



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 3, 2021

The Second Sunday of Christmas

**WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!**

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 168 years our Covenant has been: We covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ and one another, and bind ourselves in the presence of God to live together in all God's ways as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and holy scripture. The church acknowledges that all members have the right of individual interpretation of the principles of the Christian faith and respects them in their honest convictions. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, the church recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.*

*Enter to Worship – Depart to Serve. Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.  
'We have waited in silence on your loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple.'  
(Psalm 48:8)*

PRELUDE

Three Carols

John Ferguson

- i. 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime
- ii. What is This Lovely Fragrance?
- iii. Cold December Flies Away

WELCOME

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

CHORAL INTROIT

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

J.S. Bach

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light,  
And usher in the morning;  
O shepherds, shrink not with afright,  
But hear the angel's warning.  
This Child, now weak in infancy,  
Our confidence and joy shall be,  
The powers of hell o'erthrowing,  
Our peace eternal making.

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Mark S. Williams

Leader: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**People: And we have seen his glory.**

*\* Then all stand.*

L: Arise, shine, for your light has come!

**P: The glory of the Lord has risen upon us!**

L: Like sages from afar, come and behold your Christ!

**P: Let us fall on our knees in his honor! Let us lift our voices in praise of his name!**

\* OPENING HYMN

Angels, From the Realms of Glory

Regent Square

1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
2. Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
3. Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
4. All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Son,  
Ye, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, Yon - der shines the in - fant light:  
Seek the great de - sire of na - tions; Ye have seen Christ's na - tal star:  
Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing To th'e - ter - nal Three in One:  
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King!

\* INVOCATION

Rev. Ahrens

L: God be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

**P: O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

\* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Ahrens

L: Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Mr. Williams

*A reading from the book of Jeremiah, chapter 31.*

For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, “Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.” See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.” For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

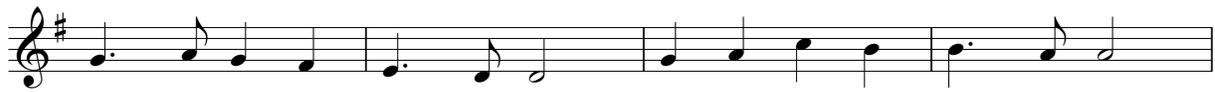
**P: Thanks be to God.**

*A reading from Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 1.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**



1. See a - mid the win - ter's snow, Born for us on earth be - low,  
 2. Lo, with - in a man - ger lies He who built the star - ry skies;  
 3. Sac - red In - fant, all div - ine, what a ten - der love was Thine;  
 4. Teach, O teach us, Ho - ly Child, by Thy face so meek and mild,



See, the gen - tle Lamb ap - pears, Prom - ised from e - ter - nal years.  
 He, who throned in height sub - lime, sits a - mid the cher - u - bim!  
 thus to come from high - est bliss down to such a world as this!  
 teach us to re - sem - ble Thee in Thy sweet hu - mil - i - ty!

*Refrain*

Hail that ev - er - bless - ed morn, Hail re - demp - tion's hap - py dawn,

Sing through all Je - ru - sa - lem: "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem."

THE GOSPEL

John 1:10-18

Rev. Ahrens

*A reading from the Gospel according to John, chapter 1.*

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION MEDITATION

“Resolved to Thrive in the Light”

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ahrens

THE OFFERTORY

*To give online, please scan this QR code link, or see additional instructions in the Depart to Serve leaflet:*



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. Ahrens

Designated gifts go to **STAR House**, a welcoming drop-in center for transitional youth, ages 14-24, experiencing homelessness. STAR House serves as a safe and accepting place where they can connect with a concerned community. Thank you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

In the Bleak Midwinter

Harold Darke

Elizabeth McConnaughey and Kevin Cubick, *soloists*  
(*pre-recorded*)

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him, whom angels fall before,  
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.  
—Christina Rossetti

\* PRESENTATION HYMN

What Child Is This (*third stanza*)

*Greensleeves*

**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, one and all, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the son of Mary.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*We practice open communion: Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at the Lord's table.*

\* INVITATION

Rev. Ahrens

L: God be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life and for your abiding love which brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets. We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life.

With the faithful in every place and time, we praise with joy your holy name:

**P: Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High.**

L: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, and bless us that as we receive them at this table, we may offer you our faith and praise, we may be united with Christ and with one another, and we may continue faithful in all things. In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you, eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve you. **Amen.**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

L: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

**P: Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,**

**and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

**Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,**

**for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Eat this, for it is the body of Christ, broken for you.

Drink this, for it is the blood of Christ, shed for you.

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Ahrens

L: Let us pray.

**P: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

#### COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Mr. Williams

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are, Bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,  
 2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, Gold I bring to crown Him a - gain,  
 3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I: In - cense owns a De - i - ty nigh,  
 4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume Breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;  
 5. Glo - rious now be - hold Him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;

Field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star.  
 King for ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er O - ver us all to reign.  
 Prayer and prais - ing we are rais - ing, Wor - ship - ing God Most Hight.  
 Sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, Sealed in the stone - cold tomb.  
 Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia Sounds through the earth and skies.

*Refrain*

O star of won - der, star of night, Star with roy - al beau - ty bright;

West - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, Guide us to thy per - fect light!

\* BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

*Noël Suisse*

Louis-Claude Daquin

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LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *celebrant and preacher*

Mark S. Williams, *liturgist*

James Velo, *reader*

Kevin Jones, *organist*

Peter Murray, *livestream engineer*

*Please join us on ZOOM for a virtual coffee hour immediately following this service.*

[Click HERE to be taken to this meeting.](#)

*ZOOM meeting ID: 884 9421 6574*

*Password: 693317*



Enter to Worship  
**Depart to Serve**

January 3, 2021

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### This Week at First Church

1/3	
9 a.m.	Worship
9:45 a.m.	Virtual Coffee Hour
11 a.m.	Worship
12 Noon	Virtual coffee Hour
1/4	
7 p.m.	Faith Formation for Adults: “ <i>STAMPED: Racism, Antiracism, and You</i> ” Book Study
1/5	
7 p.m.	All-Network BREAD Mtg
8:30 p.m.	Senior Minister Member Minister Advisory Group Mtg
1/6	
10:30 a.m.	Book Study
7 p.m.	Book Club
1/9	
8:30 a.m.	House & Grounds Mtg

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### *These Days* Devotionals

*These Days* for January, February and March 2021 have arrived. If you would like a copy, please email Pat Patterson at [ppatterson@first-church.org](mailto:ppatterson@first-church.org) or phone her at 614-313-9506.

### First Church Book Club

Everyone is welcome to join the First Church Book Club! Our first selection for 2021 is *Not Like the Movies* by Kerry Winfrey. We will discuss the book on **Wednesday, January 6 at 7 p.m.** by Zoom. Note the day change.

Anyone who wishes to be added to the Zoom List for the meetings should email Elaine Warren [melainewarren232@gmail.com](mailto:melainewarren232@gmail.com).

The selection for the **February 1** meeting is *Deacon King Kong* by James McBride.

We look forward to a new year filled with reading and friendship!

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### Senior Minister / Member Advisory Group

If you have any joys or concerns to share regarding our Senior Minister, please contact any one of the SMMAG members prior to the group's meeting on January 5, 2021 at 8:30 p.m.

Kristen Blanks: 333-990-1250; [kristenblanks@gmail.com](mailto:kristenblanks@gmail.com)

Duan Cannon: 614-589-7046; [Duanie@aol.com](mailto:Duanie@aol.com)

Tom Kiesel: 614-795-0866; [kiesel44@msn.com](mailto:kiesel44@msn.com)

Jenny Provenzano: 614-395-2428; [jenpro1@gmail.com](mailto:jenpro1@gmail.com)

Steve Sterrett: 614-262-4586; [sterrett.1@osu.edu](mailto:sterrett.1@osu.edu)

## Warming Centers

The Columbus Coalition for the Homeless has organized warming stations, and First Church is participating by hosting a warming center in our Education Wing on Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m.-Noon. The warming stations are staffed by volunteers from the CCH following all current CDC and local health department guidelines for the safe operation of warming centers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We keep all those who are homeless, as well as those assisting, advocating, and working for their safety in our prayers this winter season.

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## Health Care Workers Notes of Appreciation

We are partnering with OhioHealth to give words of encouragement to Grant Medical Center staff during this challenging time. Offer words of kindness, wish them patience or courage, thank them for their sacrifice during this difficult time, or draw a picture.

Address your note: Health Care Worker, c/o First Congregational Church, UCC, 444 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

Rev. Emily has more information if you need; contact her at [ecorzine@first-church.org](mailto:ecorzine@first-church.org). There is no deadline, as we will be collecting these on an ongoing basis through the winter months!

## Adult Faith Formation

### *STAMPED: Racism, Antiracism, and You* Book Study

Faith Formation for Adults is joining the Columbus Metropolitan Library and eight other library systems in central Ohio's largest book club starting in January. We are encouraging families, friends, and neighbors to read *STAMPED: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi. Through the reading of a singular book, the community can reflect together upon the instructional and systemic inequalities that have impacted our community and nation for far too long.

Rev. Tim Ahrens will lead the book study during his Wednesday morning book study as well as an additional Monday evening session starting in January 2021.

#### **Monday Dates:**

Monday, January 4, 7 p.m.  
Monday, January 25, 7 p.m.  
Monday, February 1, 7 p.m.

Topic: Stamped on Mondays  
Time: 7 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82072541164?pwd=Zz-dEZERwNlVULzJlQk43ZnJHUkZlZD09>

**Meeting ID: 820 7254 1164**

**Passcode: 704803**

#### **Wednesday Dates:**

Wednesday, January 6, 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, January 20, 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 3, 10:30 a.m.

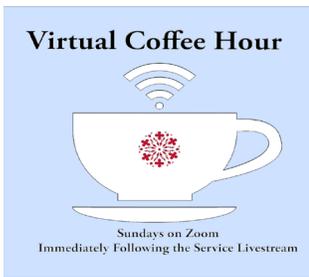
Topic: Stamped on Wednesdays  
Time: 10:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88187855765?pwd=Rys-rc0FKUDQ5RFVhSVVjWFVWMDVVRdz09>

**Meeting ID: 881 8785 5765**

**Passcode: 506979**



## Join the Virtual Coffee Hour!

Immediately following each Worship Livestream.

### 9 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86527907526?pwd=L-014R1dIdmE4UzIUNdlnZkZ4ZURldz09>

**Meeting ID: 865 2790 7526**

**Password: 601438**

### 11 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88494216574?pwd=cDN-VS0dKaEdvTGhMcVozc0twU2pyZz09>

**Meeting ID: 884 9421 6574**

**Password: 693317**

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## Emergency Pastoral Care Line

If you need to be in touch with Rev. Ahrens or Rev. Corzine, for emergency pastoral care or name a prayer request, please call **614-733-4547** and leave a message. Someone will return your call as needed.

Should you need to reach either pastor directly for a time to chat, discuss pastoral concerns or have prayer, Rev. Tim can be reached by church voicemail at (614) 228-1741 ext. 13, or email at [tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@first-church.org).

Rev. Emily has virtual office hours at 10 a.m. on Thursdays. These are 20 minute blocks beginning at 10 a.m. Contact Rev. Emily for a time slot at [ecorzine@first-church.org](mailto:ecorzine@first-church.org).

## Keep In Prayer

In celebration of the birth of Trenton Rink and Elizabeth Mitchell's son, Samuel Anderson, born December 14.

Barbara Sterrett; Tom Bishop; Susan Brooks; John Matchett; Pat Liebchen; Dana Navin Schultz; Lindy Miller; and Rev. Earl Fritz and Pauline Fritz. Members diagnosed and recovering from Covid-19: Lesley and Karl Schaab; and Robert Reber.

Olive Weller, grandmother of Gretchen Weller; Strick Strickland, nephew of Pat Patterson; Jonathan and Will Nirote, son and grandson of Bill and Arevena Nirote; Bob Prickett, friend of Steve Ferris; Michael Swift, son of Jilda Swift; Tom and Susan Murrell; Erna Temple, mother of David Temple; Dwight Elaine Holt, parents of David Holt; and Jane Mead, mother of Cindy Deliman.

Those who are affected by Covid-19 in our nation and our world, including the family of May Day Fewlass; Trish Bishop; Spencer Roberts, brother of Missy Zimmerman.

Those who mourn the loss of loved ones, including Jenny Middendorf and family Andy, Abby, and Ava, and her mother Susie Sturbaum, on the death of her father Robert Sturbaum; Greg Halbe on the death of his father Glen Halbe; Rev. Mary Ann Goetz on the death of her husband Rev. Herb Goetz; Andrew MacGregor on the death of his father Roland MacGregor; the family of former member David Magers; and Hector and Andrea Gonzalez on the death of his classmate Noah Long, 9th grader at Gahanna Lincoln High School. We also mourn all those who lost their lives to homicide in the city of Columbus this year, especially Casey Goodson Junior and Andre Hill.

## Give

At First Church, our financial resources enable us to “Enter to worship, depart to serve.” You can support the mission and ministry of First Church now by scanning the QR Code presented below, using either EasyTithe or PayPal, by visiting [www.first-church.org/give.aspx](http://www.first-church.org/give.aspx), or by sending your offering directly to First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For more information, please contact Annette McCormick at [amccormick@first-church.org](mailto:amccormick@first-church.org).



Designated gifts go to **Star House**, a welcoming drop-in center for transitional youth, ages 14-24, experiencing homelessness. Star House serves as a safe and accepting place where they can connect with a concerned community. Thank you for your generosity.

For more information about Star House visit [www.starhouse.us](http://www.starhouse.us)

## Upcoming Mission Offerings

January 10	Middle Collegiate Church
January 17	BREAD
January 24	Kaleidoscope
January 31	Trustees Endowment Knight-Perry

## Church Leadership

**Senior Minister** Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, M.Div., D. Min.  
**Associate Minister** Rev. Emily Krause Corzine, M.Div.  
**Minister of Music** Kevin Jones, M.M., M.S.E.  
**Director of Christian Education** Mark S. Williams, M.Ed.  
**Administrative Manager** Amy Wagner  
**Office Assistant** Pat Patterson  
**Communications Consultant** Melissa Kulwicki  
**Business Administrator** Annette McCormick  
**Building and Grounds Superintendent** Mark Dahnke  
**Building and Grounds Assistant** Darrell Cross  
**Custodian** Jimmy Sibrian

**Wedding Coordinators** Amy Wagner, Janet Newcity, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani, Katie Wagner  
**Nursery Staff** Miranda Brooks, Norma Secor, Blessing Weekly, Miranda Gumbita

**Senior Deacon** James Velo  
**Deacons** Carol Ernst-King, Shelly Gies, Sarah Giffen, Scott Graham, Greg Halbe, Lanier Holt, Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen, James Lowe, Dayna McCrary, Allison Lowery Palmer, Mark Sholl, Andrew Smith-Verhage, Al Waddell, Marty Worth

### Church Council Leadership

**Moderator** Lynn Wallich; **Moderator-elect** Alec Deitz;  
**Treasurer** Dennis Secor; **Treasurer-elect** Matt Myers; **Secretary** Jim Griffin; **Secretary-elect** Peter Murray

### Board of Trustees

**Chairperson** Brian Cave **Trustees** Allen Baker, Sue Cook, Cindy Conn, Kevin Cubick, Christine Farquhar, Tom Hadley, Jim Kyle, Elaine Warren

### Commissioners

**Administration** Andy Bensing; **Administration-elect** Brad West; **Church Growth** Cheryl Hoskinson; **Church Growth-elect** Elisha Hardekopf; **Church Vitality** Fran Panek; **Church Vitality-elect** Lee Kiesel; **Education** Stacie Sholl; **Education-elect** Margaret Graham; **House & Grounds** Victor John; **House & Grounds-elect** Eric Klintworth; **Justice & Mercy** Lauren Muscott; **Justice & Mercy-elect** Kaye Martin; **Music, Arts & Heritage** David Mailer; **Music, Arts & Heritage-elect** Scott Jones; **Members-at-Large** Mel Prendergast & Mia Provenzano; **Nominating Committee Chair** Joe Baszynski

## Welcome Statement

You are welcomed, affirmed, and loved here; our faith informs us that you are a child of a loving God. Your characteristics and gifts will enrich our congregation. In this community, you will be celebrated, embraced, and honored, no matter how you identify or how your identity may evolve. Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

## First Church is a Faith Community

- † Called together by God, the Creator and Sustainer of life, to worship, pray and serve;
- † Led by Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior, to learn the faith and welcome all God's children;
- † Empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness to God's love and justice between ourselves, and throughout the world.

## Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, welcome and affirm all. We believe we are all created in God's image and called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, called to unite all people in God's love. We are a community seeking God's presence and love in our lives. We seek to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, sexes, gender identities and expressions, family structures, mental, intellectual and physical conditions, economic circumstances, political, theological and faith backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)

—Adopted September 8, 2002 by the congregation

Revisions adopted January 27, 2019 by the congregation



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
God is still speaking,

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[www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx](http://www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx)



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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
444 EAST BROAD STREET, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-3885  
PHONE: 614.228.1741 FAX: 614.461.1741

[WWW.FIRST-CHURCH.ORG](http://WWW.FIRST-CHURCH.ORG)

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