

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 name tag. We'd be delighted to assist you. Please join us in the Parish Hall for Fellowship Hour.

ACOLYTES: AnnaSofia Severson and Sebby Kulwicki

WE THANK AND WELCOME the Rev. Dr. William R. Nirote as guest preacher today. Dr. Nirote was ordained in Central Southeast Ohio Association and served churches in Ohio and Maryland. Now retired, he is a member of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, and Vice-Moderator of the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the Ohio Conference UCC. Dr. Nirote is the author of Bless This Home, published by Pilgrim Press, a service of blessing for one's home. Bill and his wife Arevena live in Columbus and now spend as much time as possible with their three adult children and their spouses, and six grandchildren.

WE WELCOME AND THANK Anthony Brown for serving as officiant.

MUSIC: G. Dene Barnard, *guest organist*

THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given by Bruce and Fran Panek to the glory of God and dedicated to all who support and work for keeping families in America, whether small or large, together and strong. No matter where you're from, we're glad you're our neighbor!

GREETING AT THE EXITS TODAY

Rev. Nirote – Broad Street

Mr. Brown – Ninth Street

Dr. Mozingo – Christian Education wing

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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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