THE CHRISTIAN BEACON

“I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness,
But will have the light of life.” John 8:12

Volume 59, Issue 11          First Christian Church, Marion, Indiana               November 2014

Charles Dickens’
“A Christmas Carol”
Presented by
First Christian Church

Performance dates:
Thursday, November 20, 2014
6:00 PM
(dress rehearsal)
Friday, November 21, 2014
7:00 PM
Saturday, November 22, 2014
2:00 PM
Saturday, November 22, 2014
7:00 PM

Sign up sheets for FREE Tickets are available in the Narthex, reserve yours today! You can also call the church office to reserve them.
Free will offering baskets will be available during intermission to defray production costs and support local charities.
You are encouraged to bring friends and a non-perishable food item to donate to local food banks.

“A Christmas Carol”
Individual sponsorship

In order to offer our tickets at “no charge” to the public and to provide funding for this activity, without drawing from our general budget, we are seeking sponsors for our program booklet. For a donation of $10.00, your name will be printed in the program booklet.
You can sign up on the list in the Narthex or call the church office by November 10th to be a sponsor this year.

Thank you.
### Calendar of Events

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| 3    | Care Ministries Mtg. every Monday 1:30 pm  
VFW Meeting (1st & 3rd Monday) |
| 4    | Ladies Bible Study meet at St. James Lutheran  
Elders Meeting 7 pm |
| 6    | Vet to Vets 5:30 pm (every Thurs. downstairs)  
World Community Day |
| 10   | Quilters 10 am - 2 pm  
Book Club 6 pm |
| 11   | Rebekah Ruth Circle 1:30 pm  
Executive Board Meeting 7 pm |
| 12   | Finance Meeting 6 pm  
Executive Board Meeting 7 pm |
| 16   | Blood Pressure Checks 8:45 - 9:15 am |
| 20-22| “A Christmas Carol” Performances  
FALL CONGREGATIONAL MTG.  
to be held at the end of worship service |

#### Christmas Carol Rehearsals, first 3 weeks of November:  
Sundays 6 pm  and Mon., Tues, & Wed. 6:30 pm

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### Writing  The Seldon Report

**By David Mills**

Even as this month’s edition of the *Beacon* is rolling off the press I am busy trying to see our church family as Hari Seldon might if he were here.

Who is Hari Seldon? He is a fictional character created by Isaac Asimov and featured in the *Foundation* series of novels. Seldon actually appears in only the first chapter of the first of five novels (He does make some ghost-like appearances via recordings later on so I suppose one could argue that Hari Seldon never really dies), the books would be meaningless without him. Through him Asimov advances a simple theory by which we may better understand how the present becomes the future and prepare ourselves for it. Hari Seldon calls this theory Psychohistory. Psychohistory assumes that while no one can predict the future for each individual, we can make some more or less valid assertions as to what large groups of people may do. In this way we can distinguish between more and less probable versions of the future.

And why is it important to consider what he might see if he were at First Christian Church? The simplest answer to that question is that the final step in our church family’s process of revitalization is the development of metrics. Metrics are nothing more than standards of measurement. The notches on the side of your measuring cup and the speedometer in your car are metrics. As we prepare to launch our “sweet spot” ministries we need standards of measurement with which to determine whether we are succeeding or failing. That is why Hari Seldon is important to us at this moment. He provides us with three common sense suggestions with which we can envision what success and/or failure may probably look like. Here they are.

- **While individual needs are important our focus should be on large groups of people and the direction towards which those groups are moving.** In our context the two primary groups to consider are the church as a whole and the community surrounding the church. Where are these groups going and where and when will their movements intersect?

- **The future is already here. What will happen if what is occurring today continues day after day for years after year?** It is true that this line of thought will not disclose every detail that will arise but it will provide a general outline of what most likely lies ahead.

- **As we move from where we are today to where we most probably will be tomorrow, what challenges may arise and what are the consequences of responding to them appropriately or inappropriately.** It is tempting to hope that problems will solve themselves. This may happen in media but regular human experience indicates that this is not usually the case. Instead we should move from a reactive to proactive posture by identifying specific “Seldon Crises” that will most probably arise and preparing positive responses for them.

Seldon’s advice transforms the future from an unknowable blank into a varied extension of the present. At present I am still collecting data and, ala Hari Seldon, analyzing it. I anticipate the completing First Christian’s Seldon Report later this month and then submitting it to the Board so that together we can discuss it at the November Board meeting. Pending final revision you will be receiving your copy in time for Thanksgiving. Look for it and, as always, I covet your feedback on this and any facet of our church family.