENANT
 PAUL IN PRISON
AD 60-62
 MATURING THE FAITH
AD 64-68

JAMES FAITH THAT WORKS - Faith in action - Endurance in trials - Caring for others - Living out what we believe	COLOSSIANS CHRIST ABOVE ALL - Christ is supreme - Fullness found in Him - New life in Christ - Strong in faith, rooted in love	HEBREWS JESUS, OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST - Jesus is greater - Faith with confidence - Hold fast to hope - Draw near to God
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ONE STORY
From Creation to New Creation
 ONE PEOPLE
Called, redeemed, and sent
 ONE GOD
Faithful in every season
 ONE PURPOSE
To know God and make Him known

THE MORE WE SEE THE WHOLE STORY,
THE DEEPER OUR FAITH BECOMES.

Let's journey through Scripture together.

Bible Study Fall 2026

The Fall 2026 Bible Study will continue a study of the Christian Scriptures in chronological order beginning September 9. While we have studied the gospels and some of the epistles, this study will help us see the developing cannon of scripture of the early church. This fall we will study James, Colossians, and Hebrews. The study will take place on Wednesdays at 1:00pm in the David Bacon Room. A reading list that will allow you to prepare for each class will be distributed on Sunday mornings beginning August 23rd. See you there!

Book Study Fall 2026

The Fall 2026 study will begin on Wednesday, September 9 at noon in the David Bacon Room. We will begin a study of the book, "I'm Tired of Apologizing for a Church I Don't Belong To." This book was written by a dear friend of mine who is now the Conference Minister of the Michigan Conference of the UCC.

In her book, the author, Lilian Daniel, argues that it's time for Christians to stop apologizing and realize that how we talk about Christian community matters. With disarming candor laced with just the right amount of humor, she urges open-minded Christians to explore ways to talk about their faith journeys that are reasonable, rigorous, and real.

BOOK STUDY

Tired of Apologizing for a Church I Don't Belong To

A JOURNEY FROM SHAME TO BELONGING

An honest, hopeful invitation to stop defending a faith that doesn't reflect Jesus—and start building a faith you're proud to call home.

QUESTION
Let go of guilt. Ask better questions.
 RECLAIM
Discover Jesus of grace, justice, and love.
 REIMAGINE
Envision the Church God is still becoming.
 BELONG
Find your people. Live your faith.

"I'm not done with Church. I'm done with pretending."

WHAT IF THE CHURCH YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR IS THE ONE YOU HELP CREATE?

Come explore. All are welcome.



PICNIC SUNDAY—AUGUST 30TH @ LIONS PARK

We continue our 5th Sunday tradition of holding worship in alternate spaces. On Sunday, August 30 (a 5th Sunday), we will have a worship service and a potluck picnic. In order to facilitate both a gathering space and a place for the meal, we will be holding this service and picnic at the Cherry Tree Pavilion in Lions Park, at the end of E. Garwood Drive in Tallmadge.

The service will start at 10:00 am as usual. The church will provide a hot dog bar and beverages. Please bring a salad/side/dessert for the picnic and your own table service. Games for all ages are planned! See you there!

Fall Leadership Retreat 2026

On Saturday, September 19, in lieu of the Men's Prayer Breakfast, we will hold a Leadership Retreat from 9-10:30 AM. Come and enjoy a shared breakfast and fellowship time as we begin our time together. We will then discuss the needs for any new officers and board/committee members. We will also go over office procedures. This discussion will include issues such as meeting times/dates, minutes, turning in receipts, obtaining reimbursements, etc. While this is designed for our officers and board/committee chairs, anyone serving on a board/committee is invited to attend. Please RSVP to the church office by September 14.



A WORD OF THANKS!

Welp...didn't see that one coming! Retirement started off with a bang; only to wind up with an injury that required surgery.

I can't thank my church family enough for ALL of your thoughts, prayers, cards and phone calls. These truly have touched my heart. I will cherish these gifts through the next few months of my recovery! May God continue to bless you ALL!

— Cindie Anderson



**We want to
wish a very
HAPPY
BIRTHDAY to
Richard
“Dick” Vestal,
who turns 100
years young
September 13,
2026!**

Ladies, YOU'RE INVITED TO A Kitchen SHOWER!



FELLOWSHIP ♥ FUN ♥ FAITH ♥ FILLED WITH BLESSINGS!

The Women's Fellowship is excited to
host a Kitchen Shower on
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD
at noon!

Help us bless and stock our church kitchen
with much-needed supplies.



Visit the signup table in
the **ATRIUM** before or after
church on
AUGUST 16, 23, OR 30
to learn more and
reserve your spot.

Be sure to choose
a slip from our
**KITCHEN
BLESSINGS BASKET,**
which will suggest a
special item to bring as
your shower gift for the
church kitchen.



Enjoy a delicious
potluck lunch!



Fun *shower games!*



Fellowship and
opportunities to
win prizes!



Come join the fun, share in the fellowship,
AND HELP FILL OUR KITCHEN WITH BLESSINGS!



UNITED MINISTRIES YOUTH UPDATE

Welcome Back, United Youth!

After a summer filled with rest, adventure, and time with family and friends, we are excited to welcome our youth back to United Youth Ministry!

As we begin a new season together, we are reminded that God is with us in every season of life. We look forward to creating a space where students can grow in their relationship with Christ, ask questions, build meaningful friendships, serve others, and discover God's purpose for their lives.

Whether you are returning or joining us for the first time, you have a place in our United Youth family! We pray that this year will be filled with opportunities to deepen our faith, encourage one another, serve our community, and experience God's love in new and meaningful ways.

Come Unite With Us!

Mark those Calendars!

August 30th | Youth Fellowship – Fireside & S'more | 6:30–8:00 PM

We'll gather for our first official Youth Fellowship of the year fireside! We'll spend time in lesson, prayer, and look ahead to the exciting year God has in store for us. Together, we'll talk about and plan upcoming service projects and youth events, while enjoying some s'mores!

September 13th | Sunday in Service

First Serve Day of Service | 7:30 AM-1:00 PM

United Ministry is ALL IN! Join us as we serve our neighbors in Akron through First Serve's Annual Day of Service. This year, we'll be giving new life to a preschool mural at the 915 North Main Project with a fresh coat of paint!

We'll meet at the church at 7:30 AM and carpool to the project. The day includes donuts, an interfaith sending service, hands-on service, and lunch provided by First Serve. Want to serve? Sign up with Ms. Anne! We're also looking for two adult volunteers to join us.

More details and the sign-up link will be available in the September United Ministry Newsletter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**30
AUG**

Youth Fellowship
Fireside Fun & S'more!
@ FCC 6:30–8pm

**6
SEPT**

NO Faith In Action Class
LABOR DAY WEEKEND

**13
SEPT**

Sunday In Service
First Serve Day of Service
@ 915 N. Main St. • Akron
7:30am–1:00pm
Meet @ FCC 7:30am

**20
SEPT**

Faith In Action Class
@ FCC 9–9:45am
Youth Room

**27
SEPT**

Youth Fellowship
@ FCC 6:30–8pm

FCC UNITED YOUTH MINISTRY

August-September

Sunday, September 13th

WE'RE
FIRST SERVE
DAY OF SERVICE
JOIN IN'
sign up with Ms. Anne

7:30am-1:00pm

Faith In Action

We are ready to start the fall session.
We will meet Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

207 Roberta Nehrenz and Jill DiNuoscio
ages 4 to 2nd grade

204 Dianne Drummond
grades 3rd– 5th (this class would like to meet every week)

102 Kyle and George Herron
grades 6th– 12th

Adult Faith in Action will meet in the David Bacon Room on the 1st and 3rd Sundays as well.



Worship Art Ministry (WAM)

We have started meeting weekly for WAM where children 5th grade and younger will discover the weekly scripture through art and activities. We will head to the Fellowship Hall most Sundays following the Children's Message.

We would love your child to bring his or her bible to WAM if they have received it.



Roots and Wings is a fellowship group for parents or grandparents and grandchildren to grow in faith and friendship together. Inspired by Colossians 2:6–7, we seek to be “rooted and built up in Him” as we share activities, stories, and time that strengthen family bonds and create lasting memories. This is open to all children, but our activities will be geared for elementary-aged grandchildren. If your child wants to come and doesn't have a local grandparent, we can find an adoptive grandparent that would like to participate. The next few meetings will be

Sept. 13 @ 4:30

School days

Oct. 11 @ 4:30

Stewardship and how we can get involved

September 20: 3rd-Grade Bibles

The Board of Christian Education will be giving our 3rd graders bibles this Sunday. We purchase bibles that are child friendly and written for their age level. If you would like your child included, please let us know.



Treehouse Preschool Fall

2026

We have openings in our Me and My Parent (Wednesdays), 4-yr-old (afternoon), and 5-yr-old classes (afternoon).

If you know anyone interested, please have them call the office for a tour.



Save the date

August 30: Worship and Picnic in the Park

Come worship in Lions Park on Sunday, Aug. 30. Bring your own place settings and a potluck side dish or dessert to go with the hot dogs that the church will bring.

November 13-14: Grades 3-4-5 Lock-In

All students in grades 3-5 are invited to join a lock-in at the church. We will play games, eat, watch a movie and sleep at the church.

December 20: Christmas Pageant

We will start Christmas Pageant rehearsal the week of Oct. 26. All children in grades 1-5 are encouraged to participate. We will add the younger children to the practices in December.

Worship Attendance

July 5	85
July 12	98
July 19	112
July 26	130
Aug 2	104
Aug 9	95
Aug 16	109



UPCOMING SUNDAYS

Greeters

August 23	Cindy and Mike Cammel
August 30	
September 6	
September 13	Joe and Tom Labay
September 20	
September 27	
October 4	
October 11	Joe and Tom Labay
October 18	Mark and Cathleen Clark
October 25	Dan Thomas

Altar Flowers

August 23	Marie Zimmer
August 30	
September 6	Sylvia Taylor
September 13	
September 20	
September 27	Becky Michael
October 4	
October 11	Bonnie Fordham
October 18	Cliff and Sue Yeager
October 25	

Sign up in
the hallway
\$28 per
arrangement

Ushers



August 23	Tom Labay, Ann and Patrick Hagan, Larry Robinson
August 30	Joe Labay, Ann and Patrick Hagan, Jane Charles
September 6	Larry Robinson, Dave Marconi, Tom Labay, Ken Caldwell
September 13	Sandy Haydu, Karen Huth, Kim Darkow, Jane Charles
September 20	Dave Marconi, Jane Charles, Sandy Haydu, Gary Myers
September 27	Joe Labay, Ann and Patrick Hagan, Larry Robinson
October 4	Larry Robinson, Dave Marconi, Tom Labay, Ken Caldwell
October 11	Sandy Haydu, Karen Huth, Kim Darkow, Jane Charles
October 18	Dave Marconi, Jane Charles, Sandy Haydu, Gary Myers
October 25	Larry Robinson, Patrick Hagan, Tom Labay, Joe Labay

SEPTEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 6:00 PM—Naranon	2 9:00 AM—Quilters 7:00 PM—Cubs	3 10:00 AM—WW 10:00 AM—Staff Meeting 12:00 PM—WF Luncheon 6:00 PM—WW 6:00 PM—Bells 7:00 pm—Choir	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5 7:30/9:00 AM—WW
6 10:00 AM—Worship/ Communion	7 LABOR DAY— OFFICE CLOSED	8 10:30 AM—ACSG 6:00 PM—Naranon	9 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	10 HERALD DEADLINE 10:00 AM—WW 10:00 AM—Staff Meeting 6:00 PM—WW 6:00 PM—Bells 7:00 pm—Choir	11	12 7:30/9:00 AM—WW
13 8:30 AM—First Serve Day of Service 9:00 AM—EC Meeting 10:00 AM—Worship 4:30 PM—Roots and Wings	14 6:00 PM—Scouts 6:00 PM—Heritage	15 6:00 PM—Naranon 6:00 PM—Cards	16 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	17 10:00 AM—WW 10:00 AM—Staff Meeting 6:00 PM—WW 6:00 PM—Bells 7:00 pm—Choir	18	19 7:30/9:00 AM—WW 9:00 AM— Leadership Retreat
20 9:00 AM—Faith in Action 10:00 AM—Worship/ Bibles	21 12:30 PM Ladies Video Study 2:00 PM Chair Yoga 6:00 PM—Heritage 6:00 PM—Scouts	22 6:00 PM—Naranon	23 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts	24 10:00 AM—WW 10:00 AM—Staff Meeting 6:00 PM—WW 6:00 PM—Bells 7:00 pm—Choir	25	26 7:30/9:00 AM—WW
27 10:00 AM—Worship 6:00 PM—WJHM 6:30 PM—Youth Fellowship	28 12:30 PM Ladies Video Study 2:00 PM Chair Yoga 6:00 PM—Heritage 6:00 PM—Scouts	29 10:30 AM—ACSG 6:00 PM—Naranon	30 9:00 AM—Quilters 12:00 PM—Book Study 1:00 PM—Bible Study 7:00 PM—Cub Scouts			

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
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DATE: AUGUST 19, 2026

Spiritual and Pastoral Care Ministry Contacts

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group and Elders Ministry	Roberta Nehrenz	330.634.0713	rgnehrenz@att.net
Hearts in Service	Janet McCaulley Barbara Rowles	330.633.3775	34babs@sbcglobal.net
Prayer Chain	Diana Caldwell	330.265.5723	scdcg@icloud.com
Yarning for Peace	Elaine Engle	330.633.0896	elengle@aol.com

Staff E-Mail Addresses

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Wendy Brown	Director of Family Ministries	wendy.brown@fcctallmadge.org
Nancy Lynn Robinson	Choir Director / Organist	nrbgp@aol.com
Anne Pertick	Digital Minister/ Youth Ministries Coordinator	digitalministry@fcctallmadge.org unitedministry@fcctallmadge.org
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Gary Marlow	Sunday Custodian	