



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 22, 2023

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

## 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 48:9)*

PRELUDE

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern, BuxWV 223  
("How Brightly Shines the Morning Star")

Dieterich Buxtehude

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Andrew Smith-VerHage

Leader: Blessed be God, Light of the world, bright Morning Star, and Spirit of love.

*\* Please stand as you are able. (\* indicates Congregation standing)*

L: For God alone my soul in silence waits;

**P: from God comes my salvation.**

L: God alone is my rock and my salvation,

**P: my stronghold, so that I shall not be shaken.**

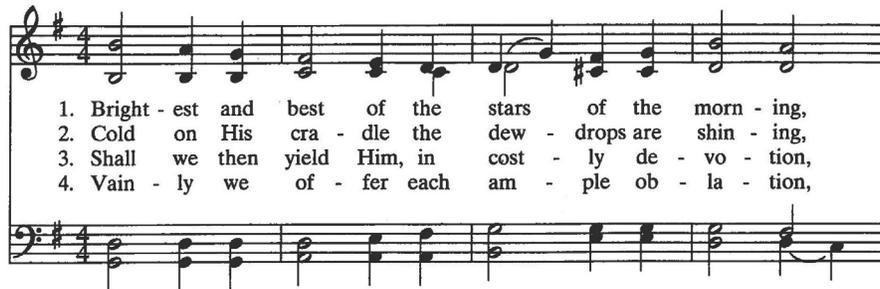
L: Put your trust in God always, O people;

**P: pour out your hearts before the One who is our refuge.**

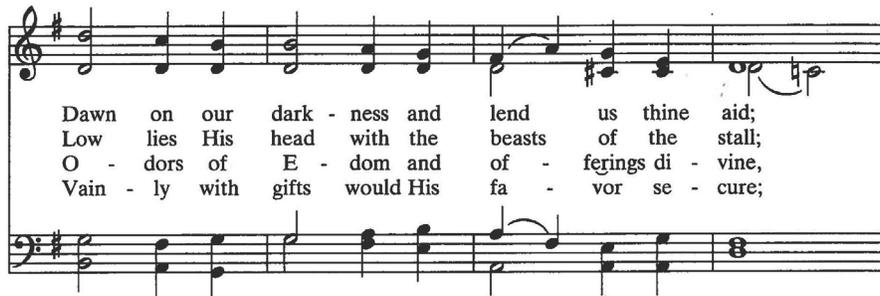
L: For God alone my soul in silence waits;

**P: from God comes my salvation.**

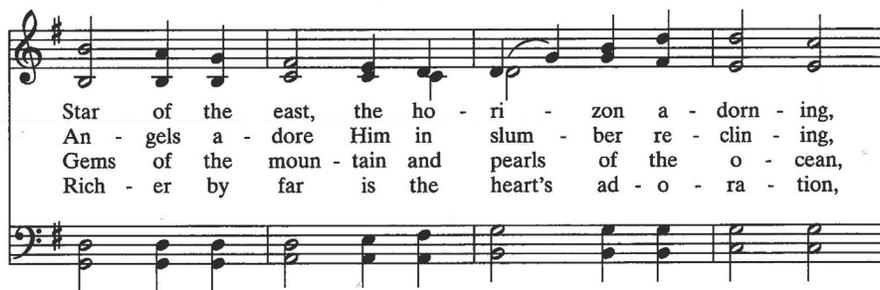
—from Psalm 62



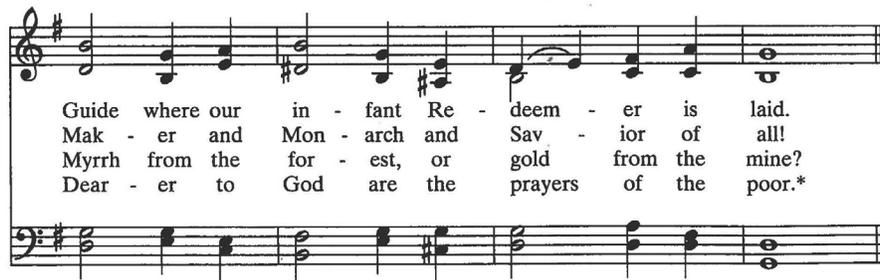
1. Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,  
 2. Cold on His cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing,  
 3. Shall we then yield Him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion,  
 4. Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,



Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;  
 Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;  
 O - dors of E - dom and of - ferings di - vine,  
 Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure;



Star of the east, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,  
 An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,  
 Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,  
 Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion,



Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.  
 Mak - er and Mon - arch and Sav - ior of all!  
 Myrrh from the for - est, or gold from the mine?  
 Dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.\*

\*Repeat stanza 1.

## \* INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

L: God be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

**P: Cause us, O Lord our God, to lie down each night in peace, and to awaken to renewed life and strength. Help us to order our lives by your counsel; lead us in the paths of righteousness. Lord, be a shield about us, protect us. Save our world from sorrow, from hate, and from war. Curb within us the will to do evil. Shelter us beneath the shadow of your wings, for you are God forever and ever. Amen.**

## \* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Joanna 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.

## THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:1–4

Mr. Smith-VerHage

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 9.*

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time the Lord brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time God will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

L: May light break forth on God's Holy Word.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

## ANTHEM

“There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth”  
(from “Christus”)

Felix Mendelssohn

Cynthia Adcock, soprano	Daniel Ehrman, tenor
Al Adcock, baritone	Robert Moreen, bass

When Jesus, our Lord, was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judaea; behold,  
from the east to the city of Jerusalem there came the wise men and said:

Say, where is he born, the king of Judaea? For we have seen his star,  
and are come to adore him.

There shall a star from Jacob come forth, and a Scepter from Israel rise up,  
And dash in pieces Princes and Nations. How brightly shines the morning star!  
With sudden radiance from afar. With light and comfort glowing!  
Thy Word, Jesus, inly feeds us, Rightly leads us, Life bestowing.  
Praise, oh praise such love o'erflowing.

## THE EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Mr. Smith-VerHage

*A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 1.*

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power. For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

L: May light break forth on God's Holy Word.

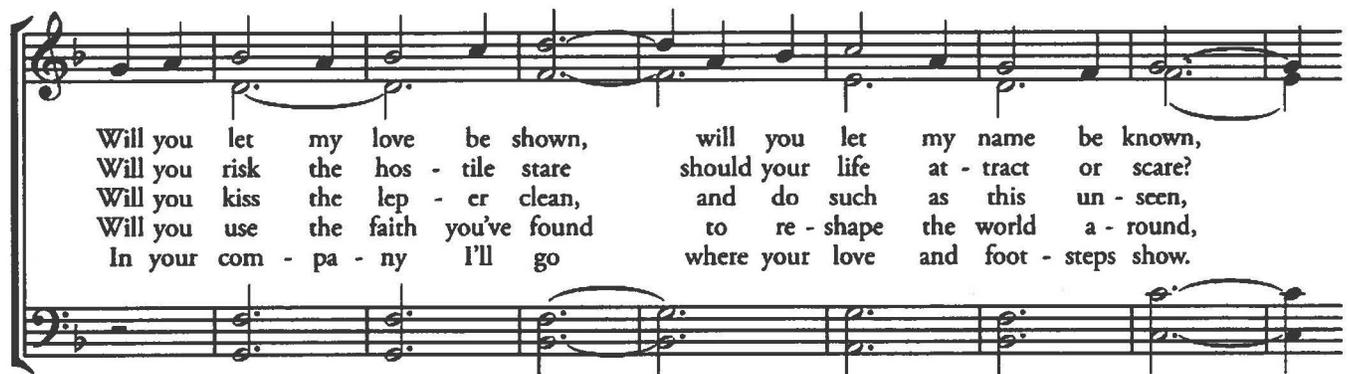
**P: Thanks be to God.**



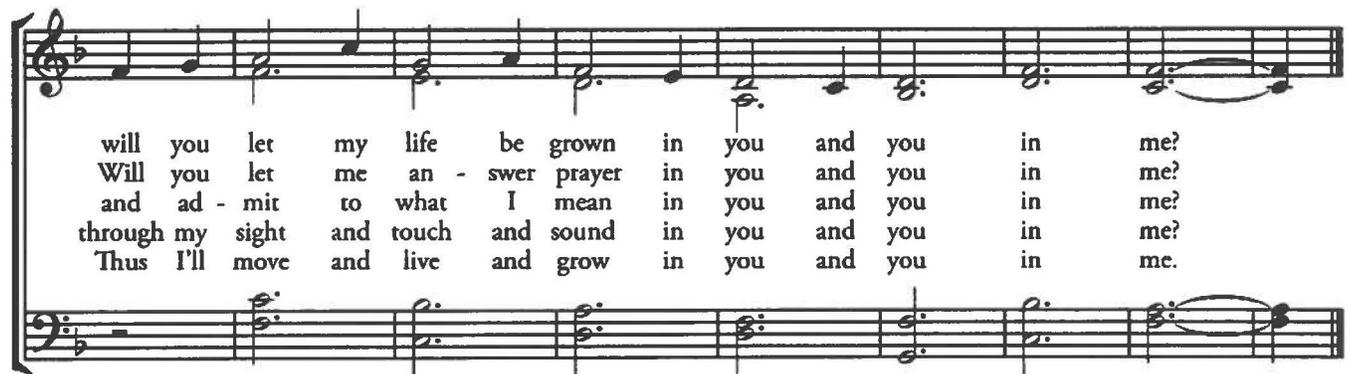
1. Will you come and fol - low me if I but call your name?  
 2. Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call your name?  
 3. Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call your name?  
 4. Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?  
 5. Christ, your sum - mons e - choes true when you but call my name.



Will you go where you don't know and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you care for cruel and kind and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you set the pris - oners free and nev - er be the same?  
 Will you quell the fear in - side and nev - er be the same?  
 Let me turn and fol - low you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,  
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare should your life at - tract or scare?  
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as this un - seen,  
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the world a - round,  
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and foot - steps show.



will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?  
 Will you let me an - swer prayer in you and you in me?  
 and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in me?  
 through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?  
 Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

*A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 4.*

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

L: May light break forth on God’s Holy Word.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“The Gift of Letting Go”

Rev. Samuelson

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ahrens

THE 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

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



MISSION INVITATION

Suzie Loik

Designated gifts go to support **Freedom a la Cart**. This downtown café and bakery space is the culmination of more than a decade’s worth of work supporting and empowering survivors of human trafficking through employment, resources, and training. Freedom a la Cart is a social enterprise providing survivors with equitable opportunities for employment. Freedom became the vehicle – literally – through which survivors began the ever-important first steps toward self-sufficiency. What was once a single food cart is now a bustling café and catering company, grown from the hearts and hard work of the women who sustain them. Thank you for your generosity.

Who knocks tonight so late? The weary porter said.  
Three Kings stood at the gate, Each with a crown on head.  
The serving man bowed down; The inn was full, he knew.  
Said he, “In all this town is no fit place for you!”  
A light the manger lit: There lay the Mother meek.  
Said they, “This place is fit: Here is the rest we seek!”  
They loosed their latched strings; So stood they all unshod.  
Come in, Come in, ye Kings! And kiss the Feet of God.

\* PRESENTATION HYMN

“As with Gladness Men of Old” *verse 3*

*Dix*

As they offered gifts most rare At that manger rude and bare;  
So may we with holy joy, Pure, and free from sin’s alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Ahrens

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

“O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

1. O Morn - ing Star, how fair and bright Thou beam - est  
 2. Thou heaven - ly bright - ness! Light di - vine! O deep with -

forth in truth and light! O Sov - erna meek and low - ly!  
 in my heart now shine, And make Thee there an al - tar!

Thou root of Jes - se, Da - vid's Son, My Lord and Sav - ior,  
 Fill me with joy and strength to be Thy mem - ber, ev - er

Thou hast won My heart to serve Thee sole - ly! Thou art ho - ly,  
 joined to Thee In love that can - not fal - ter! Toward Thee long - ing

Fair and glo - rious, all - vic - to - rious, Rich in bless - ing,  
 Doth pos - sess me; turn and bless me; Here in sad - ness

Rule and might o'er all pos - sess - ing.  
 Eye and heart long for Thy glad - ness!

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Samuelson

POSTLUDE

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

Andreas Armsdorff

*Please be seated for the Postlude.*

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*Thank you for attending worship this morning. We hope that you have found peace and grace here and invite you to return often. If you would like more information or have any questions about First Church, please ask anyone wearing a name tag. We'd be delighted to assist you.*

*Please note: Next Sunday, January 29, there will be one service at 10 a.m. followed by the Annual Meeting at 11 a.m.*

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Douglas and Hugh Stephens by Gleva Stephens.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Samuelson Rev. Ahrens – Narthex  
Rev. Ahrens – Education Wing breezeway  
Melissa Kulwicki – Education Wing door

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *preacher*  
The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *liturgist*  
Andrew Smith-VerHage, *liturgist*  
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*  
Will Haslett, *crucifer*  
Xavier Dean, *acoltye*  
Barry Moenter, *interim organist*  
Jim Gallagher, *interim choir director*  
Peter Murray, Mike Kennedy, Pat Patterson, Geoff Dean, *livestream ministry*

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# 2023 Nominations Slate

## Officers

Moderator: Greg Halbe

Vice Moderator:

Treasurer: James Velo

Treasurer Elect: Ramona Moenter

Secretary: Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

Secretary Elect:

## Commissioners

Administration Commissioner: Tom Brownfield

Administration Commissioner - Elect:

Church Growth Commissioner: Steve Sterrett

Church Growth Commissioner - Elect:

Church Vitality Commissioner: Wendy Kennedy

Church Vitality Commissioner - Elect: Janice Taft

Education Commissioner:

Education Commissioner - Elect: Mariner Taft

House & Grounds Commissioner: Michael Kennedy

House & Grounds Commissioner - Elect:

Music, Arts, & Heritage Commissioner: Melissa Kulwicki

Music, Arts, & Heritage Commissioner - Elect: Jim Griffin

Justice & Mercy Commissioner: Kris Brant

Justice & Mercy Commissioner - Elect: Jan Miller

## At-Large Members

Adult Member-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean

Youth Member-at-Large:

## Nominating Chair

Christine Farquhar

## Trustees

Chair: Sue Cook

4-year term: Hugh Schultz

4-year term: Jan Miller

Open Spot: Melody Leidheiser

## Deacons

Senior Deacon: Martha Wilson

Senior Deacon - Elect: Lynn Wallich

2-year term: Fran Panek

2-year term: Marthy Worth

3-year term: Tyler Rogers

# Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

January 22, 2023

## This Week at First Church

**1/22**

9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer & Communion  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)

10 a.m. First Serves (Education Wing)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)

12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)

12:20 p.m. Confirmation (Classroom C)

**1/24**

7 p.m. Deacons Mtg (Virtual)

**1/25**

7 p.m. Security Team Mtg (Virtual)

**1/26**

6 p.m. First Church Ringers Practice (Bell Rm)

7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Parish Hall)

**1/29**

10 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)

11 a.m. Annual Meeting (Sanctuary)

12 Noon Congregational Potluck (Parish Hall)

## Volunteers Needed to Host Future Coffee Hours

We hope everyone has had a chance to enjoy the return of Coffee Hour following the 11 a.m. service in Parish Hall! Church Vitality is looking for volunteers who are interested in helping us continue to provide this opportunity to socialize and connect with our church family. We will provide simple guidelines to follow that will make it a fun and easy way to volunteer at First Church! Please contact Kosby Carrico ([kkcarrico@gmail.com](mailto:kkcarrico@gmail.com)) or Wendy Kennedy ([wendyjkennedy@yahoo.com](mailto:wendyjkennedy@yahoo.com)) if interested.

## The Annual Meeting

**Sunday, January 29**

**One Worship Service at 10 a.m.**

**Meeting at 11 a.m.**

**Church Potluck at Noon**

Everyone is encouraged to attend this very important yearly event in the life of our church. Childcare will be provided during worship and the annual meeting.

Voting Members are active members of First Congregational Church - United Church of Christ - Columbus, Ohio. Voting Members must be present to vote. Non-Voting Members are Associate Members of First Congregational Church - United Church of Christ - Columbus, Ohio, and Guests.

The Annual Meeting will be recorded but will not be accessible through Zoom or Live-Stream.

## It's a Church Potluck!

Following the Annual Meeting join us for a Church Potluck! Bring your favorite dish to share (an 8-12 person serving) and meet us in the Parish Hall after the Annual Meeting!

Entrée/Hearty Casserole (Last Names A-G)

Soup, Chili, Side Dish (Last Names H-Q)

Veggie/Fruit/Snack Item (Last Names R-S)

Sweet Treat (Last Names T-Z)

For your convenience, you may drop off your items in the Parish Hall before the 10 a.m. service. Coffee, tea, lemonade, flatware, and utensils will be provided.

Register at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NTA1MGE3NDct-NWMzMC00MWVhLTg0N2EtYWY4ZTAxNzRkN-GU1>

## This Week in Faith Formation

**First Serves**  
**Sunday, January 22**  
**10 - 10:50 a.m.**

This coming week is the fourth Sunday of the month which means that an intergenerational “First Serves” service project has been scheduled in lieu of our Sunday school classes.

This month, we will work alongside one another to label bars of soap that we will donate to The Soap Project ([soaproject.org](http://soaproject.org)). It is a local organization that works to end human trafficking by mobilizing communities to provide prevention education and advocacy, and to facilitate restorative experiences for survivors.

Please join us this Sunday in the Education Wing hallway during the Faith Formation hour. It will be a time to connect and re-connect with one another while serving our wider community. (Service hours are available for our high schoolers as requested.) If you need additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to Rev. Joanna ([jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org)). Hope you can make it ... it is never the same without you!

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## Laundry Love

“Laundry Love” is an outreach ministry which provides the opportunity for individuals and families of low income to wash their own clothes and bedding, without cost, at a local laundromat.

Our next “Laundry Love” event is scheduled for Tuesday, January 31, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., at the West Land Laundromat in Franklinton. As volunteers, we assist individuals with operating the washers and dryers.

If you are interested or need additional information, please contact Kris Brant ([kbrant2408@gmail.com](mailto:kbrant2408@gmail.com)) or Rev. Joanna ([jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org)) for more details.

Thank you for all the ways that you serve God by serving our community!

## Game Night

**Friday, February 3, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Parish Hall**

Who's got game? We do! Come join us in the Parish Hall for a casual evening of games and fun on Friday, February 3 at 5:30 p.m. Light snacks, lemonade, and popcorn will be provided. Feel free to pack a dinner to bring with you to enjoy before we get started with the games at 6 p.m. Please enter via the Ninth Street door or elevator, which will be unlocked from 5:15- 6:15 p.m. If you arrive after 6:15 p.m., please use the intercom at the Ninth Street door and ring Parish Hall to be buzzed in. All attendees will need to sign-in/out upon entering/exiting the building. We will have a variety of games available but please also bring any games or puzzles you would like to share for the evening. Kids at heart and kids of all ages are welcome! Please register by February 2.

<https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=YzJmY2UyNzUtYm-MwZS00NTRmLWE1ZGYtYWY3MjAxM2E5MjI4>

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## Give

At First Church, our financial resources enable us to “Enter to worship, depart to serve.” You can support the mission and ministry of First Church now by using either EasyTithe or PayPal, by visiting <https://www.first-church.org/give/>, or by sending your offering directly to First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For more information, please contact Annette McCormick at [amccormick@firstchurch.org](mailto:amccormick@firstchurch.org).

Designated gifts go to support **Freedom a la Cart**. This downtown café and bakery space is the culmination of more than a decade's worth of work supporting and empowering survivors of human trafficking through employment, resources, and training. Freedom a la Cart is a social enterprise providing survivors with equitable opportunities for employment. Freedom became the vehicle – literally – through which survivors began the ever-important first steps toward self-sufficiency. What was once a single food cart is now a bustling café and catering company, grown from the hearts and hard work of the women who sustain them. Thank you for your 11 generosity.

## **Global Mission Partner Scotland**

The Church of Scotland is experiencing deep change and challenge: restructuring in parish life, merging and closing congregations and ministries, reorganizing the church structures, all of which bring challenges and confusions. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, followed Jesus and led others to also follow, witness and serve faithfully. The Church of Scotland remains thankful for the worldwide family of God with whom it shares life and faith.

The theme of this ecumenical week is “Do Good and Seek Justice” (Isa 1:17). The church gives thanks for its interconnection with the world church. Doing good and seeking justice is part of what it does together with Global Ministries in joint support of Fiona Kendall in Mediterranean Hope.

## **Music, Arts, & Heritage Commission Hosts January Coffee Hour!**

January Coffee Hours are being sponsored by the Commission for Music, Arts and Heritage with January 15 being the Arts Committee, January 22 - Music Committee, and January 29 - Heritage Committee will help with lunch, as a part of the Congregational Meeting. Join us in Parish Hall after the 11 a.m. service!

## **Keep in Prayer**

**Members** Anne Morganstern; Glenn and Sharon Bardus; Rick Sayre; Gretchen Atkinson; Leslie Boltz; Wendy Reber; Annette McCormick; 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** George Ferzli’s father; Lee Wetmore’s daughter, Rhonda and family; Jenny Provenzano’s friend, Lola; Gail and Jim Lowe’s great niece, Ani; Margaret Cipriani’s sister and brother-in-law, Sara and Terry Godwin; Barb Clapham’s friends Bruce and Pat DeLong; Nancy Loy’s friend, Maxey; Tim Ahrens’ friends Janis and Jerome Cripe; Paula Terry-Locke; Margaret Cipriani’s friend, Marilyn Niethammer; Kathy Reed’s cousin, Michael Chambers, and her friend, Sue Pinkerton; Victor John’s parents, Charles and Mary Jane John; Tom Gies’ sister, Monica Depinet; Nancy Mayle; and Martha Huey’s sister, Stephanie Childs.

**Those who mourn loved ones** Sallie and Karl Danneberger and the Wesner family on the death of their sister-in-law, Rose Wesner; Jan Kevan on the death of her son, Rick Kevan; George Ferzli and family on the death of his mother; Megan Smith, grandson Peregrin Smith Jr. and family on the death of her step-granddaughter and his sister, Sarah; and Phil Armbruster, on the death of his father.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches in Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. We pray for Global Ministries workers at the Church of Scotland.

We pray for those in California impacted by a series of atmospheric river storms.

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

# 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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