



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 22, 2020

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

**WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!**

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 167 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 Voluntary in C Major, Z. 717 Henry Purcell

WELCOME The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

ENTER TO WORSHIP Mark S. Williams

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

*\* Then all stand.*

L: Once you lived in darkness.

**P: Now the light of God has shone upon us.**

L: Find what is pleasing to God and follow God's ways.

**P: The acts of darkness are left behind as we journey to God's light.**

L: Thanks be to God who gives us the light.

**P: Open our eyes and our hearts to receive your light of salvation. Amen.**

\* OPENING HYMN 332

Live Into Hope

*Truro*



1. Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed, Of sight re - gained, the  
 2. Live in - to hope the blind shall see With in - sight and with  
 3. Live in - to hope of li - ber - ty, The right to speak, the  
 4. Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed From chains of fear or



end of greed. Th'op pressed shall be the first to  
 clar - i - ty, Re - mov - ing shades of pride and  
 right to be. The right to have one's dai - ly  
 want or greed. God now pro - claims our full re -



see The year of God's own ju - bi - lee!  
 fear — A vi - sion of our God brought near.  
 bread, To hear God's word and thus be fed.  
 lease To faith and hope and joy and peace.

\* INVOCATION

The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine

L: God be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

**P: Gracious God, whose blessed One, Jesus Christ, came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that Christ may live in us and we in Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

\* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. 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

Kevin R. Hackett

The image shows a musical score for the Kyrie Eleison. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy." The first system covers the first two phrases, and the second system covers the last two phrases. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

\* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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 AND INTRODUCTION OF CONFIRMAND ADAM GHOSE

Rev. Ahrens

\* PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

**P: And also with you.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Mark S. Williams

The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is now before the LORD.” But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

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

**P: Thanks be to God.**

## MOTET

Thou Knowest, Lord, the Secrets of Our Hearts, Z. 58

Purcell

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts; Shut not thy merciful ears unto our prayer; but spare us, Lord most holy. O God most mighty, O holy and most merciful Savior, Thou most worthy judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from Thee. Amen.

## THE EPISTLE

Ephesians 5:8–14

Mr. Williams

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

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

**P: Thanks be to God.**



1. The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness fail - eth nev - er;
2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed soul he lead - eth,
3. Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear Lord, be - side me;
5. Thou spread'st a ta - ble in my sight; thy unc - tion grace be - stow - eth;
6. And so through all the length of days thy good - ness fail - eth nev - er:



I noth - ing lack if I am his, and he is mine for ev - er.  
 and where the ver - dant pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 and on his shoul - der gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
 thy rod and staff my com - fort still, thy cross be - fore to guide me.  
 and oh, what trans - port of de - light from thy pure chal - ice flow - eth!  
 Good Shep - herd, may I sing thy praise with - in thy house for ev - er.

THE GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

Rev. Ahrens and Rev. Corzine

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do

not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

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

**P: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Is Christianity a Religion of Love?”

Rev. Ahrens

(Fifth in the nine-part series *Christianity 101: Essential Questions of Christian Faith: A Lenten/Easter Journey*)

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.**

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. Corzine

Cash and designated checks go to **Horizon Prison Ministry** which has well-established programs in two prisons: London Correctional Institute for men and the Ohio Reformatory For Women. Horizon works to break the cycle of incarceration and its effects on society. They meet this goal by helping the incarcerated become aware of self, others, and the faith tradition at the center of their lives. Thank you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

Hear My Prayer, O Lord, Z. 15

Purcell

Hear my prayer, O Lord : and let my crying come unto thee.  
—Psalm 102:1

\* PRESENTATION HYMN 591

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

*Old Hundredth*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Corzine

*Please be seated for the Notices.*

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Mr. Williams

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: **Thanks be to God.**

\* CLOSING HYMN 380

O Christ, the Healer

*Erhalt uns, Herr*

1. O Christ, the heal - er, we have come To pray for health, to plead for friends.  
 2. From ev - ery ail - ment flesh en - dures Our bod - ies clam - or to be freed;  
 3. How strong, O Lord, are our de - sires, How weak our knowl - edge of our - selves!  
 4. In con - flicts that de - stroy our health We rec - og - nize the world's dis - ease;  
 5. Grant that we all, made one in faith, In Your com - mu - ni - ty may find

How can we fail to be re - stored, When reached by love that nev - er ends?  
 Yet in our hearts we would con - fess That whole - ness is our deep - est need.  
 Re - lease in us those heal - ing truths Un - con - scious pride re - sists or shelves.  
 Our com - mon life de - clears our ills: Is there no cure, O Christ, for these?  
 The whole - ness that, en - rich - ing us, Shall reach the whole of hu - man - kind.

\* BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

Voluntary in D Minor, Z. 718

Purcell

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 Bulletins and audio podcasts of services are available on the website for each week:  
[www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx](http://www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx)

## 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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# Enter to Worship ...

March 22, 2020

# Depart to Serve

## Christianity 101: A Lenten / Easter Journey

### Sermon Titles

Ash Wednesday, February 26 – services – noon and 7:30 p.m.

Sermon Title: “In the Beginning: Becoming Christian”

Lent I – March 1 – services – 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Communion Meditation Title: “What is the Bible and How Do We Read It?”

Lent II – March 8 – services – 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Sermon Title: “What do Christians Believe about the Trinity?”

Lent III – March 15 – services – 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Sermon Title: “A New Way of Being Church”

**Lent IV – March 22 –  
Sermon Title: “Is Christianity a Religion of Love?”**

Lent V – March 29 –  
Sermon Title: “Why Do We Need ‘the Church’ and How Do We Seek God’s Kingdom?”

Palm Sunday – April 5 –  
Sermon Title: “As Closely As You Can”

Maundy Thursday – April 9 –  
Tenebrae service – 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday – April 10 –  
Sermon Title: “On the Death of Jesus”

Easter Sunday – April 12 –  
Sermon Title: “Jesus Christ’s Resurrection and Eternal Life”

*Services are streamed live on the First Church Facebook page and are available as podcasts from [www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org)*

## We’re Online ...

As we adapt ourselves to this new social distancing lifestyle you will notice upcoming meetings and gatherings being conducted through a program called Zoom.

If you are unfamiliar with Zoom, it is a communications program allowing for video and audio conferencing. It provides services allowing for online meetings, chats and other mobile collaboration. It’s web-based with an app for phones.

Several meetings and other church groups have had Zoom meetings, and other groups using Zoom will send out invites. Staff will do their best to help answer questions on this new method of coming together.

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## “Christianity 101” Online Class ...

Rev. Nancy Livingston will teach online each Friday afternoon on the curriculum “Christianity 101.” The sessions will be at 2 p.m. with the first one starting on March 20. The intent is these will run each Friday through May 1.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/967443994?pwd=K3pvTEpTL2YycGV0VGpmWVBBVmFHdz09>

Meeting ID: 967 443 994

Password: 167654

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## Spring Flower Sale

Youth groups are taking orders for their spring flower sale now through **April 6**. There are many varieties of flowers and hanging baskets to choose from, and several varieties of vegetables. The order form can be viewed online from the church website. Please mail your order, along with payment, to the office. Plants will be available for pick up May 9-10.

## This Week at First Church

### Sunday, March 22

11 a.m. — Worship Streaming (Virtual)

6 p.m. — Youth Groups (Virtual)

### Tuesday, March 24

7 p.m. — Deacon's Mtg. (Virtual)

### Saturday, March 27

1 p.m. — Faith Mission Dinner Prep (Kitchen)

### Keep in Prayer

Our senior minister, Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens as he faces two surgeries in the coming weeks and months; Joan Lebold; Dr. Karl Danneberger, Sallie, Marc and Kyle Danneberger; Paul Flocken; Brooke Chute, cousin of Amy Wagner; Emma, great niece of Shelly Gies; Christine Nichols, friend of Victor John; Richard Brant; Mike Bittle, brother-in-law of Melva Fisher; John Bigelow, brother-in-law of Virginia O'Neill; Nolan and Sissy Anderson, friends of Melva Fisher; Ann Richards, mother of Jonathan Miller; Paul Zimmerman, father of Doug Zimmerman; Taco, service dog for Mariner Taft; Rev. Earl Fritz and Pauline Fritz; Amy Smith, sister of Sarah Lange; Arlene Reynolds; and those who mourn the loss of loved ones, including Andrea Gonzales, on the dath of her brother-in-law, Silverio Gonzalez; Melanie Brown, on the death of her sister of Kathy Erskine; and all those affected by illness, especially the Coronavirus, locally, nationally and globally.

Congratulations on the birth of Graves Smith Wills, grandson of Jeff and Rev. Emily Corzine, born March 19th.

### Sanctuary Flower Dedications ...

Sanctuary Flowers will now be distributed to members of our congregation as a bouquet. If you would like to deliver flowers or know of an individual who should receive flowers please contact Amy Wagner at [awagner@first-church.org](mailto:awagner@first-church.org).

## Church Leadership

### Church Staff

Senior Minister **Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens, D. Min.**

Associate Minister **Rev. Emily Corzine, M. Div.**

Minister of Music **Kevin Jones, M. M., M.S.E.**

Christian Education Director **Mark S. Williams, M. Ed.**

Office Administrator **Amy Wagner**

Office Assistant **Pat Patterson**

Building and Grounds Superintendent **Mark Dahnke**

Building and Grounds Assistant **Darrell Cross**

Wedding Coordinators **Amy Wagner, Janet Newcity,**

**Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani, Katie Wagner**

Nursery Staff **Miranda Brooks, Norma Secor**

### Diaconate

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**

### Board of Trustees

Chairperson **Chris Farquhar**

Trustees **Allen Baker, Brian Cave, Sue Cook, Cindy**

**Conn, Kevin Cubick, Tom Hadley, Jim Kyle, Elaine**

**Warren**

### Church Council Leadership

Moderator **Lynn Wallich**

Treasurer **Dennis Secor**

Secretary **Jim Griffin**

### Give ...

At First Church, our financial resources enable us to "Enter to worship, depart to serve." You can give now by scanning the QR Code or by sending your check to the church (First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215).



Today our offerings go to **Horizon Prison Ministry**, which offers well-established programs in two prisons: London Correctional Institute for Men and the Ohio Reformatory For Women. Horizon works to break the cycle of incarceration and its effects on society. They help the incarcerated become aware of self, others, and the faith tradition at the center of their lives. Thank you for your generosity.

The mission and ministry of First Church can be supported by using either EasyTithe, PayPal, the QR code above, or sending your offering directly to the church. You can also make payments through your bank's bill pay option. For more information, please contact Pam Mantor at [pmantor@first-church.org](mailto:pmantor@first-church.org) or Rev. Emily Corzine at [ecorzine@first-church.org](mailto:ecorzine@first-church.org).