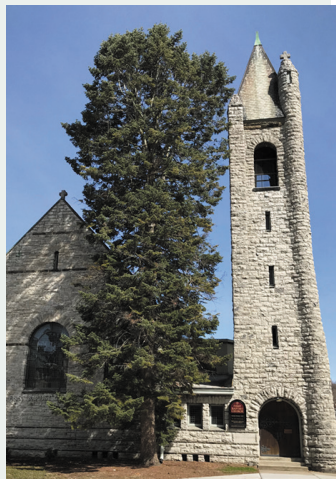


607-273-5800; www.firstbaptistithaca.org; email: fbithaca@gmail.com



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Upcoming Events

- See Advent Listing on page 2.
- 2020 Women's Retreat:
April 23rd-25th.

Tim Hembrooke
Community Dinner:
Saturday, December 14th

What does the Lord require
of you?

To do justice,
Love mercy and
Walk humbly with our God
Micah 6:8

The Giving Tree Is Up!

From Linda Caughey

The Giving Tree is a long-standing tradition at First Baptist that provides an opportunity for us to "share our light" with children and families in need in the Enfield community through our collaboration with Enfield Elementary School. On November 24th the Giving Tree will be up and decorated with tags that list items that are needed. Here's how it works:

- take the double tag with a child's age, gender, item in need, plus size and/or color preference;
- fill out one tag with your name, phone number, e-mail, and put it in the basket;
- purchase the item, wrap it, put the second tag on the gift;
- and return gift to church!

Gifts need to be back at church by Sunday, December 8 to meet the school's deadline. If you have questions, please contact Linda Caughey at 273-7864.

Please Turn in Your Pledge
as soon as possible



Share Your Light: Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds had the children and youth light votive candles during the Young People's Time November 17th to symbolize how when many share their light, the light magnifies.
Photo by Bill Abeles



All Saints Sunday: On November 3rd, after FBC congregants received communion, they lit candles in remembrance of the saints they have experienced in their lives.

Walking the Labyrinth - for Personal Reflection and in Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees

By Rev. Debbie Bennett Reynolds

Walking a Labyrinth is an ancient spiritual practice - an opportunity for reflection and prayer and a form of spiritual seeking and inward pilgrimage. But, walking a labyrinth can also be done as an act of witness and solidarity. Here at First Baptist Church in Ithaca we have a rich tradition of setting up a labyrinth in our sanctuary during the Christmas to New Year's transitional time for use by ourselves and the larger community.

This year, on Sunday evening, December 29th from 7 – 9 pm, when we first open our labyrinth, we are inviting people to walk the labyrinth in solidarity with migrants and refugees around the world. We will walk to honor their journeys and hold in prayer their struggles. There will be an opening ritual at 7 pm to focus our thoughts and prayers, but participants are welcome to come at whatever time they can. The labyrinth will be in our sanctuary from Sunday, Dec 29th - Tuesday Dec. 31 from 7 – 9 p.m., New Year's Day, January 1 from 1-5 p.m. and Thursday and Friday, January 2 and 3, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. All are invited to come and walk the labyrinth.



From Your Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds

Dear Friends,

As The holidays are upon us. In my Bible study with Ithaca College students this week, they were all tired, really tired. There wasn't much energy for Bible study, but when I asked what they were most anticipating about a week's break and Thanksgiving dinner their energy surged! Everyone had their favorite foods and activities to talk about.



Reverend Debbie Bennett Reynolds

The holidays - all the special foods, activities and events - are rich with traditions. For some of us, these are such joyful times. For others of us, these are times that sharply remind us of grief for loved ones who have died and changes that mean we can no longer celebrate as we remember doing in the past. Maybe for most of us, holidays bring a mixture of emotions – memories both sweet and sad, anticipation both joyful and anxious. In these holiday times, let's try to be kind to ourselves and to each other. We don't have to do all the things we've done before. Sometimes, less really is more. Sometimes, simpler is beautiful. Let's support and encourage each other to find the deep meanings that this season invites us to seek.

Advent is a season that invites us to embrace the gathering darkness and cold of winter. Advent invites us to know God in the starkness of bare trees and the grayness of December skies, as much as in the sparkling lights and beautiful decorations. Advent invites us, in the midst of the busyness, to find moments to go inward, to breathe, to seek God in the depths, to be still and know that God is God. Advent calls us to see and know that God is here, present, with us and for us. Advent's message is always Emmanuel – God With Us.

Blessings to all of you!

Your Pastor, Debbie Bennett Reynolds

"Tis the Season at FBC"

Advent & Christmas Saturday Evening Prayers On Saturday, December 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 5 p.m. you are invited to a short, contemplative time of worship with chant, silent meditation, and reading of scriptures in the lectio divina style.

Thursday Meditation: 5:00 - 5:30 in the chapel

Advent Adult Education: Discussion of key Advent scriptures. Sunday mornings. Dec. 8, 15, 22: 11:30 - 12:30 in the Library.

Christmas Breakfast: Bring food to share as we join together to celebrate Christmas as a church family. Sunday, December 22: 8:30 am

Youth Pageant: December 22: 10:00 am

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Tuesday, December 24: 7:00 pm

Labyrinth: Open to All Service of Dedication to walk in solidarity with the Sanctuary Movement Dec. 29-31st: 7:00 - 9:00 pm
New Year's Day: 1:00 - 5:00 pm Jan 2nd & 3rd: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Epiphany Service: January 5: 10 am



Raise Your Voice in Song

Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds urged all to sing out a familiar song at the end of worship.



Successful Sanctuary Support Fundraiser

Over 200 persons filled First Baptist's Community Room Saturday evening, November 18th to enjoy a bowl of squash or bean soup accompanied by bread, greens and applesauce in support of the Sanctuary Project at First Congregational Church. After eating folks moved into the sanctuary for entertainment and talks about the Sanctuary Project. Entertainment was provided by our own David Caughey on voice and guitar, a Chilean guitarist and a number of vocal renditions from students in Ithaca College's Theater and Arts program (shown in picture above). Leslie Schultz and Bill Abeles helped organize the highly successful event in which over \$5,000 was raised.

2020 CALENDARS

If you receive 2020 calendars but don't use/need them, please bring them to church. They will be donated to Mental Health or Ithaca Community Recovery Center.

Visioning Continues

The second hour of the November 11th Cabinet meeting was dedicated to discussion of the Visioning process and the results of the last congregational event October 19th at the Unitarian Universalist Church because First Baptist did not have heat. Mark Lawrence gave a summary of the event, and the process during which 24 phrases that described First Baptist were distilled, first down to six, and then down to three. They six phrases were:

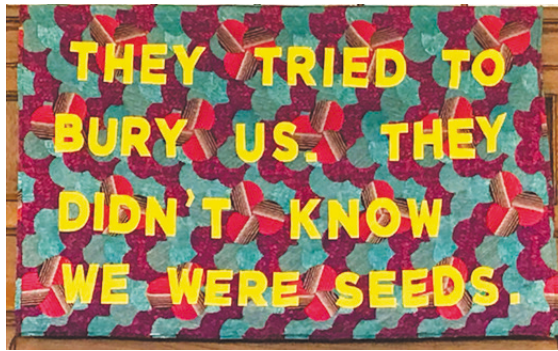
1. A nurturing community
2. Four Baptist Freedoms
3. Diversity and Inclusion
4. Heart and Soul centered
5. Jesus teachings of service
6. Social justice

These were then distilled at the meeting to the following three value phrases:

- 1) First Baptist as a nurturing community
- 2) Jesus Teachings of Service
- 3) The Four Baptist Freedoms

Pastor Debbie reminded all that this was our process. There seems to be confusion about the teachings of Jesus phrase. What does that mean exactly? It was also suggested that it would be helpful to have some action verbs in the phrases to indicate living out these values. Considerable thought and discussion ensued about how to continue to disseminate the visioning results to others in the congregation.

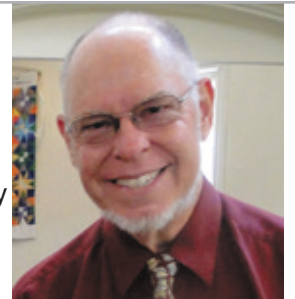
Since the Cabinet meeting Debbie has led an adult Sunday School session November 17th for additional feedback on the Visioning phrases. The discussion was inclusive with feedback solicited from the more than 20 folks that attended the session. There was strong support for inclusion of an creation/environmental statement. Debbie left us with the thought that we were not locked into just three value statements, but could consider adding another if that would help capture the essence of First Baptist.



How the Light Gets In: Carol Hockett, Coordinator of School and Family Programs at Cornell University's Johnson Museum of Art previewed their current exhibit "How the Light Gets In" during an adult Sunday School class. The exhibit showcases contemporary art about the movement of people across the globe and the welcome cracks that develop in our notions of borders and nation states. Marlene Sack visited the exhibit and borrowed the banner on the right, now hanging in the sanctuary, from the exhibit which ends December 6th.

Binghamton's Press & Sun-Bulletin Features Rich Barron

When Binghamton residents opened their newspapers in early October, they were not only surprised but also delighted to find a full half page spread featuring Rich Barron and traces his 48-year association with the Lions Club International.



Rev. Rich Barron

Written by Connie McKinney, the article tells of Rich's long history with the Binghamton Lions Club, which he first joined when he served as a young pastor at the Community Baptist Church in Port Dickinson. Many years later, after having participated in respective Lions Clubs in the other communities where he served as a pastor, Rich reunited with his longtime friends in the Binghamton Lions Club when he and his wife Lil retired and moved to Berkshire, NY.

Throughout Rich's years as a Lion, he has worked on the club's numerous service projects. With 1.4 million members across the globe, Lions Club International is the largest service organization in the world. Their focus is fivefold: the environment, hunger, childhood cancer, diabetes and vision. Rich has been especially involved in their vision program. He and his fellow Binghamton Lions serve as silvers sponsors for the Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment in downtown Binghamton

Rich is like many other First Baptist members, who not only serve their church, but are also involved in other community service organizations. Thank you Rich.



Parable of Talents Event. On November 2nd, FBC members and friends attended a Parable of Talents-sponsored event in the community room. The evening began with a pork BBQ, which was followed by a silent auction of items that had been donated. The evening culminated in learning line dancing (pictured above). The event was a great success adding over \$2,000 to the church's coffers.
Photo by Marlene Sack



Cute as a Bug: Tina Hilsdorf submitted the above quilt to the Tompkins County Quilt Guild show held in Dryden in early October.

Photo by Amanda Ufford

Friendship Lunches

The Friendship Lunch crew needs more help and/or contributions for our monthly lunch preparation. We make 65 lunches the first Thursday of each month for the Friendship Center on West State Street. We need the following:

- food items to make sandwiches (meat, cheese, bread, lettuce, etc.)
- other items to complete lunches (juice, cookies, raisins, fruit, etc.)
- miscellaneous (peanut butter, mustard, jam, mayo, etc.)
- and sandwich makers to put it all together!

If you are interested in doing any of the above, please contact Steve Farrell (836-6562) for more details, and Linda Caughey to be on the monthly e-mail list (273-7864). We would love to have you join us!

Louise Wilson's Carrot Cake Takes First Place

When Sue (Eymann) and Tony (Lister) were recently visiting their daughters Karen and Amy in Pristina, Kosovo, they were invited to attend a Iron Chef dish-to-pass gathering of ex-pats. The one requirement was that each dish must include carrots. Amy took an exotic carrot salad, but Karen remembered the Louise Wilson carrot cake from the First Baptist Cookbook, *Not By Bread Alone* that mom (Sue) used to make. Much to her surprise and delight, her carrot cake took first place when the attendees voted on which was the best offering.

LOUISE WILSON'S CARROT CAKE

from Louise Wilson. Editor's note: "This is the cake that brought in a large sum of money at the First Baptist auction in 1992!"

4 eggs	2 cups flour
1 1/2 cup Wesson oil	2 tsp baking soda
2 cups sugar	1 cup flaked coconut
3 cups grated carrots	1 cup chopped nuts
1 tsp cinnamon	

Put all together and mix with beater. Put in well-greased bundt pan (I use Pam). Bake at 325 degrees for 1 - 1 1/4 hours.

Cream cheese frosting:

1 stick butter or margarine, softened
6 ounces (more or less) cream cheese
1 cup confectioners sugar
1 tsp vanilla

Beat all ingredients together. Frost the cake when it is cool.

In Memoriam: Grace Evans A Blessing To All Who Knew Her

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Rev. David and Grace Evans

Our beloved Grace L Evans died May 15th of this year at her retirement home in St. Petersburg, Florida. Grace's adventurous spirit was forged in her youth in Wyoming with her homesteader parents. There, she rode a horse to school before the family moved to Lincoln, Nebraska. She married David Evans in 1952 and the couple had three children, Janel, Bronwyn and Trevor. Many in Ithaca knew Grace as a gifted kindergarten teacher at Belle Sherman Elementary School. She also taught in Berlin, West Germany and received a Fulbright Scholarship to teach in Chorley, England. Family vacations were spent in Nova Scotia where she and Dave had bought a fisherman's shanty overlooking Neils Harbor on Cape Breton. Grace served on the board of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School for many years. Among the Evans' closest friends in Ithaca was Dr. Jud Kilgore and his wife Suzanne. Jud recalls the following about Grace.

Never a more fitting name than "Grace." I'm sure she will gracefully excuse me if I write about her to include both the Evans and Kilgores in a way that ties us together as dear friends as well as pastor and congregants. I remember clam digging in Nova Scotia, walks along the rugged coast, with Grace and me quicker than Dave and Sue. I recall good meals in the rather primitive Northland, and in Grace's Ithaca kitchens, especially at Hickory Road during construction of their home. Beach walks in Florida, transplanting myrtle from my yard to the Hickory plot were other memories.

Our friendships and shared church lives date from 1970, beginning when my wife Sue met Dave. Sue, the Planned Parenthood nurse, had an office on the lower floor of FBC. She said that she thought that I might like David, and we should met as couples. The rest is a wonderful story of mutual love, respect, and FUN. Despite fearing that our children might not hit it off, they all did, and still do. Like concentric circles, the Evans-Kilgore personal lives thrived. The next circle to thrive was my relation to this First Baptist, due to my association with Dave, Grace, and the congregation.

Despite inevitable changes in size and demographics, FBC has remained a beacon of enlightened Christianity, so close to what the Evans' leadership brought. They were an inspiring, inseparable pair, leading the congregation in ways we still follow: adhering to the Golden Rule, the Lord's prayer, and our Micah verse. I am proud of our welcoming and affirming stance, our sanctuary status when it really mattered, our willingness to speak truth to power, politically. The FBC circle of decency cares for the hungry, powerless, marginalized not only in our locality, but also in the wider world circle.

If this is not 'all about Grace,' it is because she and Dave was so united and inseparable, such a force for good as parents, pastor, teacher, and friends. There were good ministers and wives before and after Grace and Dave, and this is not a typical Visitor follow up, but in going back to 1970, when the Evans and Kilgores met, my life as a person and a Baptist has been better because of what they did for our Church, and their strong foundations are thankfully still in good hands.

ACT
(Area Congregations Together)
invites you to its annual:

**Multi-faith
Thanksgiving**

Radical Welcoming:
Welcome One & All in Community

Keynote Speaker: Mother Megan Castellan
First Congregational Sanctuary Church Project:
Andy & Nancy Weislogel

Welcoming: Readings from several faith traditions

When: Sunday, Nov. 24th, 3 pm
Where: St John's Church: 201 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY

Free-Will Offering • Child Care Available
Light Refreshments & Conversation following the service

Wisdom School Retreat

About 20 friends and members of First Baptist gathered in the library on November 3rd to participate in a day-long Wisdom School retreat.

Inspired by the teaching of Cynthia Bourgeault, the program included silent mediation, listening to a lesson by Dr. Bourgeault, performing conscious practice and movement and concluding with the "Elm dance," a dance of inspiration, solidarity, remembrance and for the blessing of peace.

The Elm Dance

Set to the haunting strains of a Latvian song by Ieva Akuratere, and choreographed by Anastasia Geng, the Elm Dance took form in Germany in the 1980s. Buddhist teacher Joanna Macy popularized the dance when she took it to workshops she was leading in areas poisoned by the April 26, 1986 Chernobyl disaster. There the dance became an expression of their will to live. It was at these gatherings that the dance evolved a distinctive form with the raising and swaying of arms, evoking their connection with the trees they so loved that were destroyed by the disaster.

Knocking Holes in the Darkness (on the right) by David A. Caughey was inspired by a vignette about Robert Louis Stevenson, who, as a small boy, pressed his nose against the window pane as he watched the lamplighter going down the street lighting each of the gas street lamps. "Look," he cried out excitedly, "There's a man coming down the street punching holes in the darkness."

Lunar Spirituality

By Reverend Debbie Allen

The words that come to mind during Advent are from the first chapter of the Gospel of John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

In her recent book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, Barbara Brown Taylor describes Christianity as a "solar spirituality" because it never has anything good to say about darkness. God is always associated with light which represents goodness, righteousness, holiness, and truth. And yet, here we are soon on the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year when our part of the world has only 9 hours of daylight and 15 hours of darkness.

Most of us look forward to longer hours of daylight in the coming months, but let's not forget that darkness was once, what Clark Strand calls, "the hour of God." Long ago, he says, before the flourishing of science and industry and medicine, people took to their beds at nightfall, not only for sleep, but for stories, and intimacy, and sometimes even "divine visitations that helped guide the course of their lives." Darkness, he says, is "the only power that has ever put the human agenda [of remaking the world in our own image] on hold." Perhaps our faith can better be described as a "lunar spirituality" in which darkness, as well as light, helps us grow closer to God.



Shoe Drive: New sneakers were collected and delivered to Enfield School in September to allow full participation in gym programs at the school. Thrivent Financial contributed \$250. During November you are invited to donate new winter boots for boys and girls at the school. Sizes 12 thru 4 are appropriate. Thank you!
Marge Hansel

Knocking Holes in the Darkness

Words & Music: David A. Caughey

1. A lamplighter walks through the shadows, his torch carried high sparks a flame. A lonely boy watches, his mother nearby, She asks the boy just what he sees.

"There's a man knocking holes in the darkness, making light for the whole wide world to see. He is spreading the light of God's goodness and God's might, helping those needing light along the way."

2. Rev'rend Billy is preaching in the chapel, with stories of darkness turned to light. He tells of brother Martin going down Memphis way, to join the sanitation workers' fight.

And he died knocking holes in the darkness, making light for the whole wide world to see. He was bringing the light of God's goodness and God's might, helping those needing justice on the way.

3. Jesus spoke for the migrants in the vineyard, who toil out in the hot sun. Food for our tables, depends on their labors, but where is the justice for them?

We must work to knock holes in the darkness, making light for the whole wide world to see. We must send out the light of God's goodness and God's might, to help those needing justice on the way.



New Creation Singers The New Creation Singers sang during the worship service on October 27th. They performed "Through These Hands" by Trish Colligan and Paul Frantsen, and arranged by David A. Caughey. From left to right in the picture are Danny Scott, Marlene Sack, Shella Chace, Bill Fry and David Caughey. Kris Scott is at the piano and not visible in the picture

Photo by Bill Abeles



Please keep in your prayers:

- Nancy Sokol
- John Gross
- Suzanne Kilgore
- Naomi Hollister
- Laurel Lawshae
- Joan Yarborough/John Laney
- Betty Brown
- The Evans family
- Pastor André Thera
- Marge Hansel
- Ron Drummond
- Barbie Lister
- Dick Fielding



James Schultz reading scripture.

The Visitor — November 2019

Editor, publisher: Susan Eymann

Proofers: Judy Kennison Tony Lister

Contributors: Debbie Bennett Reynolds, Jud Kilgore, Linda Caughey, Marge Hansel, Debbie Allen, David Caughey

Photos: Barb Fry, Bill Abeles, Marge Hansel, Amanda Ufford

Please Contribute to the Visitor

In the Baptist tradition each of us are called to be ministers. Therefore, each of you is invited and urged to contribute to our *Visitor*. Please send announcements, articles, features, pictures to: susan.eymann@transonic.com



VOICES Multi-cultural Chorus. On November 17th, VOICES Multi-cultural Chorus, directed by Associate Director Ross Mizrahi, sang three numbers during the worship service. They were "Gabi, Gabi," "Behold Zion" and a choral response, "Community of Christ." The thanksgiving cornucopia on the communion table was arranged by Mariana Morse.

Time and Talent Ministries

First Baptist Staff

Pastor: Rev. Debbie Bennett-Reynolds
Secretary: Shella Chace
Organist: Christopher Morgan Loy
Choir Director: Belinda Adams
Youth and Children's Ministries Coordinator: Laura Ward
Nursery Caregiver: Carol Fleming
Sunday School Aide: Sarah Zipfel
Custodian: David Hopkins

Elected Leaders

Moderator: Judy Kennison
Vice Moderator: Mark Lawrence
Membership Clerk: Tina Hilsdorf
Recording Clerks: Rich Barron/Susan Eymann
Treasurer: David Caughey
Assistant Treasurer: Andrea Mooney
Financial Secretary: Marlene Sack

Board of Trustees

Anne Farrell (2022), Kris Scott (2022), Rich Barron (2022), Hans Bump (2021), Elizabeth Pia-Miller (2021), Amy Chaffee (2021), Bill Phelan (2020), Josie Zanfordino (2020), Baruch Whitehead (2020), David Caughey (ex officio)

Trustees' Subgroups Finance & Endowment

David Caughey, Marlene Sack, Janet Cotraccia, Andrea Mooney, Curt Ufford

Stewardship Committee: Janet Cotraccia, Bill Staffeld, Judy Kennison, Alice Grow, Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds, Andrea Staffeld (graphic), Bill Fry (letter), Susan Eymann (*Visitor*)

Interior Decoration: Barbara Fry, Julie Dean, Tina Hilsdorf, Bill Abeles, Anne Farrell, Andrea Staffeld, Susan Eymann

Church Archivist: Linda Caughey

Lay Delegates:

Affiliate Organizations

Rochester Genesee Region (2 delegates), ABC-USA (2 delegates): Rich and Lil Barron, Co-chairs Ossie Heath-Crump, Anne Farrell, Bill Reynolds
AWAB: Shella Chace, Josie Zanfordino, Baptist Peace Fellowship: Meg Gillard, Cornell Protestant Cooperative Ministry: Julia Dean, Linda Nicholson, Anne Farrell
Kitchen Cupboard: Amanda Ufford, Sue Hemsath
Tompkins County Workers Center: Bill Abeles

Pastoral Relations

Barbara Fry (2022), Bronwyn Evans (2022), Bill Abeles (2021), Lou Carlucci (2021), Tim Dean (2020), Steve Farrell (2020)

Nominating Committee

Josie Zanfordino, Adrienne McNair, Linda Caughey, Louise Mudrak, Marge Hansel

Personnel Committee

Tony Lister, Julia Dean, Beth Wolfer

Ministry Teams

Worship & Spiritual Life:

Barbara Fry, Amy Chaffee, Co-chairs; Bill Abeles, Tony Lister, Kris Scott, Edie Reagan, Alice Grow

Worship/Spiritual Life Subgroups

Flower Committee: Barbara Fry, Mariana Morse, Tina Hilsdorf, Andrea Staffeld

Myra's Ministry: Tina Hilsdorf, Lou Carlucci, Bill Reynolds

Labyrinth: Kris Scott, Liz Wilkinson

Sound & Audio Ministry: David Caughey, Curt Ufford

Education

Children's and Youth:

Carol Fleming, Tim Dean, Leslie Schultz
Christian Ed Teachers: Baruch Whitehead, Lou Carlucci, Sarah Zipfel, Lil Barron

Christian Concern

Steve Farrell, Bill Phelan, Co-chairs;

Christian Concern Subgroups

Circle of Care: Coordinators: Amanda Ufford, Sue Hemsath, Linda Caughey

Hospitality Ministry:

Anne Farrell: chair; Shella Chace, Meg Gillard, Tina Hilsdorf, Adrienne McNair, Andrea Staffeld, Ella Dean, Greta Cotraccia, Bay Ward/Aittama

Communications Ministry

Shella Chace (convener), David Caughey, Mark Lawrence, Craig Riecke, Susan Eymann, Amy Bean, Lisa Kilgore

Green Team

Louise Mudrak, Lisa Kilgore (Co-conveners), Lynn Glase, Tony Lister, Hans Bump, and many others

Ad Hoc Visioning Team

Bill Abeles, Julie Dean, Bronwyn Evans, Anne Farrell, Bill Fry, Judy Kennison, Mark Lawrence, Barb Fry, Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds