



Building Bridges • Transforming Lives

# first touch

This is a monthly publication of First Church of God, St. Joseph, Michigan



## Make a Promise by Faith

Faith Promise allows God to empower our **giving** so that, working together with him, we can do more for missions than we can do with human power alone.

*Faith Promise* finds money for missions that wouldn't otherwise be available. It is money God wants to give if he can find someone to pass it on when he puts it in their hands. First we pray for God to tell us how much he wants to give through us. As we pray and think about it, an amount often comes to mind. Then we make a "Faith Promise" with confidence God will supply. We promise to give it if and when God supplies.

Many in our congregation tell of making a "Faith Promise" without knowing from where the money will come, then wait for God to supply. When he does, in some unusual or unexpected way, it is usually obvious this is from God. It is fun and awe-inspiring to see God work in your life to accomplish something significant that you know will have a huge, positive impact on someone else's life—someone you may never know!

**The weekend of July 9 & 10 will be Faith Promise Weekend.**

**First we pray for God to tell us how much he wants to give through us...then we make a Faith Promise with confidence God will supply.**

Our speaker will be long-time missionary and Global Missions Director, Bob Edwards, who will share good stories about Church of God missions—of which we are a significant part. We are a "Missional" congregation in the best sense of the word and we expect this to be a great *Faith Promise* campaign.

**Our goal is \$106,000.** At this writing our congregation is on target to reach our \$104,000 *Faith Promise* goal. Add a tithe on our local income of about \$200,000 and almost \$59,000 from WCG's Christ Birthday and other special offerings, and it brings our congregational mission giving to about \$366,000 or so annually!

I hope everyone in our congregation has a real sense of joy as you think about the generosity of our congregation and how our ministry encircles the globe. I hope too, that every household will participate in Faith Promise-Missions.

If you can't give much, please don't think your offering doesn't matter. When given to God, it becomes significant and all of us together, working as God's team, will powerfully impact our world. In God's eyes, your small gift, given in faith, is huge, when multiplied by his unlimited resources.



This van, presented to Camille Melki & Heart for Lebanon is just one of the ways that your giving provides for the work of God through Faith Promise.

**Building Bridges • Transforming Lives**



# “Do Something” Takes Community By Storm

God really DID SOMETHING!

On June 12, following a 6-week focus on being the hands and feet of Jesus, almost 1,000 adults, teens and children from First Church took part in our DO SOMETHING all-church outreach. It was a beautiful day and teams of people wearing t-shirts with big yellow exclamation points bearing the words “*Do Something, Make Your Life Count*” were seen all over the community... making their lives count.

Over 73 gallons of paint were used...almost 400 fire hydrants were painted...Approximately 500 perennials were planted...1,000 box lunches were assembled...100 letters were written to armed servicemen and women...1,122 gallons of gas were pumped...589 tray favors were made for nursing home meals...over 9 tons of electronics were collected (120 computers & 75 TVs)...and 2,300 lbs of paper and cardboard were collected for recycle

Parks and organizations were cleaned and landscaped, fire hydrants and buildings were painted, lunches were served to senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, cars were washed, gas was pumped, and sports equipment, hygiene, household, and humane society items were collected to be given to those in need.

I am so grateful to the 50 project leaders who joyfully accepted the responsibility for almost 80 different projects. Because of your organization, commitment and example, God’s light shined brightly in our community. I can’t express enough thanks to the First Church staff who supported DO SOMETHING with their frontline verbal and written communication. Because of you, our community understands the heart of First Church.

There aren’t words to begin to convey my appreciation to the planning team who gave hundreds of hours of their time to make the vision of this God-sized outreach a reality. Your passion and excitement to “run” with God as He led us on this wild ride has been a great joy!

First Church is blessed to be led by a pastor who listens to God’s whispers and truly understands the meaning of “faith without action is not faith at all.” God told you to “do something” and almost 1,000 of your congregation heard God’s prompt and stepped out in obedience to follow! And lastly...as another area pastor put it... “A sacred thank you to our God who designed us to act this way.”

Collectively we served 4,516 hours for our DO SOMETHING outreach through June 18!!! This leaves a balance of 45,484 hours to serve before June 12, 2012. I know that for many of

you volunteering is part of your lifestyle and it will be exciting to see all the places that individuals from First Church are involved in serving our community. Some are just beginning to experience the great sense of purpose that comes from giving your time to serve others. We hope that you will take the time to record your hours this year. Go to our website [www.myfirstchurch.com](http://www.myfirstchurch.com) and find the “clock hours” link on the home page. There is a very simple form to fill in each time you serve and it will automatically add your hours to our total. If you do not have online capability

then use the tear off on the worship bulletin and let us know that way.

It is truly a privilege to serve with all of you at First Church and I look forward with excitement to the next big adventure that God has planned for us as well as the little ways that He invites us to reach out to each other and our community and share His amazing love!

Jenny Fry

Missional Outreach Director



COMING SOON! A WEBPAGE WITH UP-TO-DATE PROJECTS...AND BE SURE TO COUNT YOUR HOURS WHILE THERE!



Here are a few great things that we heard people saying... visit our website for more quotes!

*"... they weeded, planted flowers, replaced trees, and even re-sealed the parking lot....with a smile and cheerfulness. They did not preach their faith; they lived their faith and were shining examples of God's love.... from the bottom of our hearts, we thank you!"*

--Maria Houseal Johnston, Birthright Director

*"... In just a few short hours, these volunteers truly transformed our building and our yard. Groups washed windows, painted, cleaned, shredded paper, landscaped, trimmed trees, power-washed and stained our deck...and transformed our backyard into a peaceful oasis..."*

--Alysia G Babcock, Executive Director, Emergency Shelter

*"Thank you very much for staining our handicapped ramp and the wonderful meal. Great workers and very good cooks are in your congregation. It helps us a great deal in spirit."*

--John Reed & all, Director at Consequential Minds Drop-In



Read more thank yous from the community on our website: [myfirstchurch.com](http://myfirstchurch.com)

## A BIG THANKS TO THESE BUSINESSES FOR THEIR GENEROSITY & SUPPORT!

- Culby's Landscape Materials
- The Cleaning Authority
- Lowes Home Improvement Store
- Twixwood Nursery
- Priebe's Creative Woodworking
- Sherwin Williams Paint & Wallpaper



## UPCOMING PROJECTS:

**PAINTING:** Paint the inside of the former McCord Elementary building, which will house Headstart this fall. We will paint July 6, 7, 11-14, 7am-5pm. If you can help any or all of these days, just report to McCord School, North door (by the portables) and ask for Richard or Candy. You may go any day between the hours of 7am and 5pm. For more information, contact Ann Frakes 429-0624, or Ellen Russell 277-0516

**H3: Hoops, Hip-Hop & Hotdogs:** First Church is partnering with other community churches to put on this fun event at Broadway Park in Benton Harbor. We are expecting a crowd of about 500 and volunteers are needed. Set-up begins at 10:00; the event is 12-4pm.



# Gathering Area: Reaching Out to Those Who Seek

It is our goal to utilize the Gathering Area space to connect people to one another and to ministries in a personal way. As we have seen an increase in the number of people involved in First Church, we have sought out ways to be engaging.

One way is to create ministry booths where folks can sign up for classes, talk with ministry representatives, and basically get all of their questions answered in a friendly, inviting atmosphere. The new ministry booths will be located in the area where the mail boxes currently are located.

We listened to those of you that like to use the mailboxes for communication via notes, letters, and cards. It is understood that this is a way to stay in touch with others. And while it is our hearts desire to continue to provide a venue for this, the church needs to avoid what the mailboxes perhaps communicate non-verbally to new and searching folks, that “you don’t belong” because you don’t have a mailbox with your name on it. First Church is a loving, welcoming body of Christ, and we want to express that to all who enter this house of worship.

## Two Ways to Serve Your Church Table Set-up for Funerals

Tables do not set themselves up. For years, Hank Hirsch has been quietly working behind the scenes at First Church setting up tables for funeral meals and various Prime Time events. Thank you, Hank, for your dedication!

Now, he feels the need to step down from this service. Will you consider stepping up to take his place as the “go-to” person? You would be contacted as the need arises. You would then call your group of helpers to assist in the set-up of the tables and chairs. Depending on the number of workers, this doesn’t take much time, yet it meets a great need in the church.

Please think and pray if this is how God would use you in the body of the church. Contact Jennifer at the church office ([jennifer.r@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:jennifer.r@myfirstchurch.com) / 269.983.1524) to offer your services or for more information.

## Volunteer at Front Desk

Meet all the great folks of First Church! We are looking for someone to cover the front desk occasionally, as needed. Often, only for a couple of hours at a time. Duties include answering the phones and greeting all who come through our doors. Simple training will be given.

This is an interesting way to spend a few hours away from home and help out your church as well. If interested, you can call the church office or sign-up online at [myfirstchurch.com/volunteer/](http://myfirstchurch.com/volunteer/) first impressions.

Because many activities take place in the lower level, such as the Fellowship Hall, and classrooms; some mailboxes will be transferred to the lobby between the elevator and room five. We will automatically put mailboxes there for all of our “Prime Timers”, since most of them are in the older adult Sunday school class that is just down the hall. If you are not a “Prime Timer” and would be interested in having a mailbox located there, please contact Jennifer Robbins, at 983-1524 ext. 10.


Thank you for your understanding, and for sacrificing convenience in order for those seeking God to feel loved, valued, and welcomed with open arms.

In His Service,

*Greg Gordon*

### Baptism at Lake Michigan

**Jean Klock Park  
Sunday, July 24  
7:00pm**



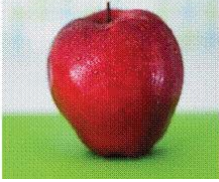
**Baptism Class: Sunday, July 17, 9:30am**

Come to Jean Klock Park on Sunday, July 24, 7:00pm, for our annual baptism service at Lake Michigan.

After the service, we will eat and visit together. Families are asked to bring a dessert to share, a serving utensil for that dessert, and your own seating (chairs/blankets). We'll provide beverages and tableware.

**PARKING:** There is a reduced parking fee of \$4 at Jean Klock Park. Shuttle service will be provided from the Whirlpool lot beginning at 6:30pm for those who need it.

## HEALTH MOMENTS



*“Everyone who drinks water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (Jn 4:13).*

As we move into the heat of summer, I would like to focus on “Living Water; God refreshes our bodies and our souls.” I’d like to propose some action related to our use of water.

# Drinking Living Water

## Living Water for our Bodies

Water is important to all living things – physically it is the most abundant substance on the earth and in our bodies. Sixty percent of our bodies is water. We and all living things need a large amount of water to function and grow properly! Even Jesus became thirsty. In the account of Jesus and the woman at the well, He asked her for a drink of water. Most of us do not drink enough water. This July and August I challenge you to consciously increase the amount of water you drink each day.



### How much water do I need to drink?

In our land we are blessed to have an abundant clean water supply, yet we often fail to drink enough plain water. For most of us, (unless your Doctor has directed you otherwise) we need approximately eight glasses (8 ounce size) of water each day.



### What does water do for us?

- Removes waste products effectively
- Assists in digestion and metabolism
- Helps regulate our body temperature
- Lubricates our joints
- Assists in breathing
- Helps maintain our fluid balance
- Helps with weight reduction



## Living Water for Our Souls

Our loving God has provided living water for our souls. Without this living water, we are spiritually dead. Indeed, thinking of that familiar glass of refreshing water as a symbol for life makes a lot of sense both physically and spiritually. In the Bible, the reference to living water is usually understood to mean the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### How much Living Water do I need to drink?

We need to “drink” in the Holy Spirit until we are filled with the Lord! In reality, this means that we will never be overflowing with the Lord until the Second Coming; so ‘drink’ in God’s Spirit without ceasing! God’s supply will not run dry.

For questions or more information, feel free to contact me. Beth Fiskars RN/BSN, Parish Nurse.

Beth Fiskars RN/BSN, Parish Nurse | 269.983.1524 (ext 40) | [beth.f@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:beth.f@myfirstchurch.com)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE RECENT BLOOD DRIVE!** Fifteen pints were donated. We had 20 people sign in to donate, only five were deferred (not able to donate this time) and eight first-time donors--a great number!



## THE NEXT BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 7

**SJ Campus:** 10:30-11:00am, in Room 5 | **BH Campus:** immediately after service in the Fellowship Hall

**COLORECTAL KITS:** Detect colon cancer early. If you are 50 or older and are interested in a free Colorectal Screening kit, please contact Parish Nurse Beth Fiskars: [beth.f@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:beth.f@myfirstchurch.com) / 269.983.1524 (x40).



## Looking for a cool Vacation Bible School?



**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**  
SJ Campus: July 10-14 | 6:00-8:30pm

and don't miss...

## Summer Slam

BH Campus: August 2-4 | 6-8:30pm

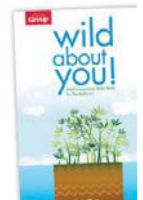
This is a family event!



or Kids 3 yrs - 5th-grade



for Teens



for Adults

REGISTER ONLINE: [myfirstchurch.com](http://myfirstchurch.com)

INFO: Contact Bill Shepard | 269.983.1524 x50 | [bill.s@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:bill.s@myfirstchurch.com)

## July Church Plant Update:

*Jill, Emily, and I have made our move south as we begin the work of planting a new church in the southeast suburbs of Indianapolis. In 2001 God began to stir in my heart the vision for a new church on the southeast side. As we have prayed and talked with others, we have been affirmed in the recognition that there is indeed a need for a new church focused on connecting and reconnecting young families in our generation with each other and with the God who so desperately desires a relationship with them.*

*As we are in the early stages of our plant, please pray for us as we get settled into Indianapolis and begin re-acclimating to our community. We also ask that you would pray that God would lead us to the right name for our church as we seek to identify with the community and those disconnected from the church. Lastly, please pray for relationships with potential members of our launch team and for those individuals who do not have a connection with God, that we would be able to have an impact in their lives and help them become fully devoted followers of Jesus.*

*We so much appreciate the prayers and support of First Church. Our time spent in Saint Joseph was a great opportunity of ministry and helped prepare us for the work into which God has called us.*

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Ryan, Jill, and Emily Carrell*



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## First Tuesday

Join the First Church pastoral staff in the Sanctuary at lunchtime the first Tuesday of each month for prayer and fasting. Our next *First Tuesday* is August 2, 12:00-1pm.

## BH Life Group

Join us in the First Church at Benton Heights Fellowship Hall Thursday, July 14, 7:00-8:30pm, for talk, study and prayer. Bring a friend to this new and growing group. For more information, contact Wendy: 269.313.5341

## Prayer Shawls

Bring your knitting/crochet needles (and yarn, if you have it) and help us create shawls to bless those who need healing/comfort. We meet Tuesday, August 9, 9:30-11:30am.

## Prayer & Bible Study

Our Wednesday night Prayer & Bible Study meeting led by Pastor Rick Blumenberg is ongoing throughout the summer. Join us in Room 3 at 7:00pm for a short Bible lesson and to pray for our church family requests and your own.

## Military Support Group

Our Military support group meets Sunday, July 17, 1:00pm, at the home of Mark & Lisa Baldwin (5355 Wilshire Terrace, St. Joe). Please bring a dish to pass. Meat and drinks will be provided. Questions? Call Mark or Lisa at 269.429.1930.

## WCG Summer Meetings

**Tuesday, July 12, 5:30pm** --Women of the Church of God will meet at the home of Nancy Hemingway for an informal potluck and fellowship. Please bring a dish to pass. Tableware and beverage provided. All women are invited.

**Tuesday, August 2, 5:30pm** - We will meet at Riverview Park (Grove 2 - back by the river). Please bring a dish to pass, tableware, and beverage. All women are invited.

## FCOG Pre-School

Openings are available for fall session. Contact Kathy MacTavish at 269.983.1816 for more information.



## Prime Timers Go Wild

On Tuesday, Sept. 27, Prime Timers go to Battle Creek to join other Church of God congregations from across Michigan for an inspirational and fun day!

We will go to North Avenue COG in the morning for a time of worship and inspiration. Rev. Tom & Jean Tufts will lead us in worship. Dr. Robert Dulin, a retired pastor from our large church in Detroit, will share a meaningful message with us. Dr. Dulin spoke last year at a similar event and was an outstanding communicator--you will enjoy him!

After lunch at the church, we will go to Binder Park Zoo for a fun afternoon of wild animal gazing. You can walk at your own pace... as much or as little walking as you choose...as you enjoy this real treat.

Total cost for the full day is \$27/ person (includes morning worship, lunch, zoo admissions, and transportation). Registration deadline is Monday, September 19.

## Prime Time Mystery Trip

Set aside Monday, August 22, for a full day of fun at two locations. First Church older adults will leave at 7:30am to travel to our first mystery destination for a unique lunch at a special location. Then, we'll be off to our second point of interest and inspiration. We'll return home around 6:00pm.

Cost for the whole day is \$18/person plus your lunch at a reasonable price (under \$10). Seats are limited to the first 25 persons who sign-up, so don't delay! Registration deadline is August 8. (We need to make some "real" reservations, so sign-up early.)

WANT A HINT? We will have an "udderly" delightful day!

## Book of Acts Study begins



Start reading now! The Book of Acts (found in the Bible just after the four Gospels) is an exciting journey of the first acts of the Apostles. We'll travel it with them by way of lively discussion.

This discussion group is open to all adults. It begins Sunday, July 17, 9:30am, in Room 2 (downstairs at our SJ campus). Bring your own Bible and join the discussion. For more information, contact Sandra Fleming at 269.463.8849.



# Warner Summer Campers on Their Way UP

**What's Up?** This was our theme for JH2 at Warner Camp. It was a wet, fun week and God did awesome things!! Our daily themes were...

**Wake up** ... to God's calling on your life;

**Buck up** ... and get tough in the face of fear;

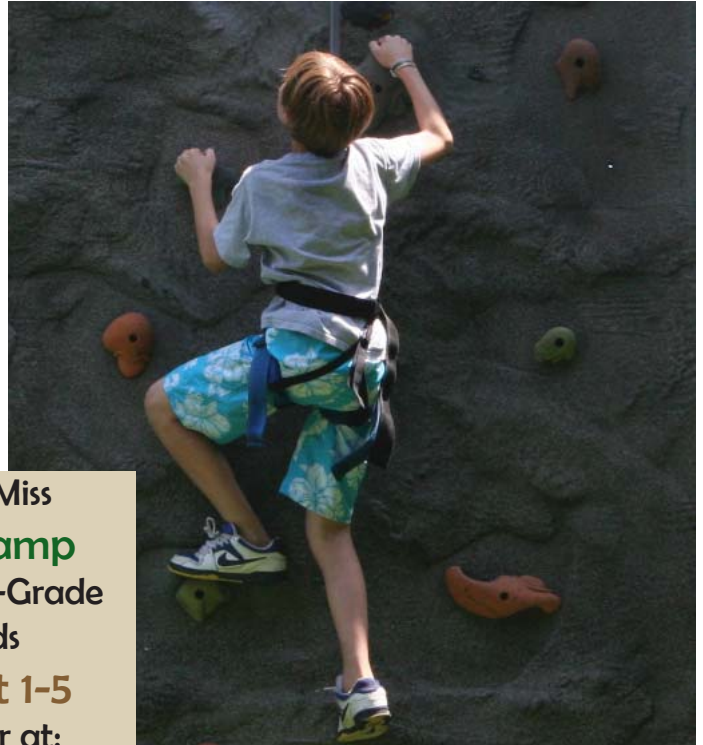
**Fess up** ... and get right with God;

**Step up** ... and walk with God!

Deuteronomy 31:6 was our verse for the week, *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

Now, we get to do it all over again with our 5th- and 6th-grade grads at KK3 Camp, August 1–5. You can still register by accessing [warnercamp.com](http://warnercamp.com). All registrations are done through Warner Camp.

Don't miss out!!!



**Don't Miss**  
**KK3 Camp**  
**5th & 6th-Grade**  
**Grads**  
**August 1-5**  
**Register at:**  
[warnercamp.com](http://warnercamp.com)



## High School Students Head to Appalachia to Help Repair Homes & Hearts

Thirty-two high school students and leaders are driving to Lincoln County, West Virginia, for a 5-day mission trip. Many homes and trailers are in desperate need of repair. We will help restore these homes and pray that God uses us in restoring hearts!

Pray also that we will experience incredible life change ourselves as we impact a hurting community!!

**TRIBE:** There will be no Tribe on Sunday, July 10, due to this trip.

# BOOMERLIFE

Deadline for First Touch articles  
1st Friday of each month  
Send to: [teresa.l@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:teresa.l@myfirstchurch.com)

## FIRST CHURCH OF GOD 2 LOCATIONS

St. Joseph Campus & General Office  
2627 Niles Ave., St. Joseph, MI 49085

SERVICES: Saturdays at 6pm  
Sundays at 9:30 & 11AM

### OFFICE HOURS

M-Th, 8-4:30 | 269-983-1524  
[jennifer.r@myfirstchurch.com](mailto:jennifer.r@myfirstchurch.com)

### Benton Heights Campus

990 N. Euclid Ave., Benton Harbor 49022  
SERVICES: Sundays at 11am

WEBSITE: [myfirstchurch.com](http://myfirstchurch.com)

## PASTORAL STAFF

### Lead Pastor

*Rev. David Colp*

### Executive Administrator

*Rev. Gregory Gordon*

### Prayer/Missions

*Rev. Rick Blumenberg*

### Children

*Bill Shepard*

### Older Adults/Pastoral Care

*Rev. Bob Confer*

### Young Adults, Worship

*Dan Deitrich*

### Benton Heights Campus Pastor

*Rev. Mary Shawl-Ranke*

### Students

*Rev. Chris Spitters*

### Discipleship/Women

*Sandy Mason*

### Outreach

*Jenny Fry*

### Advisory Council

JC Anderson	14
Larry Holben	14
Vance Price	14
John Fozard, Oklahoma	14
Arden Bradley	12
Michelle Kerns, Chair	12
Mark Krenz, Arizona	12
Mitzi Tompkins	12
Gary Bolin	13
Rajeane Alexander	13
Dave Eichberg	13
Greg Gordon and David Colp	13



## Picnic & Concert

The deadline is quickly approaching to sign-up for a fun catered picnic at the beach and an evening concert on Saturday, July 23. Our picnic will be served at Jean Klock Park at 5:30pm (south end of the parking lot). Bring your lawn chair and stay for the Under the Street Lamp SMSO concert at 7:30pm.

PICNIC MENU: Brats, fried chicken, hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad, 3-Bean salad, chips, fruit platter, and pop.

Cost is only \$21/person for picnic & concert or \$11/person for just the picnic. The cost of parking is separate (\$8/car).

Register by Monday, July 18. Call the church office or use the registration envelopes located by the staff mailboxes and drop it into the silver "Registrations" slot.



## Boomers Plays Volleyball

Join us every Wednesday this summer for volleyball at Silver Beach. Bring your own beverages and let's volley!

We play 7-8:30pm at Silver Beach. Find us at the court near the road every Wednesday thru August 31.

## Help Clean After Venetian

July 18

Boomers meet at the stairs on the bluff Monday, July 18, 8:00am, to help clean following the Venetian Festival. Join us! For more information, call Judy Nitz: 269.422.1210

## Help with Summer Slam

Aug 2-4

Volunteers are needed to cook, serve and clean-up after this VBS for the entire family at our BH campus. For more information, call Judy Nitz: 269.422.1210

## Small Group Walks in the Summertime

First Church walkers meet at Grand Mere Park in Stevensville every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday (10:00am) for a brisk walk. Join us!

## WARNER

## CAMP MEETING: JULY 15-22

SPEAKER: Rev. Gary Ausbun

WORSHIP LEADERS: Jessa  
& Jordan Anderson

INFO: [WARNERCAMP.COM](http://WARNERCAMP.COM)

Want a ride? The First Church bus is going to evening service on Sunday, July 17, & Wednesday, July 20. Contact Becky Beach at 269.925.4410. Cost is just \$3/person.




# THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

August 11-12, 2011 | [willowcreek.com/summit](http://willowcreek.com/summit)

## Lead Where You Are

We hope that you have marked your calendar and plan to attend the Global Leadership Summit here at First Church on Thursday, August 11 and Friday, August 12, brought to us via live simulcast from Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago.

A dozen world-reknonw religious and business leaders come together to share their secrets of success and their vision. People like Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks, Nobel Prize nominee Mama Maggie Gobran, bestselling author Seth Godin, and many more will offer you their insights in a 2-day inspirational event.

Whether you are a business or community leader, board member, teacher or ministry leader, volunteer leader, student or even an emerging leader, this is for you! You will gain new insights and learn how to develop your own unique leadership gifts.

As a host church, we can offer those who attend First Church the low rate of \$75 if you register by the 'early bird' date of July 26 (\$105 after July 26). All registrations are done online. The Host Site Priority Code that you will need to enter when prompted is: 2011GLS (not case sensitive).

You can register and get more information on the speakers by visiting our church website at [myfirstchurch.com](http://myfirstchurch.com). Just follow the link on the main page. PLEASE NOTE: This special rate is just for those who attend First Church. However, please invite others. (If someone you invite doesn't have a church home, they can also register at the \$75 rate) We encourage all others to register by following the instructions on our church website.

The Global Leadership Summit is a great opportunity for our First Church family to join leaders from all over our community in a top notch leadership development event designed to enhance our own leadership abilities.

We hope to see you there!!

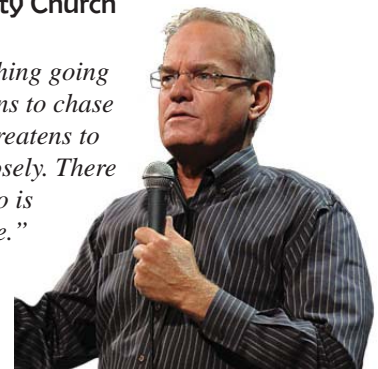


# THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

August 11-12, 2011 | [willowcreek.com/summit](http://willowcreek.com/summit)

**Bill Hybels**  
 Founder & Senior Pastor of  
 Willow Creek Community Church

*"Whenever you see something going well – whenever light begins to chase back the darkness that threatens to engulf our world – look closely. There stands a leader who is holding that candle."*



**HEAR HIM AT FIRST CHURCH!**