



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 26, 2023

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

Master Tallis' Testament

Herbert Howells

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Jenkins Smith

Leader: Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Let us worship God.

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

L: Our lives feel all disjointed as though they were a valley of dry bones.

P: But the Spirit of God will bring connection and continuity to our lives.

L: The Spirit of God breathes hope into each one of us.

P: The Spirit of God challenges us to be people of faith.

L: Open our hearts, Lord, and bring us to your light.

P: Open our lives, Lord, and break us free from doubt and fear. Amen.

1. O Love of God, how strong and true, e - ter - nal
 2. O wide-em-bracing, wondrous Love, we read thee
 3. We read thee best in him who came to bear for
 4. We read thy power to bless and save e'en in the

and yet ev - er new; un - com - pre - hend - ed and un -
 in the sky a - bove; we read thee in the earth be -
 us the cross of shame, sent by Cre - a - tor from on
 dark - ness of the grave; still more in res - ur - rec - tion

bought, be - yond all know - ledge and all thought.
 low, in seas that swell and streams that flow.
 high, our life to live, our death to die.
 light we read the full - ness of thy might.

* INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

L: God be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

L: We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us. God, in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and brokenness. Let us confess our sin to almighty God.

All: Eternal God, whose Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, we recognize and confess that we have failed to respond faithfully to your gracious presence in our lives. Through Jesus Christ you have offered us new life, fulfillment, and the freedom to serve you. We confess that we are captive to sin, that our sin binds us with false pride, and that the wrong we do is made worse by the good we leave undone. Reconcile us to you and to all people. God of mercy, forgive all our sin and strengthen us anew for life as you intend it; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

* KYRIE ELEISON

William Mathias

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have
mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer -
- cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Samuelson

L: Almighty God, who is great in mercy and promises forgiveness of sin to all who truly repent and are sincere in faith, have mercy on us, pardon and deliver us from all sin, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life.

P: Amen. Thanks be to God.

* WELCOME

Rev. Ahrens

L: Let us pray.

P: Gracious God, on this glorious day of your creating, bless Joshua Stafford and Quang Pham as they come among us to receive our love and support, to share their gifts, and to strengthen our ministry together. May they be good stewards of their lives as they brighten this Holy Space with joyful music and purposeful care. May we be good stewards of our relationship to each of them, to ourselves, and to this holy place as we work and collaborate to reflect your love and grace here and everywhere. Through Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. 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.

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Ahrens

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 37:1-11

Mr. Smith

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 37.

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD." So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Restore My Soul

Robert J. Powell

Restore my soul, O Lord, And heal my heart's distress.
O cleanse me from my weariness, And bring my spirit rest.
Restore my joy, O Lord, My heart is standing still.
O touch me, reach my emptiness, Retrieve my broken will.
O God, who sees beyond our sight, who hears our every prayer,
Remake our foolish human faith, For always you are there.
Accept my life, O Lord, My heart: flawed, frail, and spent,
Requires the comfort of thy love to mend life's discontents.

-Beverly Easterling

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans, chapter 8.

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

* GOSPEL HYMN 316

"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

Trentham

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life a - new,
 2. Breathe on me, Breath of God, Un - til my heart is pure,
 3. Breathe on me, Breath of God, Till I am whol - ly Thine,
 4. Breathe on me, Breath of God, So shall I nev - er die,

That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do.
 Un - til with Thee I will one will, To do and to en - dure.
 Un - til this earth - ly part of me Glows with Thy fire di - vine.
 But live with Thee the per - fect life Of Thine e - ter - ni - ty.*

A reading from the Gospel according to John, chapter 11.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

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

P: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Forgive and Raise Dry Bones"
Sixth in the Lenten sermon series, "Forgiveness"

Rev. Miller

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Samuelson

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

Rev. Samuelson

Designated gifts go to support **Green Columbus**, a volunteer-driven nonprofit dedicated to promoting sustainable living, environmental education, and community involvement. Green Columbus holds the largest one day Earth Day event in the country. Green Columbus aspires to be a "do tank" (as opposed to a think tank), running programs—such as tree plantings and community outreach events—that have a positive impact on our environment. Thank you for your generosity.

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul is athirst for God,
yea even for the living God:
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
My tears have been my meat day and night,
while they daily say unto me,
Where is now thy God?

Psalm 42.1-3

* THE DOXOLOGY

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow”

Tallis' Canon

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

* 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.

1. O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
 2. O God, who calls your peo - ple out to ven - ture and to dare,
 3. O God of cov - e - nant and law, re - vealed in cloud and flame,

who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
 to plumb the bleak a - byss of doubt and find you e - ven there:
 your might - y deeds e - voke our awe; we dare not speak your name.

de - liv - er us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
 when we de - spair in wan - der - ing through wastes of emp - ty lies,
 Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your peo - ple prove,

Help us to know your Spir - it still is mak - ing all things new.
 re - fresh us with the liv - ing spring of hope that nev - er dies.
 as on our hearts you write a - new the cov - e - nant of love.

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Miller

POSTLUDE

Litanies

Jehan Alain

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 to welcome Joshua Stafford and Quang Pham to the First Church staff.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Miller – Narthex

Rev. Ahrens – Education Wing breezeway

Rev. Samuelson – Education Wing door

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Laurence Miller, Jr., *preacher*

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *liturgist*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *liturgist*

Jenkins Smith, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Will Haslett, *crucifer*

Xavier Dean, *acoltye*

Joshua Stafford, *minister of music*

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

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

March 26, 2023

This Week at First Church

3/26

9 a.m. Service of Morning Prayer and
Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. First Serves (Education Wing)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)

12:15 p.m. Welcome Reception (Parish Hall)
4 p.m. Congregational Concert (Sanctuary)

Congregational Concert Reception
(Parlor)

3/27

10:30 a.m. Grief Support (Virtual)

3/28

5:30 p.m. Laundry Love (Wash Land)
7 p.m. Deacons Meeting (Virtual)

3/29

12:15 p.m. Organ Meditation (Sanctuary)

3/30

6 p.m. First Church Ringers Practice (Bell Rm)
7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal
(Parish Hall)

4/1

10:30 a.m. Sacred Earth Meeting (Adult Library)

4/2

9 a.m. Palm Sunday
Service of Morning Prayer and
Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Faith Formation (Education Wing)
Coffee Sales (Parish Hall)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour and Coffee Sales
(Parish Hall)
12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)

Holy Week at First Church

Palm/Passion Sunday - April 2, 9 & 11 a.m.

Maundy Thursday - April 6, 7 p.m, Begins in Parish
Hall

Good Friday - April 7, 12 Noon, Sanctuary

Easter Sunday - April 9, 7 a.m. Social Justice Park,
8:45 a.m. Sanctuary, 11 a.m. Sanctuary

Forgiveness: 2023 Lenten Sermon Series Remaining Sermons

Palm Sunday - April 2, 9 & 11 a.m.
Rev. Joanna Samuelson preaching
“**A Forgiving Spirit**”

Easter Sunday – April 9, 7 a.m., 8:45 & 11 a.m.
Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens preaching
“**Forgiven and Risen**”

Congregational Concert Today at 4 p.m. Featuring Eric Plutz, Organist

First Church Book Club Wednesday, April 5, at 7 p.m. Zoom.

Everyone is invited to join the First Church Book Club. The next meeting is Wednesday, April 5, at 7 p.m. and the book that will be discussed is “The Book Woman’s Daughter” by Kim Michele Richardson. For more information or for the Zoom link email Elaine Warren (melainewarren232@gmail.com).

Concerts at First Church

Lenten Meditation

Amanda Mole

Wednesday, March 29 from 12:15 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Amanda Mole is Principal Organist and Assistant Director of Music at St. Joseph Catholic Cathedral in Columbus. She obtained a Bachelor of Music degree with honors from Eastman, a Master of Music degree in Organ Performance and Sacred Music at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, and is currently completing a Doctor of Musical Arts at the Eastman School of Music. She is a first-prize winner of the 2017 International Musashino-Tokyo Organ Competition, has performed internationally across the USA, Europe, and Japan, and at the AGO National Convention in Seattle, Washington, in 2022, among many other competitions and venues.

Register for the Spring Retreat Friday Evening, April 14 - Sunday, April 16



Join us for a three-day-long Spring Retreat at Templd Hills Camp in Bellville, Ohio. This is a wonderful time to be outside and to reconnect with our friends at First Church. This event is for all ages! There will be time for devotion, crafts, games, fishing, and much more!

To register, scan the QR code or visit <https://onrealm.org/TheFirstCongreg/PublicRegistrations/Event?link-String=NzViNzA5YzEtY2JiYy00OWE0LWFiOTAxYWZjNTAxMDE3NjY0>

Contact Rev. Joanna (jsamuelson@first-church.org) or Melissa Kulwicki (communications@first-church.org) for more information.

April Lunch Bunch Maple Street Biscuit 1310 Polaris Parkway, Columbus, OH 43240 Tuesday, April 4 12 Noon - 1 p.m.



Join First Church friends for a taste of comfort food with a modern twist. Mark your calendars and sign up before April 2 and we'll save you a seat. We look forward to seeing you there!

This event is sponsored by Church Vitality.

**Global Ministries
Angola: Angola Council
of Christian Churches and the
Evangelical Congregational Church in
Angola**

The Angolan Council of Christian Churches (CICA) is an ecumenical institution founded in 1977 to provide guidance for the Angolan faith community as well as be a voice for its members toward local and international governments. CICA has 22 member churches and related organizations. It is based in Luanda.

Angola's Department of Justice, Ecumenism, Reconciliation, and Cooperation promotes peace building and conflict transformation. Its objectives are to develop a culture of peaceful coexistence and to build relationships throughout Angolan society. Following these goals, CICA supports activities and ecumenical relationships in all 18 of Angola's provinces.

The Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola (IECA) is a longstanding partner of Global Ministries and was founded in 1880 in the Chilume Mission, Bailundo, and Huambo Province.

Easter Flowers and Music

Here is your opportunity to dedicate beautiful Easter flowers (suggested donation \$10/each) or contribute to special Easter music in honor/memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special occasion by March 31.

Simply send an email to Amy Wagner, (awagner@first-church.org) Administrative Manager. Please include the following information in your email:

Your name

Dedication in memory of or in Celebration of

Amount you intend to donate

You may pay via Realm or EasyTithe, or by mailing a check to the church office with "Easter Flowers" or "Easter Music" written in the memo line.

Thank you for your continued support of First Church.

**Laundry Love
Tuesday, March 28
from 5:30-6:30 p.m.**

"Laundry Love" is an outreach ministry that 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, March 28, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., at the Washland 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) or Rev. Joanna (jsamuels@first-church.org) for more details.

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

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 support **Green Columbus**, a volunteer-driven nonprofit dedicated to promoting sustainable living, environmental education, and community involvement. Green Columbus holds the largest one-day Earth Day event in the country. Green Columbus aspires to be a “do tank” (as opposed to a think tank), running programs—such as tree plantings and community outreach events—that have a positive impact on our environment.

BREAD:

Join us at Nehemiah Action Tuesday, April 25 at 6:45 p.m.

BREAD’s big annual Nehemiah Action will take place on April 25 at the Celeste Building on the State Fair Grounds at 6:45 p.m. At this event we will show our support for the research that was done to find solutions for some of the problems that concern us so much. Please get your BREAD T-shirt at the coffee hour and sign up to be there. Together we can make a difference, because BREAD rises!

Connect with Us

If you need help accessing Realm or wish to join our email list, please send an email to home@first-church.org.

Keep in Prayer

Members Karin Sandell; John Anderson; Sarah Giffen; Nancy Braverman; Barbara Sterrett; Bill Kutschbach; Ron Cook; Bob Monahan; Rick Sayre; Melva Fisher; Anne Morganstern; Glenn and Sharon Bardus; Gretchen Atkinson; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; Lola Edwards; Rick Brant; Betsy Zahn; Janice White; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter.

Family and friends Matty Provenzano; Melissa Kulwicki’s sister, Jennifer Scruggs; Cara Harasaki; Susie Loik’s friend and neighbor, Dottie Clark; Melody Leidheiser’s nephew, Mick Clark; Matt Farabaugh’s friend Pamla Mineo; Samuelson/Gillies family friend, Eric Williams; Susie Loik’s friend, Jan Lanier and family; Victor John’s parents, Charles and Mary Jane John; Tom Gies’ sister, Monica Depinet; and Nancy Mayle.

Those who mourn loved ones Fred Hunker and family on the death of his mother, Beth Hunker; Callie Mitchell on the death of Connie Hollins; David Temple on the death of his mother, Erna Temple; the family and friends of Ecumenical leader and seeker of social justice Marilyn Shreffler; Jenkins Smith on the death of his brother, Richard E. Thompson; and David Kandel and family on the death of his sister, Sue.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we lift the people and churches in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia. We also pray for the Angolan Council of Christian Churches, and the Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola.

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.

Minister of Music: Joshua Stafford, M.M.

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

Building and Grounds Superintendent: Quang Pham

Custodians: Jenkins Smith, Alexis Wayne

Wedding Coordinators: Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani

Nursery Staff: Miranda Brooks, Shelly Gies, Celecia Smith

Senior Deacon: Martha Wilson

Senior Deacon-elect: Lynn Wallich

Deacons: Cami Curren, Tom Kiesel, Nan Kreimer, Gail Lowe, James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Alex Palmer, Fran Panek, Joel Mathias, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Tyler Rogers, Hank Wilson, Martha Worth

Church Council Leadership

Moderator: Gregory Halbe

Moderator-elect: Sarah Reed

Treasurer: James Velo

Treasurer-elect: Ramona Moenter

Secretary: Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

Secretary-elect:

Nominating Chair: Christine Farquhar

Board of Trustees

Chairperson: Sue Cook

Trustees: Cindy Conn (Treasurer), Greg Halbe, Elizabeth Iannarino, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Melody Leidheiser, Janet Miller, Judy Smith (Secretary), Hugh Schultz

Commissioners

Administration: Thomas Brownfield

Administration-elect: David Hogrefe

Church Growth: Steve Sterrett

Church Growth-elect:

Church Vitality: Wendy Kennedy

Church Vitality-elect: Annette McCormick

Education: Janice Taft

Education-elect: Mariner Taft

House & Grounds: Mike Kennedy

House & Grounds-elect:

Justice & Mercy: Kris Brant

Justice & Mercy-elect: Janet Miller

Music, Arts & Heritage: Melissa Kulwicki

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Jim Griffin

Members-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean and Aran Cunningham

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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