



MORNING PRAYER AND HOLY COMMUNION AT NINE
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.*

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. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
People: and all flesh shall see it together.

CONFESSION OF SIN AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: John the Baptist called people to repentance, to prepare them for the coming of God's reign. Let us, too, repent, that we may be ready for God who comes to us.

A brief period of silence follows

P: God, we confess that it is not easy to wait for you. Our world worships the power that acts quickly through force; how difficult it is for us to wait for the power of your rule which comes slowly through love. We admit, that while claiming to desire your reign of peace and justice, we take part in the ways of war, hatred, and injustice. We leave little room for you to act in our lives. We turn now to you in repentance and openness to your Spirit. Forgive us, and show us how to clear a path for you. Come to us in your Christ, and reveal your reign on earth. Amen.

L: God says: Remember these things, O Israel, for you are my servant; you will not be forgotten by me. I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. I say to you in the name of Jesus the Christ, our sins are forgiven.

P: Amen. Thanks be to God.

** Please stand as you are able*

* THE INVITATORY AND PSALTER

Mr. Mark S. Williams

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

VENITE

1. Come, let us sing to God on high, The Rock of our sal - va - tion praise; Come
2. For God is high a - bove all gods, The heights and depths are in God's hand; God
3. Bow down and let us wor - ship God Who is our Ma - ker and our Lord; We

with thanks - giv - ing to God's courts And raise our joy - ful psalms in praise.
made the sea and all there - in, God's hands have mol - ded the dry land.
are God's peo - ple and God's sheep; To - day, then, hear - ken to God's Word.

* PSALM OF THE DAY

PSALM 72

Mr. Williams

(read responsively by verse)

L: Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.

P: May God judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice.

L: May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

P: May God defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

L: May God live while the sun endures and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

P: May God be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.

L: In God's days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

P: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

L: Blessed be God's glorious name forever; may God's glory fill the whole earth.

P: Amen and Amen.

* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Samuelson

L: The peace of God be always with you.

P: And also with you.

**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.*

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Mr. Mark S. Williams

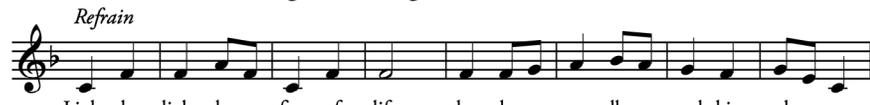
LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Thom Smith and Cami Curren

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.

Fine



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.

D.C.



light the can - dle of his peace, light the light that shone that night.

THE FIRST READING

ISAIAH 11:1-10

Mr. Williams

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 for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed 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 will feed 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.

1. My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
 2. My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.
 3. From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,
 4. Love casts the might - y from their thrones, pro - motes the in - se - cure,
 5. Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup - ports those in dis - tress,

God lift - ed up my low - li - ness in man - y mar - velous ways.
 All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
 dis - pens - ing jus - tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.
 leaves hun - gry spir - its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud - den - ly poor.
 re - mem - bring all past prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

THE SECOND READING

MATTHEW 3:1-12

Rev. Samuelson

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 12.

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 Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and 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; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and 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.

* CANTICLE: SONG OF SIMEON

American Folk Medley

C F B♭ F C Dm C C7 F Am

1. Lord, bid Your ser - vant go in peace, Your word is now ful - filled.
2. This is the Sav - ior of the world, The Gen - tiles' prom-ised light,

Dm C Dm Am B♭ F C7 F B♭ C7 F

These eyes have seen sal - va - tion's dawn, This child so long fore - told.
God's glo - ry dwell - ing in our midst, The joy of Is - ra - el.

HOMILY

“A New Way”

Rev. Samuelson

Part two of the sermon series, “Walking Together in the Light of God”

THE PRAYERS

Rev. Samuelson

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.

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Mr. Williams

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.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Comfort, Comfort O My People

Freu Dich Sehr

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-pent-ance Since the king-dom now is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be-fits 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 - bey! 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.

MUSIC AT COMMUNION

Taste and See (*sung three times*)

Taste and see. Taste and see the good - ness

The first system of musical notation for 'Taste and See' consists of a treble and bass staff in 2/2 time. The treble staff contains the melody with lyrics 'Taste and see. Taste and see the good - ness'. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

of the Lord. O taste and see. Taste and

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff lyrics are 'of the Lord. O taste and see. Taste and'. The bass staff continues the accompaniment.

see the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord. Fine

The third system of musical notation concludes the piece. The treble staff lyrics are 'see the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord.' and ends with a double bar line and the word 'Fine'. The bass staff concludes the accompaniment.

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Samuelson

We give you thanks, Almighty God, that you have brought us from darkness to light, from slavery to freedom, from death to rebirth. Transform our lives with this heavenly food, that we may shine with your love and take to the world the risen life of your Son Jesus Christ. 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

Wait for the Lord (*sung three times*)

Lento ♩ = 48

Wait for the Lord, his day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

* BLESSING

Rev. Samuelson

POSTLUDE

† We welcome Thom Smith and Cami Curren to light the second Advent candle.

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

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=OTBjOTNIOTctN2NmZi00NDFjLW15OG-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 Easytithes.

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 artisan 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=NTg5MzJjMmY-tOWE4YS00MTZjLWFmZWYtYWY0OTAwZGRiM-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=NWRlM2RkZjUtYTJhNC00MwVm-LWJmZTAAtYWY0OTAwZGYwODll>

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.

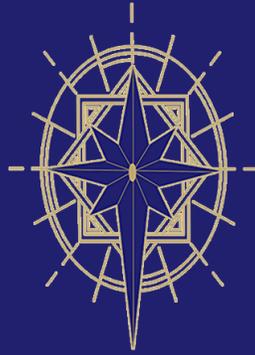
BREAD Meeting

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: 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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