



### WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

*If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! For more than 171 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.*

#### LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

- The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher and co-celebrant*
- The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *co-celebrant*
- Cami Curren, *liturgist*
- Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
- David Hogrefe, *pianist*
- Geoff Dean, *livestream ministry*

*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

#### ENTER TO WORSHIP

Cami Curren

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

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

Leader: In this year of our Lord, on this Sabbath morning, in this Holy moment we come seeking God's presence with hope, with wonder, and with joy. And we pray:

**People: Holy, Holy, Holy, God of power and might, the whole world is filled with your glory!**

Leader: Yet, this beloved world is riddled with sadness. For need encounters greed, and war is a constant. We listen for the call:

**People: Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?**

Leader: We come longing to be consoled, strengthened, and changed so that in hope, in wonder, and in joy we may answer:

**People: Here I am! Send me!**

Leader: Let us worship our God in this year of our Lord, on this Sabbath morning, in this Holy Moment!

\*OPENING HYMN

“We come to you for healing, Lord”

*Land of Rest*, American folk melody

Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 2002

1 We come to you for heal - ing, Lord, of  
2 As once you walked through an - cient streets and  
3 Through nights of pain and wake - ful - ness, through  
4 We come to you, O lov - ing Lord, in

bod - y, mind, and soul, and pray that by your  
reached toward those in pain, we know you come a -  
days when strength runs low, grant us your gift of  
our dis - tress and pain, in trust that through our

Spir - it's touch we may a - gain be whole.  
mong us still with power to heal a - gain.  
pa - tience, Lord, your calm - ing peace to know.  
nights and days your grace will heal, sus - tain.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: God be with you.

**People. And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

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

\*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

*\*When you return to your seat, please find the blue Welcome notebook, sign it and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them by name.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Melissa Kulwicki

*During the sermon time, the young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories" with Melissa Kulwicki and Rev. Joanna.*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:21-31

Cami Curren

Leader: A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah, the fortieth chapter.

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,

and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;

who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,

and spreads them like a tent to live in;

who brings princes to naught,

and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,

scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,

when he blows upon them, and they wither,

and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

To whom then will you compare me,

or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see:

Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,

calling them all by name;

because he is great in strength,

mighty in power,

not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,

and speak, O Israel,

"My way is hidden from the Lord,

and my right is disregarded by my God"?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALTER

Psalm 147: 1-11, 20c

Cami Curren

Alleluia! How good it is to sing praises to you, O God; how pleasant it is to honor you with praise.

**For you rebuild Jerusalem and gather the exiles of Israel.**

You heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds.

**You count the number of the stars and call them all by their names.**

Great are you and mighty in power; there is no limit to your wisdom.

**You lift up the lowly, but cast the wicked to the ground.**

We sing to you, Most High, with thanksgiving; we make music to you upon the harp,

**For you cover the heavens with clouds and prepare rain for the earth;**

You make grass to grow upon the mountains and green plants to serve humankind.

**You provide food for flocks and herds and for the young ravens when they cry.**

You are not impressed by the might of a horse; you have no pleasure in human strength;

**Alleluia!**

THE GOSPEL

Mark 1:29-39

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.

After Jesus and his disciples left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION MEDITATION

“The Fifth Stream”

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

**All: 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, or see additional instructions in Depart to Serve:*



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. Samuelson

Cash and designated gifts go to support **The Largest Table**. Every Wednesday, for more than twelve years, volunteers provide food for individuals and families in the community who are in need. This program transitioned to grab-and-go lunches during COVID in the Spring of 2020. The First Church meal team gathers on the third Wednesday of each month to make and pack up to 100 lunches. Your gifts will help purchase the supplies for our meal team to support this feeding ministry. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN  
"Abide with me"

*Eventide*, William Henry Monk, 1861  
Henry Francis Lyte, 1847

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide.  
2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
3 I need thy pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour;  
4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes;

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide!  
earth's joys grow dim; its glo - ries pass a - way;  
what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's power?  
ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.  
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,  
change and de - cay in all a - round I see.  
Who, like thy - self, my guide and stay can be?  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?  
Heaven's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;

help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.  
O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.  
Through cloud and sun - shine, Lord, a - bide with me.  
I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me.  
in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

COMMUNION  
COMMUNION HYMN  
"Come and fill our hearts"

Rev. Samuelson  
*Confitemini Domino*, Jacques Berthier, 1982

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system has four measures with lyrics: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly." The second system has four measures with lyrics: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu-ia!". Chord symbols are placed above the vocal line: D, Bm, D, A in the first system; Em, C, Em, A, D in the second system.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: Let us pray.

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

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. Kulwicki

Leader Let us depart with a heart to serve.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

\*CLOSING HYMN  
"God be with you"

*Randolph*, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906  
Jeremiah Eames Rankin, 1880

1. God be with you till we meet a - gain; Lov - ing coun - sels  
guide, up - hold you, With a Shep - herd's care en - fold you:  
God be with you till we meet a - gain.

\*BENEDICTION  
POSTLUDE

Rev. Ahrens

*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 would be delighted to assist you.*

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*Enter to Worship*  
**Depart to Serve**

February 4, 2024

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, Feb. 4**

- 9 a.m. Morning Worship & Holy Communion  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)  
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion  
(Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12 Noon Coffee Sales (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)
- 6 p.m. Youth Group Gathering (Parish Hall)

### **Monday, Feb. 5**

- 9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution  
(Good Sam Office)
- 12 Noon Congregational Care Ministry Mtg  
(Fanning Rm)
- 6:30 p.m. House & Grounds Mtg (Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Faith Formation Mtg  
(Classroom C & Zoom)

### **Tuesday, Feb. 6**

- 12 Noon Lunch Bunch (101 Beer Kitchen)
- 7 p.m. Communications & Technology Mtg  
(Fanning Rm)  
Justice & Mercy Mtg  
(Classroom C & Zoom)  
Personnel Committee Mtg (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, Feb. 7**

- 11 a.m. Church Vitality Mtg (Zoom)
- 12:15 p.m. Wednesday Meditations (Sanctuary)
- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg  
(Fanning Rm)
- 7 p.m. Book Club (Zoom)

### **Thursday, Feb. 8**

- 4:30 p.m. Choristers (Choir Rm)
- 6 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

### **Sunday, Feb. 11**

- 9 a.m. Morning Worship & Holy Communion  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)  
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)

## **Youth Group**

**Today, February 4**

**6-7:30 p.m.**

**Parish Hall**

Youth grades 6-12 are invited to join us this evening from 6-7:30 p.m. in Parish Hall for Youth Group. Each week, we will share a meal, have a discussion, an activity, or work on a mission project, and then we will close with the First Church favorite game Sardines.

This is an excellent opportunity for our young people to connect and build relationships with each other and their church family. If you have middle school or high school-age youth and are not receiving our youth group emails, have any questions, or would like to help out please contact Rev. Joanna Samuelson [jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org) or Melissa Kulwicki [mkulwicki@first-church.org](mailto:mkulwicki@first-church.org).

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## **Neighborhood Care Circles Luncheon**

**Sunday, February 25  
After 11 a.m. Worship  
Parish Hall**

Learn all about our new neighborhood groups and how they will help all of us create new connections with our church family. Enjoy a taco bar and get to know your neighbors! Dessert contributions are welcome. Representatives from Church Vitality and Deacons will pass out invitations this Sunday following both worship services. Donations for the luncheon are encouraged. Please RSVP by placing your completed invitation in one of the baskets outside the sanctuary.

## First Church Book Club:

Wednesday, February 7

7 p.m. Zoom

### *Demon Copperhead*

Come enjoy lively conversation and fellowship this February and March with the First Church Book Club. On Wednesday, February 7, Elaine Warren will lead a discussion of Barbara Kingsolver's *Demon Copperhead*. Inspired by *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy born into poverty in Appalachian Virginia and his experiences with foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, opioid addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses, using his wits to survive. Kingsolver makes plain the problems facing rural America. Equal parts hilarious, heartbreaking, and wise, it was awarded the 2023 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Questions? Call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742.

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## Coming Soon ... Lenten Book Study Groups

In keeping with a cherished First Church tradition, we are offering book study groups for the upcoming Lenten season. The book that we'll read together as a congregation this year is *Following Jesus: Finding Our Way Home in an Age of Anxiety* by the beloved author Henri Nouwen who speaks to the gifts, vulnerabilities, and struggles that come with faithful living. We'll have copies of the book available for your purchase in the church office soon or you may find a copy of the book at the public library or your favorite bookseller.

Once again, we hope to organize several Lenten Book Study Groups to take place in the homes of First Church members who live in the different neighborhoods and suburbs of the Columbus area. In the past, most of our Lenten groups have met two or three times for discussions about the book and fellowship. Each host determines the day of the week and time of their gatherings. Contact Rev. Joanna at [jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org) for more information or to host.

## First Serves: SOAP Project

Sunday, February 25

10-10:45 a.m.

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

We are asking for monetary donations to purchase the supplies. Please visit the Giving Tree in the Education Wing and take an envelope. You can place your donation in the envelope and drop it in the collection plate. You can also give online, just make sure to designate it for "First Serves." Thank you for your generosity!

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## Join the New Communications and Technology Commission

The Communications and Technology Commission is now forming! It is led by Mike Kennedy, Commissioner, and Stefan Duga, Commissioner-Elect, and the staff liaison is Melissa Kulwicki, Communications Manager. The group is hoping to meet the first Tuesday of each month, starting in February. If you are interested in helping the church grow in the areas of technology and communications, contact Mike Kennedy ([michaela.kennedy@yahoo.com](mailto:michaela.kennedy@yahoo.com)) or Melissa Kulwicki ([mkulwicki@first-church.org](mailto:mkulwicki@first-church.org)).

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## Wednesday Meditation Qin Ying Tan, Harpsichord Wednesday, February 7 12:15 p.m.

Join us for a brief, free Wednesday Meditation at First Congregational Church on February 7 at 12:15 p.m. featuring Dr. Qin Ying Tan playing our beautiful Bechtel harpsichord.

## **Stephen Ministry: How Stephen Ministry Works**

Stephen Ministry in each church is led by Stephen Leaders—lay leaders, church staff, and pastors who are trained by Stephen Ministries, St. Louis, through the online Bridge Leader's Training Course. Following their training, Stephen Leaders recruit and select laypeople from their congregation to serve as Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Leaders then train their congregation's Stephen Ministers, covering topics such as listening, understanding difficult feelings, maintaining confidentiality, and ministering to people in specific situations, including grief, divorce, medical crises, terminal or chronic illness, infertility and other family issues, and more.

Stephen Ministers also learn to recognize when a care receiver may need care beyond what a Stephen Minister is able to provide and how to work with Stephen Leaders to make referrals to the appropriate type of care. After completing training, Stephen Ministers are commissioned by their congregations and matched with care receivers by their Stephen Leaders.

A Stephen Minister typically meets with their care receiver once a week for about an hour, for as long as the need for care persists. Stephen Ministers also meet regularly with their Stephen Leaders for supervision, support, and continuing education.

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### **Pysanky Workshop**

**Two Dates:**

**Friday, March 1, 6 - 9 p.m.**

**Saturday, March 2, 1:30- 4:30  
p.m.**

**Parish Hall**

**Register on Realm**

## **Lunch Bunch Tuesday, February 6 at Noon 101 Beer Kitchen 7509 Sawmill Road**

Join us for lunch at 101 Beer Kitchen on February 6 at noon. This chef-owned restaurant features a seasonal menu with hand-crafted specialties and a few house classics that are exceptional. At 101 Beer Kitchen, beer might come first in the name, but their food is second to none! Register by clicking the QR Code below.



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## **Time Out Monday Monday, February 19 at 6 p.m. Cafe Istanbul 6125 Riverside Drive**

Join us for authentic Turkish and Mediterranean cuisine at Cafe Istanbul, 6125 Riverside Drive on Monday, February 19 at 6 p.m. Come and enjoy dinner and a Turkish coffee with us! Register by clicking the QR Code below.



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## **Wednesday Book Study *Jesus and the Disinherited* Wednesday, February 21 10:30 a.m., Classroom C or Zoom**

# Keep in Prayer

**Members** Bridget Tharp and Tony Baker; Wendy Reber; Antoinette Beynen; Elaine Warren; Janice Taft; Hugh Schultz; Steve Anderson; Dene Barnard; Connie Johnson; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; Janice White.

**Family and friends** Marti Rideout; Pat Patterson's son, Jay Patterson; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; Mary Ann Jacobson's nephew, Peter Poppleton; Diane Kutschbach and Emily Kutschbach Schmitt's aunt and great aunt, Lola, and Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; Melissa Kulwicki's mother-in-law, Bev Kulwicki; Susie Loik's grandson, Alex Glover and his parents, Kristen and Wes; Hugh Schultz's friend, Barbara Van Ripper; Arevena Nirote's sister and brother-in-law, Marlene and Gary Gallion; Fran and Bruce Panek's friends, Richard and Beverly Cicenias; Victor John, his parents, Charles and Mary Jane, and sister; Martha Huey's sister, Stephanie Childs and cousin, Martha Dieckmann; Amy Brooks' father, Michael Hamlin; and Karl and Sallie Danneberger's friend, Ron Kendzier.

**Those who mourn loved ones** Melody Leidheiser and her niece, Kathy Clark, on the death of Melody's nephew and Kathy's husband, Mick Clark; Jill Hultin on the death of her sister, Gail Nelson; Geneva Rice on the death of her husband, Jim Monsul; Allison Ellenberger, on the death of her father, Bill Ellenberger; David Kandel and family on the death of his sister, Sheryl Elizabeth Kandel Loeffler; and Joe Provenzano and family on the death of his step-father, Harve Senter.

We keep Stephen Ministers in prayer as they care for our church members.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Andorra, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, and the Vatican City. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Pacific Conference of Churches in Fiji.

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## Give

## Upcoming Mission Offerings

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](mailto:amccormick@firstchurch.org).

<b>February 4</b>	<b>The Largest Table</b>
February 11	NAMI
February 18	Good Sam
February 25	Equal Justice Initiative

Cash and designated gifts go to support **The Largest Table**. Every Wednesday, for more than twelve years, volunteers provide food for individuals and families in the community who are in need. This program transitioned to grab-and-go lunches during COVID in the Spring of 2020. The First Church meal team gathers on the third Wednesday of each month to make and pack up to 100 lunches. Your gifts will help purchase the supplies for our meal team to support this feeding ministry. Thank you for your generosity.

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## Pastoral Care

If you are in need of pastoral care please contact Rev. Tim Ahrens [tahrens@first-church.org](mailto:tahrens@first-church.org) or Rev. Joanna Samuelson [jsamuelson@first-church.org](mailto:jsamuelson@first-church.org).

# 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.

**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, Bob O'Brien

**Wedding Coordinators:** Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani

**Nursery Staff:** Miranda Brooks, Shelly Gies, Celecia Smith

**Commissioned Minister for Social Justice:** Tom Brownfield

**Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction:** Jacquelyn Dean

**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Program Coordinator:** Gary Glover

**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Training Coordinator:** Wendy Kennedy

**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator:** Susie Loik

**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, Lynn Wallich, 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:**

**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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