



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

October 9, 2022

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 23

**WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!**

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 170 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

David Hogrefe, *pianist*

OPENING SENTENCES

The Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me,  
**People: and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.**

*\* Please stand as you are able*

\* THE INVITATORY AND PSALTER

Rev. Ahrens

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: Alleluia! I will give thanks to you, O God, with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

**P: Great are your deeds, O God; they are studied by all who delight in them.**

L: Your work is full of majesty and splendor, and your righteousness endures forever.

**P: You make your marvelous works to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion.**

L: You give food to those who fear you; you are ever mindful of your covenant.

**P: You have shown your people the power of your works in giving them the lands of the nations.**

L: The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all your commandments are sure.

**P: They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity.**

L: You sent redemption to your people; you commanded your covenant forever; holy and awesome is your Name.

**P: The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, those who revere you have good understanding: your praise shall endure forever.**

\* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

L: The peace of God be always with you.

**P: And also with you.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Mr. Mark S. Williams

THE FIRST READING

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

Rev. Ahrens

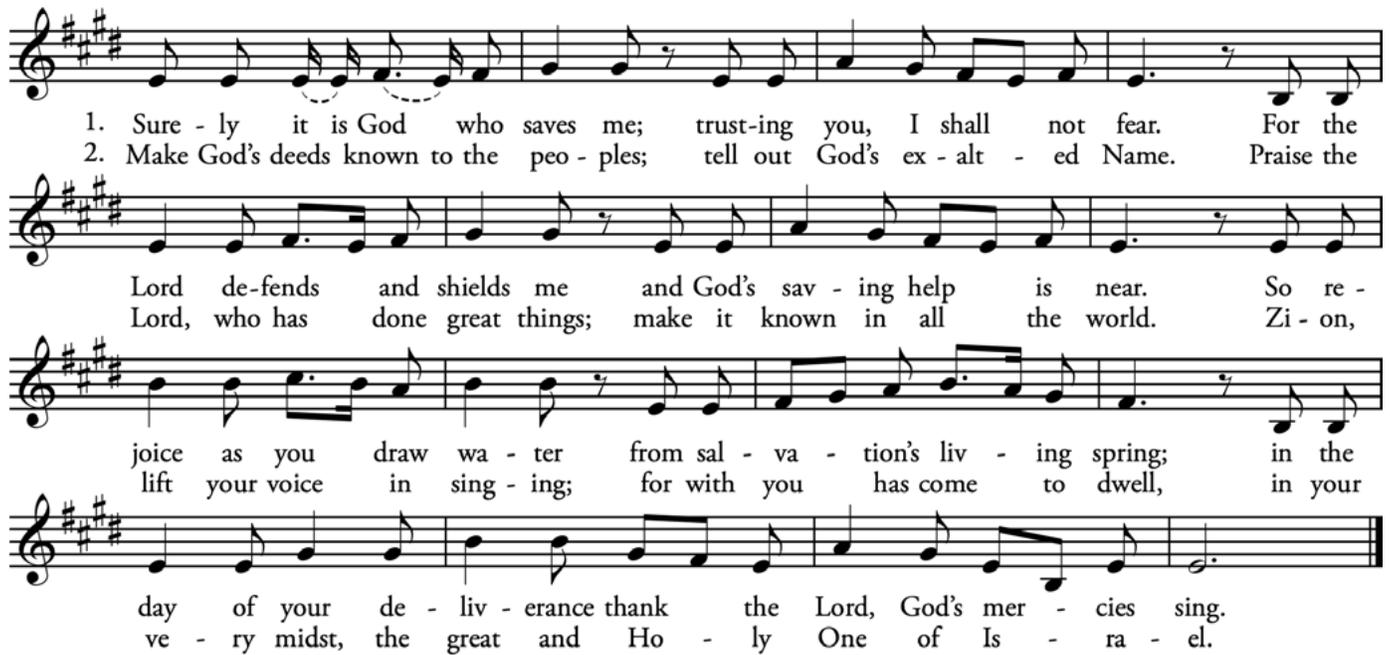
*A reading from the letter of Jeremiah, chapter 29.*

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

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 17:11-19

Rev. Samuelson

*A reading from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 17.*

On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

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

“On the Way”

Rev. Samuelson

*Part five of the sermon series, “Revive Us Again: A Return to Jesus’ Original Program”*

THE PRAYERS

Rev. Ahrens

Be still, be still. Be still and know that I am God.  
*repeat ad lib.*  
 Be still, be still. Be still and know that I am God.

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: Christ, have mercy**

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 **BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity)**. BREAD is the organization through which our congregation works for social justice. BREAD has a 24-year history of improving the quality of life in Central Ohio by researching serious community problems and gathering the power of people in nearly 40 congregations to press public officials to implement proven solutions to those problems. BREAD rises! Thank you for your generosity.

Ms. Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

1. O for a thou-sand tongues to sing My dear Re-deem-er's praise,  
 2. Je - sus, the name that charms our fears, That bids our sor - rows cease;  
 3. Christ breaks the power of reign - ing sin, And sets the pris - oner free;  
 4. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, As - sist me to pro - claim,

The glo - ries of my God and King, The tri - umphs of God's grace!  
 'Tis mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, 'Tis life, and health, and peace.  
 Christ's blood can make the sin - ful clean, Christ's blood a - vailed for me.  
 To spread through all the earth a - broad The hon - ors of Thy name.

## HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Ahrens

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. Samuelson

**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

Mr. Williams

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

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The second system also has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "God be with you till we meet a-gain; lov - ing coun - sels guide, up - hold you, with a shep - herd's care en - fold you; God be with you till we meet a-gain."

\* BLESSING

Rev. Samuelson

POSTLUDE

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# Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

October 9, 2022

## This Week at First Church

- 10/9**  
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)  
10 a.m. Faith Formation for All Ages  
(Various Classrooms)  
11 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)  
12:30 p.m. BREAD House Mtg  
(Classroom C & Virtual)  
4 p.m. Congregational Concert (Sanctuary)  
6 p.m. Youth Connections (Parish Hall)
- 10/10**  
7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Virtual)
- 10/11  
4 p.m. Annual Campaign Mtg (Virtual)  
7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg (Virtual)
- 10/12**  
9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day  
(Virtual)  
7 p.m. Book Club (Virtual)
- 10/13**  
7 p.m. Security Team Mtg (Virtual)  
Testament in Tapestry Lecture Series 4  
(CMA)  
7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal  
(Parish Hall)
- 10/14**  
6 p.m. Fun Friday Bowling Night  
(Cols Sq Bowling Palace)
- 10/16**  
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)  
10 a.m. Faith Formation for All Ages  
(Various Classrooms)  
Coffee Sales (Ed Wing)  
11 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)  
6 p.m. Youth Connections (Parish Hall)

## Faith Formation for Adults

This Week Sunday, October 2

10-10:50 in Classroom C

“Losses and New Beginnings”

What would you do if someone or something single-handedly changed the course of your life forever? How do you create something meaningful and beautiful out of something so devastating? Join Jacquelyn Dean, our Commissioned Minister of Spiritual Direction and Formation, as we explore losses and new beginnings as told through the story of Jephthah’s daughter (Judges 11:1, 29-40). All are welcome!

If you are joining us online this Sunday, our Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85931053764?pwd=a042K3RmRDZTWXBQY1VWYXQ5bUxBQT09>

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## New Members Class

A new members class is forming! The two-session class will meet in person at the church and on Zoom on Monday, October 17, and on Monday, October 24. Each session will begin at 7 p.m. and conclude by about 8:15 p.m. New members will join the church on Sunday, October 30, during the 11 a.m. service.

If you are interested in learning more about First Church and being part of our community of faith, contact Rev. Tim Ahrens (tahrens@first-church.org), one of our Deacons, or Pat Patterson (ppatterson@first-church.org).

Register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=OGYyZTI0YWYtY-WI0Mi00OGY5LWFiY2UtYWYyNTAxMmQ2MWFk>

**Concerts at First Church presents  
Congregational Concert  
ISABELLE DEMERS, Organist  
Sunday, October 9, 2022, 4 p.m.**

A native of Québec and a doctoral graduate of the Juilliard School, Dr. Demers is Associate Professor of Organ at McGill University (Montréal, Québec). She has appeared in recital throughout Europe, Oman, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Canada with reviews describing her playing as “bracing virtuosity...fearless and extraordinary.”

Dr. Demers is in continual high demand by her colleagues as witnessed by performances for numerous regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Institute of Organ Builders and International Society of Organbuilders, the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and the Organ Historical Society.

She has released three CD recordings on the Acis and Pro Organo labels.

Isabelle Demers will perform on both of our organs at First Church, the first concert of the 2022-2023 season.

There are few churches in the country that boast two world-class, independent pipe organs under one roof. Our CHANCEL ORGAN, a 1931 W.W. Kimball out of Chicago Il, has four manuals (keyboards), 66 stops (different sounds like flutes, oboe, harp, trumpet piccolo, clarinet, celeste, cello, tuba, English horn, bourdon, diapason, trombone, viola, mixtures and many more), 66 ranks (sets of pipes, one pipe for each note of the keyboard in each set of pipes, a total of 4,407 pipes). Our GALLERY ORGAN, a 1972 Rudolf von Beckerath instrument from Hamburg, Germany, has three manuals, 47 stops, 73 ranks of pipes, with 3,719 pipes. The stops include principals, flutes, mixtures, trumpet, Spanish Trumpet, viola, cornet, oboe, cromorne, gedeckt, posaune, and mixtures, among others. The pipes range in size from that of a slim pencil to 32' in length.

Organists from all over the country are thrilled to be invited to perform on our extraordinary organs and many have done so in our fifty-one years of offering concerts at First Church.

Plan to attend this concert by Dr. Isabelle Demers. Invite your family, music-loving friends, and neighbors to come and experience an exciting performance on our truly magnificent instruments.

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## **Liturgical Banner Exhibit**

First Church will celebrate the fabric artwork of one of our members, Deb Anderson, with an exhibit of her work from October 2 – November 20, 2022. The exhibit will be on display in the Chapel.

The exhibit will be open after 11 a.m. services on Sundays from October 2 - November 20. Other viewing times may be arranged by appointment by contacting Commissioner of Music, Arts, and Heritage Sandra Mathias via email at [sjmath5659@gmail.com](mailto:sjmath5659@gmail.com). Guided tours of the exhibit given by Textile Artist, Deb Anderson will be: October 2, 9, 30, and November 13 and 20. Self-guided tours of the exhibit will be: October 16 and 23, and November 6.

## Fun Friday Bowling Night

Friday, October 14, 2022, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Columbus Square Bowling Palace  
5707 Forest Hills Blvd, Columbus, OH  
43231

Is bowling right up your alley? If yes, bring your family and friends and let's get the ball rolling!

Meet us at the Bowling Palace, a family-owned and operated business since 1983. It's only 10 minutes from Polaris, Westerville, Easton, or Gahanna. Feel free to grab dinner from the Palazzo Restaurant inside and check out the amazing arcade while you're there! We look forward to seeing you at this unforgetta-bowl night!

The cost to bowl is \$15 per person and includes rental shoes and 2 hours of bowling. This will be paid directly to the bowling lanes.

Please register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=ODg5ODMwNzYtYmQ0YS00ZDQ0LWJINTctYWYxOTAxMGUzO-GJj> by October 12 and be sure to list all family members so we can reserve the right number of spots for you.

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## Time Out Tuesday

October 20, 6-7 p.m.  
Valter's at the Maennerchor,  
976 S. High Street, Columbus, OH 43206

Please join us for dinner at a German Village landmark! Valters, located at the Columbus Männerchor, serves German food and beers along with some new American twists, in this beautiful and historic place. The Männerchor was founded over 168 years ago and has become the nation's largest and longest continually active German singing society and social club. Let's share a meal and enjoy the history, culture, and community. Please register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=YzVkYTc0Mz-ktYWQ5OC00YTE0LTk1NmMtYWYxOTAxMGYyY-jc4> by October 17. Prost!

## Lunch Bunch

October 27, 12-1 p.m.  
Can't Believe It's Vegan  
584 W. Schrock Rd, Westerville, OH 43081

Let's embrace plant-based nutrition that only Chef Clayton can provide! He is known for his natural talent of combining flavors and perfect seasonings into dishes that are delectable and satisfy even the most ardent omnivores. We look forward sharing this time of church fellowship with you. Please register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NzZhMDM3ODItODAlNS00MzNjLWl0Z-mQtYWYxOTAxMTRjZWFi> by October 24.

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## BREAD House Meetings

BREAD held its first two House Meetings at the end of September. Five more are scheduled for October and hopefully you will be able to find a date that works for you. Each meeting is open to anyone who is interested in finding out more about BREAD and the campaigns we are sponsoring this year. So please look at the schedule below and contact the person who will be leading these groups if you need more information or would like to attend.

In addition, there will be opportunities to get involved with our Research process as we are looking to make recommendations for proven ways to improve solutions to our problems.

**October 9:** 12:30 House Meeting (In Person) at Church (Rm C, Ed Wing); Bill Catus leading (614-271-9479)

**October 17:** 12:30 p.m. House Meeting; Rev. Tim Ahrens leading (614-228-1741) Place and type of meeting TBD.

**October 23:** 12:30 PM House Meeting (In Person); at the Church; Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen leading (240-557-9770)

## 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 **BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity)**. BREAD is the organization through which our congregation works for social justice. BREAD has a 24-year history of improving the quality of life in Central Ohio by researching serious community problems and gathering the power of people in nearly 40 congregations to press public officials to implement proven solutions to those problems. BREAD rises! Thank you for your generosity.

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### Global Mission Partner Cory Driver, Egypt

Mr. Driver serves with The Evangelical Theological Seminary (ETSC) in Cairo. ETSC’s goal is to help form Christian leaders to serve the Church in Egypt, North Africa, and Southwest Asia. Pastors, academics, Christian ministry directors, and non-profit leaders all find inspiration, challenge, and encouragement during their time at ETSC.

Mr. Driver is the director of graduate studies, developing the curriculum, recruiting instructors and students, and overseeing requirements for the ThM program. Additionally, he liaises with accrediting partners for the DMin program. He also teaches courses for MDiv, MA, and ThM students as a professor of Hebrew Bible.

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### Coming Soon Coffee Hour returns on October 30!

## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Kay Neffenger; Katie Kutschbach; Mark Williams and Tim Carsey; Larry Dixon; Martha Huey; Tom Gies; Sarah Ahrens Stadie; Bob Davis; Twink Starr; Lola Edwards; Rick Brant; Betsy Zahn; Janice White; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter.

**Family and friends** Nanette Maciejunes’ husband, George Maciejunes; Tom Gies’ sister, Monica Depinet; Annette McCormick’s father, Charles McCormick, and friend, Vicki Sherman; Nancy Mayle; Pat Patterson’s son, Jay Patterson; Charlie Weaver’s daughter and family, Stefanie and Chris Bonhert and twins Malcolm and Madeline; Martha Huey’s sister, Stephanie Childs; 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** Tim Ahrens’ friend Karla Rothan on the loss of her wife, Linda Schuler; the family and friends of Barbara Knox on her death; Tom Kiesel on the death of his father, Harvey Kiesel; and Gretchen Weller-Cooks on the death of her grandmother, Olive Weller.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama. We pray for Global Ministries worker Cory Driver in Egypt.

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.  
Interim Associate Minister: Rev. Joanna Samuelson, M.Div.  
Director of Christian Education: Mark S. Williams, M.Ed.  
Interim Organist: Barry Moenter  
Interim Choral Director: Jim Gallagher  
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, Shelly Gies, Courtney Palmer

Senior Deacon: Martha Wilson  
Senior Deacon-elect: Lynn Wallich  
Deacons: Scott Graham, Greg Halbe, Tom Kiesel, Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen, Nan Kreimer, Gail Lowe, James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Hank Wilson, Marty Worth

Church Council Leadership  
Moderator: Christine Farquhar  
Moderator-elect: Greg Halbe  
Treasurer: Andy Bensing  
Treasurer-elect: James Velo  
Secretary: Nicole Moss  
Secretary-elect:  
Board of Trustees  
Chairperson: Sue Cook  
Trustees: Allen Baker, Cindy Conn (Treasurer), Elizabeth Iannarino, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Judy Smith, Christopher Washington

Commissioners  
Administration: Chris Glaros  
Administration-elect:  
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:  
Music, Arts & Heritage: Sandra Mathias  
Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Melissa Kulwicki  
Members-at-Large: Dayna McCrary and Alyssia Palmer

## 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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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

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