



MORNING PRAYER AND HOLY COMMUNION AT NINE  
**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 4, 2022

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 18

**WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!**

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 169 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.*

*The liturgy of Morning Prayer is a form of daily worship adapted through the ages that has its earliest roots in our Jewish heritage. Its premise is one of praying to God at the beginning of the day—giving thanks for another day ahead. The service falls roughly into three main parts: Opening sentences and singing/reading of the Psalms; readings from Holy Scripture - usually one from the Hebrew texts, and one from the Gospels - interspersed with ancient songs of the church; and prayers. To this we add Holy Communion, bringing further meaning to the totality of the prayers we have already offered. The liturgy presupposes full and hearty congregational involvement in the spoken and sung responses, preparing us to be sent forth from this house of worship into the wider world to live out the Great Commission.*

PRELUDE

Ann Eliot, *pianist*

OPENING SENTENCES

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: This is the day which God has made.

**People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

*\* Please stand as you are able*

\* THE INVITATORY AND PSALTER

Rev. Samuelson

L: O God, open our lips.

**P: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

L: Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:

**P: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

\* OPENING SONG - PSALM 95

O come and sing unto the Lord

*Irish*

1. O come and sing un - to the Lord, To God our voic - es raise; Let  
 2. Be - fore God's pres - ence let us come With praise and thank - ful voice; Let

us in our most joy - ful songs The Lord, our Sav - ior, praise.  
 us sing psalms to God with grace, With grate - ful hearts re - joice.

L: Happy is the nation that worships you, O Most High; happy the people you have chosen to be your own!

**P: You look down from heaven and behold all the people in the world.**

L: From where you sit enthroned you turn your gaze on all who dwell on the earth.

**P: You fashion all the hearts of them and understand all their works.**

L: There is no ruler that can be saved by a mighty army; the strong are not delivered by their great strength.

**P: The horse is a vain hope for deliverance; for all its strength it cannot save.**

L: But your eye, O God, is upon those who fear you, on those who wait upon your love,

**P: To pluck their lives from death and to feed them in time of famine.**

L: Our soul waits for you; you are our help and our shield.

**P: Indeed, our heart rejoices in you, for in your holy Name, we put our trust.**

L: Let your loving-kindness, O God, be upon us,

**P: as we have put our trust in you.**

\* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

L: The peace of God be always with you.

**P: And also with you.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Samuelson

THE FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 (O.T. p. 185)

Rev. Samuelson

*A reading from the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 30.*

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

1. Sure - ly it is God who saves me; trust-ing you, I shall not fear. For the  
2. Make God's deeds known to the peo - ples; tell out God's ex - alt - ed Name. Praise the

Lord de-fends and shields me and God's sav - ing help is near. So re -  
Lord, who has done great things; make it known in all the world. Zi - on,

joice as you draw wa - ter from sal - va - tion's liv - ing spring; in the  
lift your voice in sing - ing; for with you has come to dwell, in your

day of your de - liv - erance thank the Lord, God's mer - cies sing.  
ve - ry midst, the great and Ho - ly One of Is - ra - el.

THE SECOND READING

Luke 14:25-33 (N.T. p. 78)

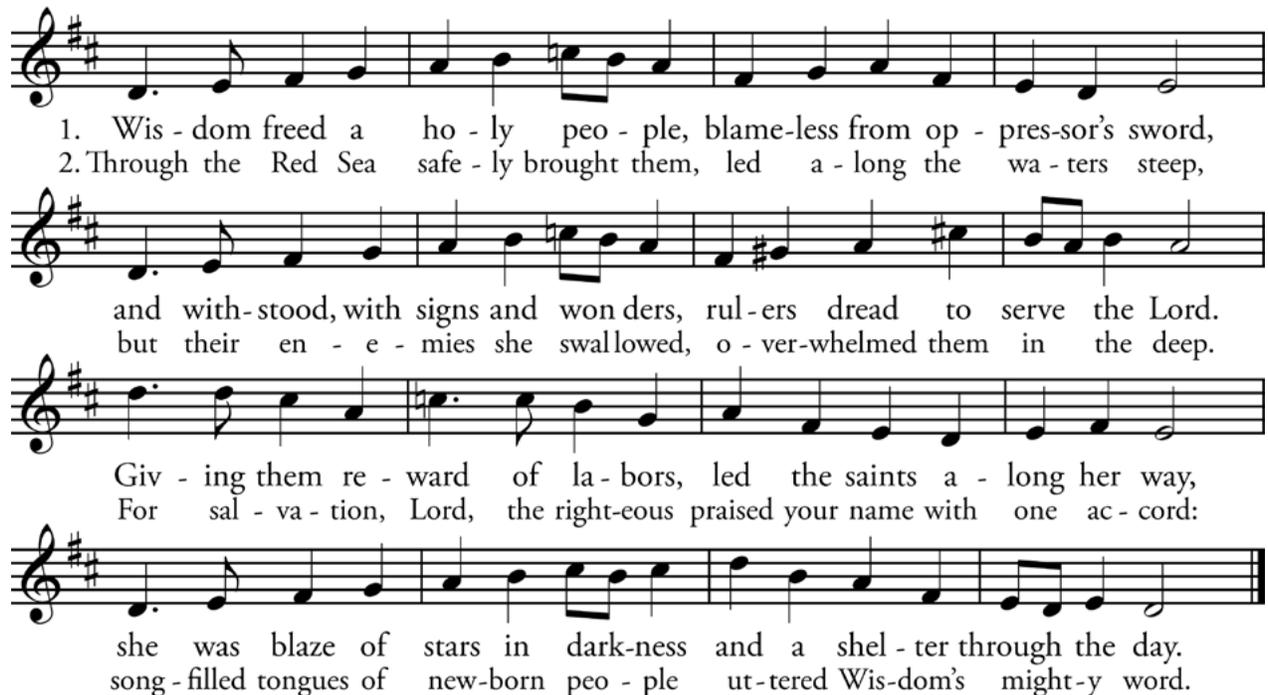
Rev. Ahrens

*A reading from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 14.*

Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**P: Thanks be to God.**



1. Wis - dom freed a ho - ly peo - ple, blame-less from op - pres-sor's sword,  
 2. Through the Red Sea safe - ly brought them, led a - long the wa - ters steep,  
 and with-stood, with signs and won - ders, rul - ers dread to serve the Lord.  
 but their en - e - mies she swallowed, o - ver-whelmed them in the deep.  
 Giv - ing them re - ward of la - bors, led the saints a - long her way,  
 For sal - va - tion, Lord, the right-eous praised your name with one ac - cord:  
 she was blaze of stars in dark-ness and a shel - ter through the day.  
 song - filled tongues of new-born peo - ple ut - tered Wis-dom's might - y word.

HOMILY

"The Eighth Day of Creation"

Rev. Ahrens

*Part six of the six-part sermon series, "God's Good Earth."*

THE PRAYERS

Rev. Samuelson

**Litany from *God's Good Earth*** (page 198, edited by Anne and Jeffery Rowthorn)

When long before time and the worlds were begun, when there was no earth and no sky and no sun, and all was deep silence and night reigned supreme,  
**and even our Maker had only a dream . . .**

. . . the silence was broken when God sang the Song, and love pierced the darkness and rhythm began, and with its first birth cries creation was born,  
**and creaturely voices sang praise to the morn.**

The sounds of the creatures were one with their Lord, their love-songs sweetly befitting the Word; the Singer was pleased as the earth sang the Song,  
**the choir of creatures re-echoed it long.**

Though, down through the ages, the Song disappeared – its harmonies broken and almost unheard – the Singer comes to us to sing it again . . .  
**Our God is singing of love without end.**

The language of love has returned as it came once before, the Song of the Lord is our own song once more . . .  
**. . . so let us sing with one heart and one voice the Song of the Singer in whom we rejoice. To you, God the Singer, our voices we raise, to you, Love Incarnate, we give your our praise.** (*Peter W.A. Davison*)

L: God be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: That there may be purpose and fulfillment, O God, in all that we do,

**P: sung, each time**



L: That we may show others this day the love that you have taught us,

**P: Christ, have mercy.**

L: That the church throughout the world may respond to your call for peace and justice,

**P: Christ, have mercy.**

L: That those who are in need be helped and comforted,

**P: Christ, have mercy.**

*(We pray for the special needs and concerns of this congregation, the members, family, and friends who are listed in the Depart to Serve and whom we hold in our hearts in prayer. As directed, you are invited to pray silently or aloud for those needs and concerns you have.)*

L: That we may be strengthened by your grace for the tasks of this day,

**P: Christ, have mercy.**

#### 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.**

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Eternal God, you create us by your power and redeem us by your love. Guide and strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may give ourselves in love and service to one another and to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### THE OFFERTORY

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



#### MISSION INVITATION

Designated gifts go to support **Mid-Ohio Workers Association**, whose mission has been to create a self-help organization to address day-to-day critical survival needs while building long-term solutions to poverty conditions. Thank you for your generosity.

Rev. Samuelson



1. How pre - cious is God's gift of speech, en - riched by time and place
2. So in - fants lisp and po - ets mold their an - cient mo - ther tongue.
3. Yet all these brid - ges to your grace are bar - riers, Lord, to me.
4. Es - tranged, our world with fear is rife, its wars will nev - er cease
5. Earth's thou - sand tongues, Lord, are your gift to bind, not keep a - part,
6. Help us to prac - tice dai - ly, Lord, till flu - ent in love's ways,



a thou - sand tongues that we may each re - hearse and share what life will teach  
 In it a peo - ple's dreams are clothed, the ex - ploits of their past re - told  
 If un - known words al - low no space to look be - yond my neigh - bor's face,  
 un - til we learn the words of life, with all our di - a - lects of strife  
 and so you came to heal the rift and taught us all, a world a - drift  
 our hearts in - ter - pret ev - ery word, and all our thou - sand tongues ac - cord



in syl - la - bles of grace, in syl - la - bles of grace.  
 their joys and sor - rows sung, their joys and sor - rows sung.  
 a stran - ger's all I see, a stran - ger's all I see.  
 trans - la - ted in - to peace, trans - la - ted in - to peace.  
 one lan - guage of the heart, one lan - guage of the heart.  
 in grate - ful hymns of praise, in grate - ful hymns of praise.

## HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Ahrens and Rev. Giffen

MUSIC AT COMMUNION

Eat This Bread

Jacques Berthier

**Eat this bread. Drink this cup. Come to me and never be hungry.  
 Eat this bread. Drink this cup. Trust in me and you will not thirst.**

## POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Ahrens

**Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.**

## COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Rev. Samuelson

**L:** Let us sing the closing hymn as we depart with a heart to serve.

**P:** **Thanks be to God.**

\* CLOSING HYMN

God be with you

*Randolph*

God be with you till we meet a-gain; lov - ing coun - sels guide, up - hold you,

The first system of musical notation for the hymn 'God be with you'. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics underneath. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).

with a shep - herd's care en - fold you; God be with you till we meet a-gain.

The second system of musical notation for the hymn 'God be with you'. It continues the treble and bass staves from the first system. The lyrics are 'with a shep - herd's care en - fold you; God be with you till we meet a-gain.' The system concludes with a double bar line.

\* BLESSING

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

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# Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

September 4, 2022

## This Week at First Church

- 9/4**  
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)  
10 a.m. Coffee Sales (Education Wing)  
11 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 9/5**  
Labor Day Observed – Office Closed
- 9/6**  
6 p.m. Personnel Committee Mtg (Virtual)  
6:30 p.m. Christian Education Mtg (Virtual)  
7 p.m. Justice and Mercy Mtg (Virtual)
- 9/7**  
9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day  
(Virtual)  
10:30 a.m. Book Study (Virtual)  
7 p.m. Book Club (Virtual)
- 9/8**  
7 p.m. Security Task Force Mtg (Virtual)
- 9/10**  
10:30 a.m. Sacred Earth (Coffee Shop)
- 9/11**  
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)  
11 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)  
12 Noon Congregational Meeting  
(Sanctuary & Virtual)

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## Fair Trade Coffee Sales Today 10-11 a.m. in the Education Wing

Profits from sales go to small farmers and to UCC Justice Missions. In 2021, \$2270 was given to small farmers by UCC participating churches. Sacred Earth sells coffee on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month.

## First Serves... Extended: Staying Connected with Our Young Adults

At this time of year, we are especially mindful that many of the young adults among us are heading off to college or beginning a new career. Please be sure to stop by the table in the Education Wing before or after worship this Sunday, September 4, to sign greeting cards for our young people during this time of significant transition in their lives. Let us shower our First Church young adults with words of love, support, and prayer!

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## Hello, My Name Is...

We've all been there. You instantly recognize someone's face, remember important details about their life, but can't recall their name, or even worse, call them by the wrong name.

As we enter this time of transition and reconnection, and before you find yourself in the middle of a real-life "Seinfeld" episode, or vow to only address people as "Hey You!" from now on, let's all return to wearing name tags. It can be the same name tag you wear to work, a volunteer position, one you design yourself, or even the one you wore for your summer job in 11th grade. Talk about a fun conversation starter!

Keeping your name tag in your car or bag is a helpful reminder to wear it. If you find yourself without a name tag or do happen to forget, blank name tags and markers will be placed at each entrance.

Thank you for your participation in this simple and fun way to connect with your First Church friends and guests!

## Sunday School Kickoff

Come one, come all – it's that time of year again! First Church members, friends and families are welcome to participate in our Sunday School classes for all ages. Our kickoff for the new church calendar year is coming up soon: Sunday, September 11, at 10:00 am.

Our classrooms for our preschool through fifth grade classes are located on the first and second floors of the Education Wing. Our Adult Education class will take place in Classroom C (there is additional information below). And, once again, our middle and high school classes will meet on the ground floor in their respective classrooms off of Parish Hall.

If you need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact Rev. Joanna Samuelson at [jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org). Hope to see you then – all are welcome!

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### Lunch Bunch

Wednesday, September 14  
12-1 p.m.

La Chatelaine French Bakery and Bistro  
in Upper Arlington

1550 W. Lane Ave, Columbus, OH 43221

Bonjour! Let's pretend we are in Paris for our next Lunch Bunch on September 14, 12-1 p.m.! Meet us at La Chatelaine French Bakery and Bistro at 1550 West Lane Avenue in Upper Arlington where we will enjoy lunch and the smell of fresh baked croissants at a lovely family-owned business. Register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?link-String=OWRiYWE1MmYtNWY4OC00MzFmLWJm-MzItYWVlYjAwZTI4YmRj> to sign-up by September 12! We look forward to seeing you there!

## Champions of Justice

Who is your social justice champion?

Through September 18, those who make a contribution for the Social Justice Window will have the opportunity to have the name of their hero placed on the wall by the west entrance.

Download a nomination form by visiting <https://files.constantcontact.com/5728e215501/cf9a95bf-33cf-45a3-84db-9da8e390242f.pdf?rdr=true>. Forms can be returned by mail to the church (444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43215) or emailed to [home@first-church.org](mailto:home@first-church.org).

We look forward to celebrating your champions along with you!

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### Coming Soon:

#### Adult Faith Formation

September 11 & 18 at 10 a.m.

In-Person Room C and On Zoom

*Navigating the Swirling  
Whitewater of Change*

Change is all around us...at church, at work, at home, in life. It can feel overwhelming. So what can we do about it? Focus on what we have control and influence over, with one of the main things being proven tools and tips to navigate that whitewater of uncertainty and fear.

Learn evidence-based knowledge of what helps - What helps the Self; What helps Others. In these two weeks, we will focus on how to transition from where we are to where we want to, or need to, be. Proven tools and lively discussions for all of those attending will help make the knowledge real. Come learn from an expert in managing transitions...Scott Graham, PhD...your whitewater river guide.

Zoom links coming soon!

## First Church Book Club

All are invited to the First Church Book Club, Wednesday, September 7, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

The book being discussed is *Barnstorming Ohio to Understand America* by David Giffels.

For more information or the Zoom link, email Elaine Warren at [melainewarren232@gmail.com](mailto:melainewarren232@gmail.com).

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## 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 using either EasyTithe or PayPal, by visiting <https://www.first-church.org/give/>, 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@firstchurch.org](mailto:amccormick@firstchurch.org).

Designated gifts go to support **Mid-Ohio Workers Association**, whose mission has been to create a self-help organization to address day-to-day critical survival needs while building long-term solutions to poverty conditions. Thank you for your generosity.

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## Special Congregational Meeting

September 11, 2022  
Immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service.  
The full notice of the meeting can be read by visiting <https://conta.cc/3q3OBBE>

## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Mitchell and Lisa Dean; Bill Catus; Amy Wagner; Larry Dixon; Martha Huey; Tom Gies; Sarah Ahrens Stadie; Bob Davis; Twink Starr; Lola Edwards; Rick Brant; Betsy Zahn; Janice White; Barbara Knox; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter.

**Family and friends** Melissa Kulwicki’s friends and neighbors, John and Carrie Mosley; Heather Jones’ father, Sam Gray; Bev and Bert Cook’s sister-in-law, Sue Jones; Gretchen Atkinson’s cousin, Linda Lambeth; and Amy Wagner’s friend, Ken Burke.

**Those who mourn loved ones** Lynn Wallich on the death of her friend, Harry Worniak; and Dr. Andy Thomas and his family on the death of his father, Eldon Thomas

We pray for teachers, students and families as they begin a new school year.

We pray for Mr. Mark Williams and family while he is on sabbatical.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches of Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, and Togo. We pray for Global Ministries worker Paul Chimhungwe in Botswana.

Please note that individuals will remain on the prayer list for three weeks, unless specified to clergy or staff.

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## Food Pantry Donations

Justice and Mercy is accepting canned and boxed foods. On the first Monday of each month, the food will be donated on a rotating schedule to either Broad Street Presbyterian Church Food Pantry (even months) or Gladden House (odd months). Both organizations are in need of canned fruits, vegetables, and meats. There will be baskets by the church office, by the entrance to the Education Wing, and inside the front entrance of the church.

# Church Leadership

Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, D.Min., M.Div.

Associate Minister

Minister of Music

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

*(On sabbatical through September 11, 2022)*

Interim Director of Christian Education Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Commissioned Minister for Social Justice Tom Brownfield

Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction Jacquelyn Dean

Administrative Manager Amy Wagner

Office Assistant Pat Patterson

Communications Consultant Melissa Kulwicki

Business Administrator Annette McCormick

Building and Grounds Superintendent Mark Dahnke

Custodian Jenkins Smith

Wedding Coordinators Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani

Nursery Staff Miranda Brooks, Norma Secor, Shelly Gies,

Miranda Gumbita, Courtney Palmer

Senior Deacon Gregory Halbe

Deacons Chris Gelpi, Scott Graham, Tom Kiesel, Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen, Nancy Kreimer, Gail Lowe,

James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Lynn Wallich, Hank Wilson, Martha Wilson, Marty Worth

Church Council Leadership

Moderator Christine Farquhar

Moderator-elect Allison Lowery Palmer

Treasurer Andy Bensing

Treasurer-elect James Velo

Secretary Nicole Moss

Secretary-elect Gretchen Atkinson

Board of Trustees

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Trustees Allen Baker, Cindy Conn (Treasurer), Elizabeth Iannarino, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Judy Smith, Christopher

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Administration-Elect Chris Glaros

Church Growth Steve Sterrett

Church Growth-elect

Church Vitality Kosby Carrico

Church Vitality-elect Wendy Kennedy

Education Margaret Graham

Education-elect

House & Grounds Mark Brown

House & Grounds-elect Mike Kennedy

Justice & Mercy Kris Brant

Justice & Mercy-elect Heather Giffen

Music, Arts & Heritage Sandra Mathias

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect Melissa Kulwicki

Members-at-Large Dayna McCrary and Alyssia Palmer

Nominating Committee Chair Alec Deitz

## 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 =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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