



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 5, 2023

The Fifth 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

Offertoire sur les Grands Jeux

François Couperin

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Gregory Halbe

Leader: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

People: And we have seen his glory.

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

L: Come, rejoice and sing! God's love is showered over you this day.

P: We gather to praise God and celebrate God's presence with us.

L: God shows compassion to all who are weak and downtrodden.

P: Jesus Christ offers healing mercies to our troubled souls.

L: Praise be to God who has called us here.

P: Thanks be to God for God's eternal love. Amen.



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter; here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ished a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,
 bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a-way: here in this place the new light is shin-ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in, the
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion; give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly;
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

* INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

L: God be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Set us free, O God, from the bondage of our sin, and give us the liberty of that abundant life which you have made known to us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

* WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

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.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Ahrens

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 58:1-12

Dr. Halbe

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 58.

Shout out; do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they want God on their side. "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers. You fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and the Lord will say, "Here I am." If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent Thy name in all the earth.
Who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Alleluia.

When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and stars, which Thou hast ordained;
What is man that Thou art mindful of him?

For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,
Alleluia, and hast crowned him with glory, and honor.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet. Alleluia.

O Lord our Lord. How excellent Thy name in all the earth.
Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Dr. Halbe

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 2.

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him"— God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

D (allow to ring off) G D/F# A7 D

1 You are salt for the earth, O peo-ple: salt for the reign of God!
 2 You are a light on the hill, O peo-ple: light for the Cit-y of God!
 3 You are a seed of the Word, O peo-ple: bring forth the reign of God!
 4 We are a blessed and a pil-grim peo-ple: bound for the reign of God!

G D/F# A7 D G D A7 D

Share the fla- vor of life, O peo- ple: life in the Cit-y of God!
 Shine so ho- ly and bright, O peo- ple: shine for the Cit-y of God!
 Seeds of mer- cy and seeds of jus- tice, grow in the Cit-y of God!
 Love our jour-ney and love our home-land: love is the Cit-y of God!

Refrain
G D/F# A7 D G D/F# A7 D

Bring forth the reign of mer- cy, bring forth the reign of peace;

G D/F# A7 D G D/F# A7 D

Bring forth the reign of jus- tice, bring forth the Cit-y of God!

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 5.

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

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

P: Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

“Restoring Beauty”

Rev. Ahrens

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

Rev. Samuelson

Designated gifts go to support **Deep Griha**. Deep Griha, in Pune, India, a mission partner with First Church, is a charitable organization working to improve the lives of people living in the slums of Pune. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Set Me As a Seal

René Clausen

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm,
for love is strong as death.

Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it.

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm,
for love is strong as death, is strong as death.

* 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.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

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

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.

* 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

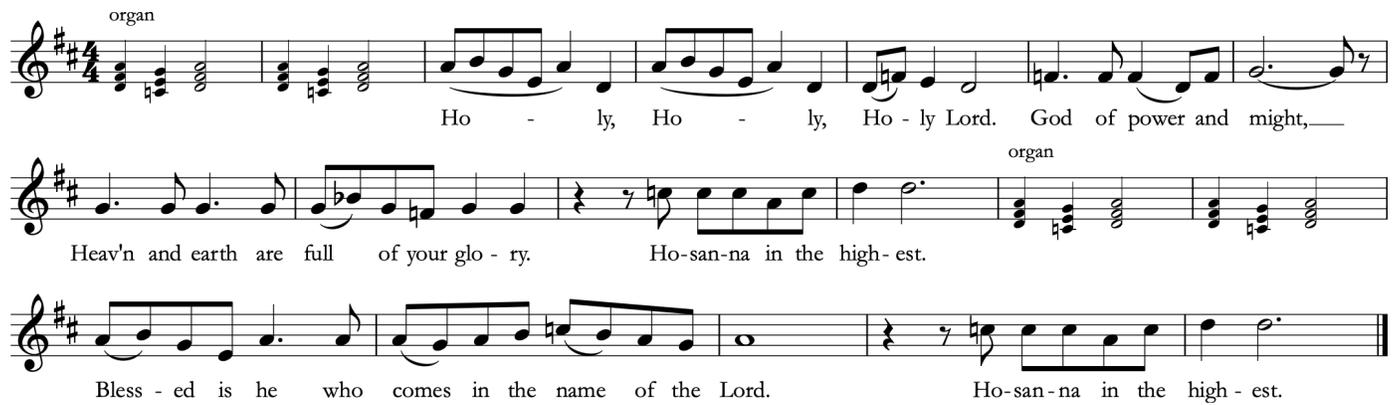
Plainsong

The musical notation for the Sursum Corda prayer is presented in three staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes, with 'Leader' and 'People' parts clearly marked. The first staff contains the lyrics: 'The Lord be with you. And also with you.' The second staff contains: 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff contains: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.'

* 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.

organ



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord. God of power and might, —

Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

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.

COMMUNION HYMN

“Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken”

Beach Spring



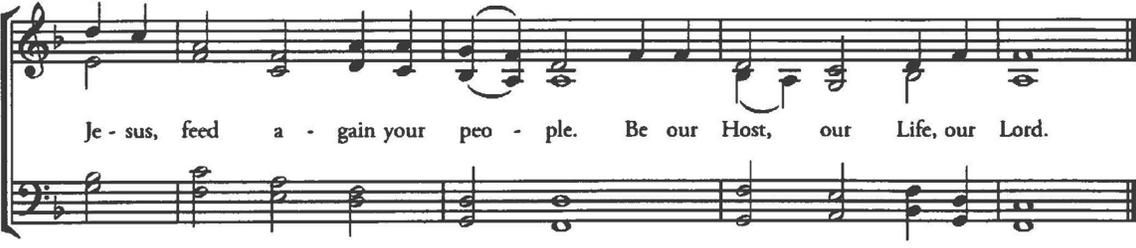
1. Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken by the Gal - i - le - an shore.
2. Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken in a qui - et room one night.
3. Loaves are bro - ken, words are spo - ken, as in faith we gath - er here.
4. By the loaves you break and give us, send us in your name to share



Je - sus, Bread of Life from heav - en, was their food for ev - er - more.
In the bread and wine you gave them, Christ, you came as Light from Light.
Je - sus speaks a - cross the a - ges: "I am with you; do not fear!"
bread for which the mil-lions hun - ger, words that tell your love and care.



By your bo - dy bro-ken for us, by your wine of life out - poured,



Je - sus, feed a - gain your peo - ple. Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.

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!**

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.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Samuelson

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

* CLOSING HYMN

"Arise, Your Light Is Come"

Festal Song

1. A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
 2. A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;
 3. A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,
 4. A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song!

Show forth the glo - ry of your God, Which shines on you to - day.
 Pro - claim the cap-tives' lib - er - ty, Good ti - dings to the poor.
 Bind up the bro-ken - heart-ed ones And com - fort those who mourn.
 Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

Fugue on the Kyrie

François Couperin

Please be seated for the Postlude.

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 loving memory of Celestine Clarke by Emily Davidson, Shirley Clarke, and Michelle Davidson, and in appreciation for honest and true friendship from people at First Church by Lynn Wallich.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Ahrens – Narthex

Rev. Samuelson – Education Wing breezeway

Melissa Kulwicki – Education Wing door

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher and co-celebrant*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *liturgist and celebrant*

Dr. Gregory Halbe, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Ethan Murray, *crucifer*

Aubrey Schmitt, *acoltye*

Barry Moenter, *interim organist*

Jim Gallagher, *interim choir director*

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

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

February 5, 2023

This Week at First Church

- 2/5**
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer and Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Faith Formation (Classrooms)
Coffee Sales & Book Offer (Parish Hall)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
Coffee Sales & Book Offer (Parish Hall)
3 p.m. First Church Youth Bowling (Columbus Square Bowling Palace)
- 2/6**
9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day (Virtual)
6:30 p.m. House and Grounds Mtg (Virtual)
- 2/7**
7 p.m. Justice and Mercy Mtg (Virtual)
Personnel Committee Mtg (Virtual)
- 2/9**
6 p.m. First Church Ringers Practice (Bell Rm)
7 p.m. Security Team Mtg (Virtual)
7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Parish Hall)
- 2/12**
9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer and Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Faith Formation (Classrooms)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (TBD)
4 p.m. Congregational Concert (Sanctuary)

Faith Formation Today

Sunday, February 5

10-10:50 a.m

Faith formation classes for all ages will resume today from 10-10:50 a.m.

Preschool - High School

The lesson of the week will focus on Matthew 5:13-20. Join us!

Adult Faith Formation

In our adult education class, Mr. Timothy White, the Director of Government Relations and Advocacy from the Mid-Ohio Food Collective, will present "Hunger, Poverty, and Relief Efforts" within our community. Our high school and middle school classes are welcome to join us for this session.

If you'd like to participate via Zoom, the link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82717081754pwd=c1BjTmhaUUtPRmlYdmMyZmtoR2hBZz09> and passcode is: 058882

If you need additional information about any of our classes, please don't hesitate to reach out to Rev. Joanna (jsamuelson@first-church.org). Hope you can make it ... it is never the same without you!

Concerts at First Church

Sunday, February 12, 4 p.m.

Janet Yieh, Organist

Janet Yieh, Director of Music at Church of the Heavenly Rest on the Upper East Side in New York City, will present a program of organ music on both the Kimball and von Beckerath organs at First Church. Ms. Yieh holds double Master's degrees in Organ Performance from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, and a Bachelor of Music from The Juilliard School. She has performed throughout the United States, as well as in Taipei, Hong Kong, Japan, and Malaysia.

The program on February 12 will include music by Theodore Dubois and J. S. Bach, as well as arrangements of well-known hymn tunes by Gerre Hancock and Carl Haywood. Janet Yieh is known to champion the works of women composers, so the program will also include works by Christa Rakich (b. 1952), Florence Price (1887-1924), Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983), and Jessica French (young woman composer in her 20s with the rare ability of synesthesia, in which her various senses are linked to one another in the form of colors associated with notes, timbres, and words).

The final selection will be Concert Piece: Variations and Theme, commissioned by First Congregational Church to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the installation of the von Beckerath organ in the Gallery. The Canadian composer, Rachel Laurin, based her composition on The Music Window, which was created and installed to honor G. Dene Barnard and his 30 years of service as Organist and Choir Director at First Church. In the two panels of the window, Ms. Laurin saw swirling organ pipes, keyboards, music notations, bass and treble clefs, handbells, and the first notes of J. S. Bach's Fantasy in G Minor. Ms. Laurin was inspired to create a musical stained glass window on the organ, featuring an array of sounds to demonstrate the organ's tonal qualities.

A reception follows the concert and you are all invited. You will still be able to be home in time to watch the Super Bowl!

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) or Wendy Kennedy (wendyjkenedy@yahoo.com) if interested.

February Lunch Bunch

Wednesday, February 15, 12-1 p.m.

Molly Woo's Asian Bistro,

Polaris Fashion Place

1500 Polaris Parkway

Columbus, OH, 43240

Let's gather around a big round table and enjoy lunch together at Molly Woo's at Polaris! Noodle dishes, sushi, peppery stir-fries, and award-winning spring rolls...they have it all. Please join us for some church fellowship and be sure to register by February 14 at <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=MTYxZGY1NTEtOTI0NC00NTI3LTk4YT-MtYWY3ZjAxMmVmODY0> or by clicking the QR Code below.



Time Out Tuesday

February 28, 6-7 p.m.

Cap City Fine Diner in Grandview

1299 Olentangy River Rd

Columbus, OH, 43212

Let's enjoy dinner together at Cap City in Grandview where they have "classic comfort food made modern!" The menu is brimming with upscale touches to your diner favorites and the company of your church family is sure to warm your heart! Please register by February 25 so we can be sure to save you a seat at:

<https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/?linkString=YjMzNzhhZmUtYmE4Zi00MjU2LTkyMG-MtYWY3ZjAxM2ZhMTVh> or by clicking the QR Code below.



Global Ministries

Costa Rica: Presbyterian Evangelical Church of Costa Rica (IEPC) and Latin American Biblical University (UBL)

The Presbyterian Evangelical Church of Costa Rica was formed in 1985 as the Fraternity of Evangelical Costa Rican Churches. The IEPC adopted its current name in 2005. IEPC has 24 worshipping communities throughout Costa Rica. Most are in modest communities where they minister to mind, body, and spirit by offering feeding programs for children, job training for youth and women, and musical instruction. Along with inviting people to know Christ and become part of the worshipping community, these ministries and others share the fullness of the good news of Jesus Christ. At the denominational level, IEPC supports theological education for its leaders and pastors, youth ministry, and women's ministry, as well as promoting international partnerships with churches from the United States and Canada.

The Latin American Biblical University (UBL) has one of the largest seminary campuses in the world, spanning two continents. Based in San Jose, Costa Rica, its program of theological education is carried out in 19 Centers in 14 countries. It is widely recognized as a leading center for theological education in Latin America and the Caribbean, preparing pastors and lay leaders for the growing Christian communities engaged in witness and service throughout the region.

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.

Deep Griha, in Pune, India, a mission partner with First Church, is a charitable organization working to improve the lives of people living in the slums of Pune. Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Mission Offerings

February 5	Deep Griha
February 12	Good Samaritan
February 19	First Serves
February 26	Faith Mission

Keep in Prayer

Members Kathy Reed; Melva Fisher; Anne Morganstern; Glenn and Sharon Bardus; Rick Sayre; Gretchen Atkinson; Annette McCormick; 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 Susie Loik’s friend, Jan Lanier and family; 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; Nancy Loy’s friend, Maxey; Paula Terry-Locke; 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 Janet Hoffman and family on the death of her mother, Shirley Santopadre; Sallie and Karl Danneberger and the Wesner family on the death of their sister-in-law, Rose Wesner.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches in Andorra, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, and the Vatican City. We pray for Global Ministries workers at the Presbyterian Evangelical Church of Costa Rica (IEPC) and the Latin American Biblical University (UBL) in Costa Rica.

We pray for the family of Tyre Nichols in their grief and pain, and we continue our prayers for policing reform in every community across our nation.

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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