



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 4, 2022

The Second Sunday of Advent

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.*

*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

“Comfort Ye” and “Every Valley” from “Messiah”
Dan Stevens, Tenor

G. F. Handel

*Comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her
That her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.
The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness,
“Prepare ye the way of the Lord.
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”
Every valley shall be exalted and ev’ry mountain and hill made low,
The crooked straight and the rough places plain.*

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Hank Wilson

Leader: The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

* *Then all stand.*

L: Get ready, people of God! The time of hope and peace is at hand.

P: We are called to action rather than reaction.

L: Open your hearts to God’s word and God’s will.

P: Help us to be workers for God rather than observers.

L: Come, draw near to God in faith.

P: Let us prepare our hearts to receive the wondrous gifts of God. Amen.



1. Com-fort, com-fort you my peo-ple, Tell of peace, thus says our God;
 2. For the her-ald's voice is call-ing In the des-ert far and near,
 3. Make you straight what long was crook-ed, Make the rough-er plac-es plain;



Com-fort those who sit in dark-ness Bowed be-neath op-pres-sion's load.
 Bid-ding us to make re-pen-tance Since the king-dom now is here.
 Let your hearts be true and hum-ble, As be-bfits God's ho-ly reign.



Speak you to Je-ru-sa-lem Of the peace that waits for them;
 O that warn-ing cry o-be-y! Now pre-pare for God a way;
 For the glo-ry of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed a-broad;



Tell them that their sins I cov-er, And their war-fare now is o-ver.
 Let the val-leys rise in meet-ing And the hills bow down in greet-ing.
 And all flesh shall see the to-ken That God's word is nev-er bro-ken.



* INVOCATION

Mr. Mark S. Williams

L: God be with you.

P. And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Merciful God, who sent your messengers, the prophets, to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

* CONFESSON OF SIN

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

L: It is time to wake from sleep. Salvation is near! Let us make our confession to God.

P: Faithful God, we confess that in thought, word, and deed we have turned away from you. We have not eagerly expected your coming. We have been slow to serve you and our neighbor. Restore us, God of might. Let your face shine upon us. And we shall be saved. Amen.

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

* KYRIE ELEISON

Healey Willan

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Samuelson

L: God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sin, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

P: We believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Samuelson

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

P: And also with you.

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

**Please find the attendance pad at the end of the pew,
sign it and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them by name.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Mr. Williams

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Lisa Fravel-Dean and McAshan, Erin,
Emma, and Jacquelyn Dean

Light the Light, the Fire of Life *vs.2*

Il Est Ne

Refrain

Light the light, the fire of life, let the can-dle re - veal his glo - ry.

Je - sus Christ has come to earth and for us shall come a - gain.

2. Light the can - dle of his peace, light the light of an - gels sing- ing,
light the can - dle of his peace, light the light that shone that night.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11:1-10

Mr. Wilson

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 11.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Salvation is Nearer

Virgil Ford

*Salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.
Sing and rejoice, I come, says the Lord. I come and
will dwell in the midst of you. The glory of the Lord
shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it.*

*Sing and rejoice, I come, says the Lord. I come and
will dwell in the midst of you. Salvation is nearer now
than when we first believed.*

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans, chapter 15.

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

* GOSPEL HYMN

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Winchester New

5

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1–12

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 3.

Rev. Samuelson

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

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

P: Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

“A New Way”

Rev. Samuelson

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Samuelson

THE OFFERTORY

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 help offset daycare costs and other needs for families at Childcare Wonderland for the month of December 2022. Childcare Wonderland is a bilingual childcare center located in downtown Columbus, 383 East Broad Street. They provide English and Spanish speaking caregivers for children ages 6 weeks - 6 years (kindergarten). There are approximately 35 children in the daycare. Children enjoy breakfast, catered lunches, and snacks. Approximately 90% of the families are on Title 20, meaning they receive subsidized childcare, depending upon their income. The need is great for these families and children in our neighborhood. Thank you for your generosity.

Mr. Williams

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD (FROM “MESSIAH”)
Casey Cook, piano

G. F. Handel

*And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together, for the
mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

Isaiah 40:5

* PRESENTATION HYMN

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

sung to *Tallis' Canon*

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

We practice open communion: Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at the Lord's table.

As directed by the Deacons, please come forward in single file via the center aisle, receive the elements of communion on the side in which you are seated, and then return to your seat via the side aisles. Individual bread and cup will be offered to you by the communion ministers.

Gluten-free wafers are available. Please deposit the plastic cups in the bins by the side aisles.

* INVITATION

Rev. Samuelson

Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

* SURSUM CORDA

Plainsong

The musical notation consists of three staves of music. The top staff is labeled "Leader" and "People". The middle staff is labeled "Leader" and "People". The bottom staff is labeled "Leader" and "People". The lyrics are: "The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise." The notation uses a treble clef and a common time signature. The music is simple, consisting of quarter notes and half notes.

* COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being. We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none. We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless. We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory. We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory. And now we give you thanks for the hope to which you call us in your Son, that following in the faith of all your saints, we may run with perseverance the race that is set before us, and with them receive the unfading crown of glory. We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons, daughters, and all children of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

* SANCTUS

William Mathias

The musical score for the Sanctus hymn is written in common time with a key signature of two sharps. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff is labeled "organ". The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord. God of power and might,—" followed by a repeat sign and "Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the high- est." The second staff continues with "Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est." The third staff concludes the hymn.

The congregation may be seated.

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory. We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service on behalf of all people. We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us. Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. Amen.

Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

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.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

Please come forward as directed by the Deacons to receive the common elements for communion. If you are worshipping online, you are invited to gather elements of communion in your home. Please hold the elements until you are directed to partake together. Sealed and separated gluten-free elements are available in the center basket.

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE

The bread is broken and the wine is poured as visible and audible reminders of the sacrificial self-giving of Jesus Christ. These actions call to mind the cost as well as the joy of Christian discipleship.

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen!**

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen!**

COMMUNION HYMN

The People Who In Darkness Walked

Dundee

1. The peo - ple who in dark - ness walked have seen a glo - rious light;
2. To hail thy ris - ing, Sun of life, the ga - thering na - tions come,
3. To us the prom - ised Child is born, to us the Son is given;
4. His name shall be the Prince of Peace for ev - er - more a - dored,
5. His power in - creas - ing still shall spread, his reign no end shall know;

on them broke forth the heaven - ly dawn who dwelt in death and night.
joy - ous as when the reap - ers bear their har - vest / trea - sures home.
him shall the tribes of earth o - bey, and all the hosts of heaven.
the Won - der - ful, the Coun - se - lor, the might - y God and Lord.
jus - tice shall guard his throne a - bove, and peace a - bound be - low.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Samuelson

L: Let us pray.

P: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Mr. Williams

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

* CLOSING HYMN

Prepare the Way

Bereden Vag for Herran

1. Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, Your Christ is draw - ing near!
 2. Christ brings God's rule, O Zi - on; He comes from heaven a - bove.
 3. Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; Your Sav - ior's rule em - brace.

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley A lev - el way ap - pear.
 His rule is peace and free - dom, And jus - tice, truth, and love.
 And tid - ings of sal - va - tion Pro - claim in ev - ery place.

Greet One who comes in glo - ry, Fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry.
 Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, For grace and joy a - bound - ing.
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, Their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.

Refrain

O blest is Christ that came In God's most ho - ly name.

* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Toccata on “Veni, Redemptor gentium”
Please be seated for the Postlude.*

Rev. Samuelson

P. Manz

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.

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God and in memory of William and Mae Johannes and Bill Johannes by Barbara Clapham.

† We welcome Lisa Fravel-Dean and McAshan, Erin, Emma, and Jacquelyn Dean to light the second Advent candle.

† GREETING AFTER THE SERVICE TODAY

Rev. Samuelson – In the Narthex

Mr. Williams – On the West Breezeway

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *preacher and celebrant*

Mr. Mark Williams, *liturgist*

Hank Wilson, *liturgist*

Ethan Murray, *crucifer*

Aubrey Schmitt and Finley Hein, *acolytes*

Barry Moenter, *interim organist*

Jim Gallagher, *interim choir director*

Peter Murray, Mike Kennedy, Geoff Dean, *livestream ministry*

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Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

December 4, 2022

This Week at First Church

12/4		12/7	
9 a.m.	Service of Morning Prayer (Parish Hall & Virtual)	10:30 a.m.	Book Study (Virtual)
10 a.m.	Faith Formation for All Ages (Various Classrooms) Children's Play Rehearsal (Parish Hall Stage) Fudge Sales (Parish Hall)	12:15 p.m.	Organ Meditations (Sanctuary)
11 a.m.	Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)		
12 Noon	Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales (Parish Hall)		
6 p.m.	Fudge Sales (Parish Hall) Youth Connections (Parish Hall)		
12/5		12/8	
9 a.m.	Good Samaritan Distribution (Virtual)	12:30 p.m.	Church Vitality Commission Meeting (Virtual)
12 Noon	Congregational Care Ministry Meeting (Fanning Room)	7:15 p.m.	First Church Choir Rehearsal (Parish Hall)
4 p.m.	Annual Campaign Committee Meeting (Virtual)		
6:30 p.m.	House and Grounds Meeting (Virtual)		
12/6		12/11	
12 Noon	Lunch Bunch (Brassica)	9 a.m.	Service of Morning Prayer (Parish Hall & Virtual)
6 p.m.	Personnel Committee Meeting (Virtual)	10 a.m.	Faith Formation for All Ages (Various Classrooms) Children's Play Rehearsal (Parish Hall Stage) BREAD Team Meeting (Parish Family Room) Fudge Sales (Parish Hall)
6:30 p.m.	Children's Christmas Play Practice (Parish Hall)	11 a.m.	Worship (Sanctuary & Virtual)
7 p.m.	Christian Education Meeting (Virtual)	12 Noon	Children's Christmas Play (Parish Hall) Coffee Hour & Light Refreshments (Parish Hall)
	Justice and Mercy Meeting (Virtual)	6 p.m.	Coffee Sales (Parish Hall) Fudge Sales (Parish Hall) Youth Connections / Pageant Rehearsal (Parish Hall)

Connection Circles

During the past few weeks, several of you participated in one of the “Connection Circles,” here at church. These small group gatherings are intended to provide a sacred space for you to share your thoughts, feelings, concerns, hopes, and prayers as we move through this time of significant transition within our life together as First Church.

The Connection Circles are co-facilitated by Rev. Joanna Samuelson and either Jackie Dean, our Commissioned Minister of Spiritual Direction and Faith Formation, or Jan Hamilton, First Church member and retired Congregational Care nurse.

There is one more Connection Circle scheduled for this Friday, December 2, 10-11:30 a.m. If you’re able to make it, please let Rev. Joanna know at jsamuelson@first-church.org or 214.995.3525. Light refreshments will be provided.

Additional Connection Circles will be scheduled as needed. Just let Rev. Joanna know of your interest.

Children’s Christmas Play Sunday, Dec. 11 After the 11 a.m. Service

Mark your calendar for the live return of the Children’s Christmas Play and Mistletoe Marchers on Sunday, December 11 after the 11 a.m. service in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to attend this wonderful presentation that the children have been working on for over a month. A light lunch will be provided. Please sign up by December 10 at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?link-String=OTBjOTNIOTctN2NmZi00NDFjLWI5OG-MtYWY1YzAxMzI3Y2Mw>

Faith Formation for Adults Meditations for Advent Sunday, December 4 10 a.m., Room C

Faith Formation for Adults will return December 4-18 with First Church member Rev. Sarah Reed leading us through “Meditations for Advent.” This is a wonderful time to focus on the meaning of Advent in this time of transition and being so busy. Join us in Room C or online.

Giving Tree

Thank you to all those who took a child’s name from the Giving Tree! Just a reminder that the gifts need to be returned to the church office by Friday, December 11.

First Church Fudge

First Church Fudge is back! It’s a “sweet” way to start your holiday gifting and help the First Church Youth at the same time. Proceeds from the fudge go to the Youth Mission Trip Fund. Orders can be picked up in Parish Hall this Sunday following each service. If you didn’t get a chance to place your order, additional quantities will be available for purchase.

Payment is by cash, card, or through Easytithe.

**Lunch Bunch
Tuesday, December 6
12-1 p.m.
Brassica Sandwiches & Salads
1442 W. Lane Avenue
Upper Arlington, OH, 43221**

Please join us for our December Lunch Bunch at Brassica in Upper Arlington! This casual counter service restaurant provides a delicious variety of made-from-scratch sandwiches, salads and hummus, among many other things. They use local, organic and artesian sourced ingredients and you won't want to miss trying their tahini chocolate chip cookie! Come hungry and invite a new church friend. We look forward to connecting with you! Please register by December 5.

<https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NTg5MzJjMmYtOWE4YS00MTZjLWFmZWYtYWY0OTAwZGRiM-jM3>

**Time Out Wednesday
December 14
6-7 p.m.
Nostalgia Brewing
81 Mill Street, Suite 150
Gahanna, OH, 43230**

Let's enjoy dinner and church fellowship together in the beautiful Creekside District of Gahanna! Meet us at Nostalgia Brewing and enjoy one of their delicious wraps, salads, fancy grilled cheeses, or even a skillet mac and cheese dish—comfort food at its finest! We hope to see you there! Please register by December 13.

<https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NWRIM2RkZjUtYTJhNC00MWVm-LWJmZTAtYWY0OTAwZGYwODll>

**Advent Music Meditations
Jeremy Bankson
Wednesday, December 7
12:15-12:45 p.m.**

Jeremy Bankson serves as the Director of Music at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Dublin, Ohio where he leads a dynamic music ministry that includes several choirs and the Concerts at Prince of Peace Series. Jeremy received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he also pursued graduate studies in choral conducting. Active as a composer and arranger, he has led workshops, clinics, and hymn festivals for the Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, the American Guild of Organists, and churches and institutions around the country.

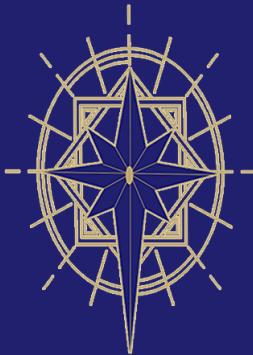
BREAD Meeting

BREAD will be kicking off its new research season on December 5 at 7 p.m. It will be a zoom meeting with break-out groups for each of the issues that will be addressed. For the Environmental group, the focus will be on mold, how widespread is it and if an ordinance can be issued to combat it; Juvenile Justice will follow up on promises that all city schools will have Restorative Practices by 2026; Gun violence will study non-police interventions if mental health patients are at risk and other issues.

Anyone is welcome to join a study group. Please let Antoinette (text message to 1-240-557-9770) know if you are interested in attending and she will send you a link. BREAD rises!

Annual Campaign

The 2023 Annual Campaign, "Together in Mission-Sharing God's Love," has begun. Information and an online pledge form can be found at www.first-church.org/annual-campaign.



WALKING TOGETHER IN THE LIGHT OF GOD

2022 Advent & Christmas Sermon Series
First Congregational Church, UCC

November 27, The First Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“Let Us Walk in the Light of God”
Worship at 9 & 11 a.m.
In-Person & Streaming Online

December 4, The Second Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Joanna Samuelson Preaching
“A New Way”
Worship at 9 & 11 a.m.
In-Person & Streaming Online

December 11, The Third Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“The Light of Jubilee”
Worship at 9 & 11 a.m.
In-Person & Streaming Online
12:30 p.m. The Children’s Christmas Play

December 18, The Fourth Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“Comfort in the Darkness”
Worship at 9 & 11 a.m.
In-Person & Streaming Online
4 p.m Festival of Lessons and Carols
(Doors open at 3:15 p.m. Prelude begins at 3:40 p.m.)

December 24, Christmas Eve
Family Worship Service 3 p.m.
7:30 p.m The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“A Flashlight in the Manger”
Followed by the Drama of the Nativity
11 p.m. The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“Bright Light in the Darkest Night”

December 25 Christmas Day
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
“You are the Light of God!”
Worship 10 a.m.
In-Person & Streaming Online

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.

Designated gifts go to help offset daycare costs and other needs for families at **Childcare Wonderland** for the month of December 2022. Childcare Wonderland is a bilingual childcare center located in downtown Columbus, 383 East Broad Street. They provide English and Spanish-speaking caregivers for children ages 6 weeks - 6 years (kindergarten). There are approximately 35 children in the daycare. Children enjoy breakfast, catered lunches, and snacks. Approximately 90% of the families are on Title 20, meaning they receive subsidized childcare, depending upon their income. The need is great for these families and children in our neighborhood. Thank you for your generosity.

Global Mission Partner Phyllis Byrd, Kenya

Phyllis Byrd serves with the Organization of Africa Instituted Churches (OAIC) in Kenya. OAIC brings together African Independent and Instituted Churches to develop indigenous forms of worship, theology and social organization in order to improve the lives of more than 60 million AIC members across the continent. Ms. Byrd is the Director of “Just Communities.” The word ‘just’ means “being honorable or fair in our dealings.” The Just Communities program seeks to walk alongside Africa Independent churches as they work to address good governance, poverty eradication, and just environment in which the people of God can live with dignity. She also works with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa as the coordinator of the Young Adult Volunteer program, helping to place young adults from the USA to serve in Kenya for a year.

Keep in Prayer

Members Annette McCormick; Melva Fisher; Lesley Schaab; Larry and Diane Dixon; Rick and Lourdes Henderson; Kay Neffenger; Martha Huey; Bob Davis; Twink Starr; Lola Edwards; Rick Brant; Betsy Zahn; Janice White; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter.

Family and friends Pat Patterson’s family friend, George Ullman; Shane Gillies’ mother, Marie Gillies; Joe Provenzano’s mother, Mary Jo Senter; Missy Obergefell; Bev Cook and Lynn Wallich’s friend, Jeanie Schultz; Tim Ahrens and Susan Sitler’s granddaughter, Hazel Stadie; Victor John’s mother, Mary Jane John; Nanette Maciejunes’ husband, George Maciejunes; Tom Gies’ sister, Monica Depinet; Nancy Mayle; Martha Huey’s sister, Stephanie Childs; Melissa Kulwicki’s friends and neighbors, John and Carrie Mosley; and Bev and Bert Cook’s sister-in-law, Sue Jones.

Those who mourn loved ones Christine Farquhar, her sister and family on the death of her sister’s husband, Tom Horton.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches in Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore. We pray for Global Ministries worker Phyllis Byrd in Kenya.

We pray for the doctors, nurses and staff at Nationwide Children’s Hospital and all Children’s Hospitals across the nation due to the increase of RSV.

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

Liturgical Banner Display Extended

First Church will celebrate the fabric artwork of one of our members, Deb Anderson. The exhibit is on view in the Chapel through Sunday, December 4.

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, Alexis Wayne

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: Marty Worth

Secretary-elect:

Board of Trustees

Chairperson: Sue Cook

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

Commissioners

Administration: Chris Glaros

Administration-elect:

Church Growth: Steve Sterrett

Church Growth-elect:

Church Vitality: Cosby 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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www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx



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