



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 18, 2018

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 165 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.*

Please silence all electronic devices.

Assistive listening devices and large-print bulletins with hymns of the day are available at the Sanctuary doors. Deacons wearing white roses can assist you.

Cards requesting prayer are in the pew racks and placed in the offering plate.

(* Indicates the congregation should stand as they are able.

*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 Chorale and Variations on “Wondrous Love” Samuel Barber

ENTER TO WORSHIP Dan Axt

Leader: Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Let us worship God.

* *Then all stand.*

L: The Lord is making a new covenant with the people of God.

P: Here in this place, Christ writes the law of love on our hearts.

L: We are children of the living God.

P: Together, let us worship the Lord of Love!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN 85 What wondrous love is this
Wondrous Love

* INVOCATION The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine

L: God be with you.

P. And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens
 L: We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us. God, in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and brokenness. Let us confess our sin to almighty God.

All: Eternal God, whose Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, we recognize and confess that we have failed to respond faithfully to your gracious presence in our lives. Through Jesus Christ you have offered us new life, fulfillment, and the freedom to serve you. We confess that we are captive to sin, that our sin binds us with false pride, and that the wrong we do is made worse by the good we leave undone. Reconcile us to you and to all people. God of mercy, forgive all our sin and strengthen us anew for life as you intend it; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

* KYRIE ELEISON, HYMN 574 arr. David Johnson

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON Rev. Ahrens

L: Almighty God, who is great in mercy and promises forgiveness of sin to all who truly repent and are sincere in faith, have mercy on us, pardon and deliver us from all sin, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life.

P: Amen. Thanks be to God.

* WELCOME & INTRODUCTION OF CONFIRMAND CASSIDY HOPCRAFT
 Rev. Ahrens

* PASSING OF THE PEACE Ms. Hopcraft

L: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

P: And also with you.

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

CHILDREN'S TIME Mark S. Williams

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE Jeremiah 31:31–34 (O.T., p. 735) Mr. Axt

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

P: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM Lamb of God arr. F. Melius Christiansen

Lamb of God most holy! Who on the cross didst suffer,
 Patient still and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer;
 Our sins by Thee were taken, Or hope had us forsaken:
 Have mercy on us, O Jesu!
 —Decius

THE EPISTLE Hebrews 5:5–10 (N.T., p. 220) Mr. Axt

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

P: Thanks be to God.

* GOSPEL HYMN 93 Ah! Holy Jesus *Herzliebster Jesu*
During the hymn, children, Kindergarten through second grade, are invited to the Worship Connections in the Children's Library on the second floor of the Education Wing. They will return after the sermon. A fully staffed childcare ministry is provided during each Sunday Morning Worship Service and Education Hour for infants through age four. This ministry is located in the nursery and toddler rooms on the first floor of the Education Wing.

THE GOSPEL John 12:20–33 (N.T., p. 106) Rev. Ahrens

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

P: Thanks be to God.

SERMON “A Forgiving Life: Offered to God” Rev. Ahrens
 (Part six of the eight-part Lenten sermon series, *Forgiveness*)

A time of reflection follows.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Rev. Corzine

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

THE OFFERTORY

Want to give online? Please see the Depart to Serve leaflet for more information and a QR link.

MISSION INVITATION Miriam Myers

Cash and designated checks go to the **2018 Youth Mission Trip**. The trip is scheduled for June 3 to June 8. The Youth will work in conjunction with the Gladden Community House and their Senior Referral Program to serve senior residents of West Franklinton. The youth will be making basic home repairs including painting, gardening, and cleaning. They will be housed during the week in a local retreat center and will assist with their meals during the week. The week will also include visits to the homeless camps in Franklin County and a night tour of the homeless under the auspices of the Columbus Coalition for Homelessness. Thank you for your generosity.

ANTHEM Jesus walked this lonesome valley
 Spiritual, arr. Joel Mathias

Jesus walked this lonesome valley; he had to walk it by himself.
 O, nobody else could walk it for him, he had to walk it by himself.
 We must walk this lonesome valley; the way is dark, we cannot see.
 But, we will not fear this lonesome valley; he walked it once for you and me.

* PRESENTATION HYMN Now to Christ who loved us *Lauda anima*

**Now to Christ who loved us, gave us
 Every pledge that love could give,
 Freely shed his blood to save us,
 Gave his life that we might live,
 Be the kingdom, Power and glory
 And thanksgiving evermore.**

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Corzine

Thank you for attending worship this morning. We hope that you have found peace and grace here and invite you to return often. If you would like more information or have any questions about First Church, please ask anyone wearing a nametag. We'd be delighted to assist you. Please join us for Fellowship Hour in the Parlor.

Please be seated for the Notices.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

Mr. Williams

* CLOSING HYMN 389

O Jesus, I have promised

Nyland

* BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

Prelude in C Minor, BWV 546

J.S. Bach

It is our custom to be seated for the Postlude

ACOLYTES: Jack Patterson and Finnegan Miller

CRUCIFER: Alex Palmer

MUSIC: The Jubilate Choir, Janet Axt, *guest director*; The Exultate Choir, Kevin Jones, *director and organist*

THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God and in honor of sisters Marcie Harmon, Susan Gatton, and Ann Dosch by Amy Wagner.

GREETING AT THE EXITS TODAY:

Broad Street – Rev. Ahrens

Ninth Street – Rev. Corzine

Education Wing – Mr. Williams

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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.

Our Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, believe the following represents our commitment and desire to reach out and welcome all those in need of and searching for God's love: We believe that we are all created in God's image, female and male, and we are called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us on our common journey. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels and political and theological 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)



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