



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 10, 2023

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Carillon de Westminster, Op. 54, No. 6

Louis Vierne

ENTER TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Marti Baumer

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

People: And also with you.

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

L: How shall we live in the love of God?

P: We will treat one another with fairness and dignity.

L: How shall we witness God's forgiving love?

P: We will reach out to others with compassion.

L: Come, let us worship God who has always loved us.

P: Let the worship of God be reflected in our lives of hope and peace. Amen.

1 Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en; glad of heart your
 2 Praise God for the grace and fa - vor shown our fore - bears
 3 Like a lov - ing par - ent car - ing, God knows well our
 4 An - gels, teach us ad - o - ra - tion; you be - hold God

car - ols raise; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,
 in dis - tress; God is still the same for - ev - er,
 fee - ble frame, glad - ly all our bur - dens bear - ing,
 face to face. Sun and moon and all cre - a - tion,

who, like me, should sing God's praise? Al - le - lu - ia!
 slow to chide, and swift to bless. Al - le - lu - ia!
 still to count - less years the same. Al - le - lu - ia!
 dwell - ers all in time and space: Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the Mak - er all your days!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing our Mak - er's faith - ful - ness!
 Al - le - lu - ia! All with - in me, praise God's name!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

* INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

L: God be with you.

P. And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Grant us, O God, to trust in you with all our heart; for as you always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so you never forsake those who make their boast in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Kathy Reed, Church Growth: I invite all those who have been in conversation with First Church and now wish to accept our invitation of membership to please step forward as I read your names: Dianne Frazer, Shane Gillies, Malcolm Gillies, Henry Gillies, the Rev. Joanna Samuelson, Edward "Eddie" Gomez and Christina "Chris" Van Fossen.

Martha Wilson, Senior Deacon: Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through baptism. These persons standing before you have found nurture and support in our spiritual family. Through study, discussion, and prayer they have been led to reaffirm their baptism and to enter into a covenantal relationship with the members of this church. They are ready to offer their devotion and service to Jesus Christ, using the unique gifts provided them.

Rev. Ahrens: You are no longer strangers, but are now one of us. We are delighted to have you here and willingly share with you all of our resources. We look forward to getting to know you better in the weeks and months to come. I invite all the members and friends of First Church to unite with those joining in reading together our church's statement of faith and covenant.

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

The church is a community of faith called to witness and to serve. 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.

Rev. Ahrens: Will all people of faith please rise? By our baptism we are made one in the body of Christ. Today we rejoice in the journey which has brought you here. We give thanks for other communities which have been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your commitment to continue your sojourn in this household of faith. Let us read together:

* WELCOME

We welcome you with joy to the life and ministry of The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ of Columbus, Ohio. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love, and be faithful witnesses to the ways of Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Rev. Samuelson: Let us pray. O God, we praise you for calling us to be disciples and for gathering us into the Church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this congregation and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith. Together may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Rev. Ahrens: In the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this church. We look forward to getting to know you better in the weeks and months ahead.

You are invited to welcome the new members at the Chancel steps following the service and then join us for the reception in Parish Hall.

* PASTORAL 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.

** When you return to your seat, 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

Following Children's Time, the children are invited to depart for "Sunday Stories" with Rev. Tim and Dr. Wendy Kirkland. They will return for the Prayers of the People.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Exodus 12:1-14

Rev. Baumer

A reading from the book of Exodus, chapter 12.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn with fire. This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the Lord. I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human to animal, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

"This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

P: Thanks be to God.

Awake, my heart, and render to God thy sure defender,
thy maker, thy preserver, a song of love and fervor.

My heart shall be thy dwelling, with joy and gladness swelling;
thy word my nurture, given to bring me on toward heaven.

Confirm my deeds and guide me: this day, with thee beside me,
beginning, middle, ending, will all be upward tending.

-Paulus Gerhardt, 1647, tr. Winifred Douglas

THE EPISTLE

Romans 13:8-14

Rev. Baumer

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans, chapter 13.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

P: **Thanks be to God.**

* THE GOSPEL HYMN

“O for a world”

Azmon

1 O for a world where ev - ery - one re - spects each oth - er's ways,
2 O for a world where goods are shared and mis - er - y re - lieved,
3 We wel - come one world fam - i - ly and strug - gle with each choice
4 The poor are rich; the weak are strong; the fool - ish ones are wise.
5 O for a world pre - par - ing for God's glo - rious reign of peace,
where love is lived and all is done with jus - tice and with praise.
where truth is spo - ken, chil - dren spared, e - qual - i - ty a - chieved.
that o - pens us to u - ni - ty and gives our vi - sion voice.
Tell all who mourn: out - casts be - long, who per - ish - es will rise.
where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 18.

If a member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

P: Thanks be to God.

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.

THE OFFERTORY

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



Cash and designated gifts go to BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity). BREAD is the organization through which our congregation works for social justice. BREAD has a 24-year history of improving the quality of life in Central Ohio by researching serious community problems and gathering the power of people in nearly 40 congregations to press public officials to implement proven solutions to those problems. BREAD rises! Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

See, I Make All Things New

Alfred V. Fedak

Behold, behold! I am doing a new thing.
Now it breaks forth: do you not perceive it?
I am Alpha and Omega,
the beginning and the ending.
See, I make all things new!
I will make a way in the wilderness,
and rivers through the desert.
To the thirsty I give water
as a gift from the spring of the water of life.
I will pour out water on the thirsty land
and streams on the dry ground.
I will pour my Spirit on your offspring,
and my blessing upon your children.

-Isaiah 43:19-20, 44:3; Revelation 21:6

* DOXOLOGY

Old 100th

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

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Ahrens

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. 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. Samuelson

POSTLUDE

Carillon, Op. 31, No. 21

Louis Vierne

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 would be delighted to assist you.

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God by Pat Patterson, dedicated to her mother Betty Stone, who instilled the love of family in all of us.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Samuelson – Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Rev. Ahrens – West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

Ms. Kulwicki – East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITURGY

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *preacher*

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

The Rev. Dr. Marti Baumer, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Joshua Stafford, *organist and director*

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

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This Week at First Church

9/10	9/13
9 a.m. Morning Prayer, Communion & Sunday Stories (Parish Hall & Virtual)	6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Team Mtg (Parish Hall)
10 a.m. Book of Acts Bible Study (Classroom C)	9/14
Sunday School for Children and Youth (Various Classrooms)	10:30 a.m. Constitutional Amendment Information Session (Zoom)
11 a.m. Worship Service & Sunday Stories (Sanctuary & Virtual)	6 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
12 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)	7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
4 p.m. First Church Congregational Concert (Sanctuary)	9/17
9/11	9 a.m. Morning Prayer, Communion & Sunday Stories (Parish Hall & Virtual)
12 p.m. Congregational Care Ministry Mtg (Fanning Rm)	10 a.m. Constitutional Amendment Information Session (Classroom C)
7 p.m. Education Commission Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)	Sunday School for Children and Youth (Various Classrooms)
Trustees Mtg (Zoom)	11 a.m. Worship Service & Sunday Stories (Sanctuary & Virtual)
9/12	12 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg (Virtual)	4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)
6 p.m. Quarterly Music Mtg (Parlor)	
6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Team Mtg (Parish Hall)	
7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg (Zoom)	

**First Church Arts
 Congregational Concert
 Joshua Stafford, Organist
 Today at 4 p.m.**

Legacy Sunday Picnic Sunday, September 24 Following 11 a.m. Service On the West Lawn

Join us outside on the church grounds on Sunday, September 24, immediately following the 11 a.m. service for a potluck picnic! Church Vitality will be grilling some hamburgers and hot dogs (a veggie option as well!). Bring a dish to share and your favorite lawn chair or blanket to enjoy some fellowship with your First Church Family. Water, plates, and utensils will be provided. We will have outdoor games to add to the fun. We can't wait to see you there!

Potluck Guidelines:

A-J Side Dish

K-R Salad

S-Z Dessert

Global Ministries India: Center for Social Equity and Inclusion

The Center for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI) exists to develop a robust, inclusive society in India by enhancing the involvement of communities that are currently excluded. CSEI was formed in 2009, the result of three decades of work by volunteers on community mobilizing, networking, research, and forming campaigns.

Exclusion and discrimination against communities such as Dalits, Adivasis, Muslims and others is still prevalent in Indian society, especially in education and employment. CSEI partners with community-led organizations within the marginalized communities, drawing its leadership and agenda from the communities themselves.

The core focus of the work is promoting equal rights and equitable opportunities for learning and leadership among children and young people from Dalit, Tribal, and Muslim communities. This includes advocacy-oriented research, social equity surveys, policy advocacy, and creating better access to education and employment for individuals from excluded communities.

Informational Meetings for Proposed Church Constitutional Amendments

Church members are invited to attend one of three informational meetings in September to discuss the proposed amendments to the church constitution that will be voted on at a special congregational meeting this fall.

The informational meetings will be held:

- Thursday, September 14, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. over Zoom.
- Sunday, September 17, from 10 to 10:45 a.m. in person in the church's Classroom C.
- Monday, September 25, from 7 to 8 p.m. over Zoom.

The Zoom link for the meeting on September 14 is listed below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83671742184?pwd=UEExJc3U2am5iajcydzN5aFJRbFdvUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 7174 2184

Passcode: 021499

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 Realm, 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.

Cash and designated gifts go to **BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity)**. BREAD is the organization through which our congregation works for social justice. BREAD has a 24-year history of improving the quality of life in Central Ohio by researching serious community problems and gathering the power of people in nearly 40 congregations to press public officials to implement proven solutions to those problems. BREAD rises! Thank you for your generosity.

BREAD 2023 House Meetings

BREAD is ready to kick off the 2023 House Meeting season and will hold 10 different meetings, some in the Church, some on Zoom, and some in our homes. These meetings aim to discover serious problems in our community that can and should be addressed by our elected officials. It is also an excellent opportunity to get to know each other and make new connections.

In the next three weeks you may receive a call from one of our team members to participate, but please feel free to reach out yourself, and call one of the hosts listed below. House Meetings are scheduled between September 13 and October 20. Hope to see you all! BREAD rises!

Tim Ahrens (614-228-1741)

Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen (240-557-9770)

Bill Catus (614-447-1944)

Debi Cunningham (614-323-6319)

Gary Hammond (614-512-1404)

Jill Hultin (646-522-0250)

Todd Jacobson (612-718-3105)

Jim Lowe (614-397-7512)

Kaye Martin (740-438-1894)

Joanna Samuelson (214-995-3525)

Steve Sterrett (614-262-4586)

BREAD 2023 House Meetings

Date	Time	Host(s)	Location
Sept. 17	12:30 p.m.	Tim Ahrens/Kaye Martin	Parlor
Sept. 20	5:30 p.m.	Bill Catus	Parlor
Sept. 21	7:00 p.m.	Steve Sterrett	Home of Steve Sterrett
Sept. 28	7:00 p.m.	Jill Hultin	Home of Jill Hultin
Sept. 28	10:00 a.m.	Joanna Samuelson/Debi Cunningham	Classroom C & Zoom
Oct. 2	7:00 p.m.	Tim Ahrens/Kaye Martin	Home of Kaye Martin
Oct. 8	12:30 p.m.	Gary Hammond	Parlor
Oct. 10	7:00 p.m.	Todd Jacobson	Home of Todd Jacobson
Oct. 12	6:00 p.m.	Antoinette Beynen	Westminister Thurber
Oct. 18	7:00 p.m.	Jim and Gail Lowe	Zoom

Keep in Prayer

Members Emily Schmitt; Karl Danneberger; Dan Axt; Karl Schaab; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; Lola Edwards; Betsy Zahn; Janice White; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter.

Family and friends Miranda Brooks and son, Wilson; Amy Brooks' father, Michael Hamlin; Mary Day Fewlass' friend, Tim Holt; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; Tim Ahrens and Susan Sitler's friends, Jennifer and Yisrael and their son, Freddie; Melissa Kulwicki's mother, Judy Blandi; Liz Kuhn; Celecia Smith; LJ Cooks' mother, Gloria Roane; Karl and Sallie Danneberger's friend, Ron Kendzier; Emily Wilson's friend, Thane Fanfulik, her sister and niece, Karen Newcomb and Stasia Hylas, and friend Julia Wharff Piermont; Todd Cunningham and family's aunt, Mary Ann Dykes; Lisa Fravel Dean's nephew, Joshua Ross; Lee Wetmore's friends, Ray and Mary Pollard; Susie Loik's friend and neighbor, Dottie Clark; Matt Farabaugh's friend Pamela Mineo; Victor John's parents, Charles and Mary Jane John.

Those who mourn loved ones family and friends of Jenkins Smith; Martha Wilson on the death of her uncle, Paul Edward Player; Victor John and his sister, Amanda John, her husband Gerald Young, niece Ella Young, and Victor's parents, on the recent loss of Victor's nephew, Matthias. Melva Fisher on the death of her friend, Steve Wood; and the family and friends of Joanne Morse.

We pray for our Stephen Ministry team in seeking God's presence in their work, to fill them full of faith as they train as caregiving ministers, and to thank God for all the gifts of our church members.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches of Ghana and Nigeria. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Center for Social Equity and Inclusion in India.

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.
Designated 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
Commissioned Stephen Ministry Leader: Gary Glover
Administrative Manager: Amy Wagner
Communications Manager: Melissa Kulwicki
Office Assistant: Pat Patterson
Business Administrator: Annette McCormick
Building and Grounds Superintendent: Quang Pham
Custodians: 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: Tom Kiesel
Deacons: Nan Kreimer, Gail Lowe, James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Fran Panek, Joel Mathias, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, 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: Martha Wilson
Nominating Chair: Sarah Reed

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: Eric Klintworth
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

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



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



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