



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



WORSHIP AT 11 A.M.
MARCH 24, 2024
PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

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*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *officiant*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Greg Duncan, *verger*

Henry Gillies, *crucifer*

Joshua Stafford, *organist and director*

Pat Patterson, *livestream ministry*

PASSION READERS

Courter Shimeall – *Narrator*

Noah Winters – *Judas*

Jack Drake – *Jesus*

Sebastian Kulwicki – *High Priest*

Whitney Carr – *Servant Girl*

Annie West Hatch – *Peter*

Michael Papisidero – *Pilate*

Austin Paul – *Centurian*

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)

THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS

Children and youth are invited to gather at the back of the sanctuary to lead the palm procession.

PRELUDE

Valet will ich dir geben

J.S. Bach, c. 1715

MOTET

"Hosanna to the Son of David"

Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623)

Matthew 21:9

Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord. Hosanna.

Thou that sittest in the highest heavens. Hosanna in excelsis Deo.

*ENTER TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

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

Leader: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: A reading from the gospel according to Mark, the eleventh chapter.

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

*THE BLESSING OF THE PALMS

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: We praise you, O God, for your redemption of the world through Jesus Christ, who entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph and was proclaimed Messiah and King by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Let these branches be signs of his victory, and grant that we who carry them may follow him in the way of the cross, that, dying and rising with him, we may enter into your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

People: Amen.

*ENTRANCE OF THE PROCESSION

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: Hosanna to the Son of David!

People: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest!

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Valet will ich dir geben, Melchior Teschner, 1614

“All glory, laud, and honor”

Theodulph of Orleans, c. 820; trans. John Mason Neale, 1851

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re-deem-er, King,

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho-san-nas ring!

1 Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;
 3 To thee, be - fore thy pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
 4 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

who in the Lord's name com - est, the King and bless - ed One.
 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
 to thee, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King!

to Refrain

*INVOCATION

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

People: **Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for humanity you sent Jesus, to take our nature upon him and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us an example of great humility: Mercifully grant that we too may walk in the way of the cross and share in the resurrection; through the one who is our Savior and Redeemer and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Samuelson

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 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

Melissa Kulwicki

During the sermon time, the young children are invited to follow Melissa Kulwicki and Amy Wagner out of the sanctuary to participate in Sunday Stories in Classroom B.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: A reading from the prophet Isaiah, the fiftieth chapter.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning the Lord God wakens — wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; the Lord God who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

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

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Philip Moore, 1989

"It is a thing most wonderful"

William Walsham How, 1872

It is a thing most wonderful, almost too wonderful to be,
that God's own Son should come from heaven,
and die to save a child like me.

And yet I know that it is true: he chose a poor and humble lot,
and wept, and mourned, and toiled and died,
for love of those who loved him not.

I sometimes think about the Cross,
and shut my eyes, and try to see
the cruel nails and crown of thorns,
and Jesus crucified for me.

But even could I see him die,
I could but see a little part
of that great love, which, like a fire,
is always burning in his heart.

And yet I want to love thee, Lord;
O light the flame within my heart,
That I may love thee more and more,
until I see thee as thou art.

PALM SUNDAY MEDITATION

"Jesus and the Children"

Rev. Ahrens

Seventh in the Lenten sermon series, "Jesus"

LITANY ON THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Rev. Ahrens and Rev. Samuelson

Leader: Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." In the name of Jesus, we pray:

People: Lord, help us to take up our cross and follow you.

Leader: You stood before Pilate, your life condemned, your word rejected, your innocence ignored:

People: Keep us from rejecting your word of truth and salvation.

Leader: You carried your cross on the wounded stripes of your back, for love of us and for all the world.

People: Help us to bear our cross, for love of you and for love of others.

Leader: The weight of your cross was the weight of our sins which make us stumble and fall.

People: In our weakness, we turn to you for strength.

Leader: Although you suffered, you still reached out to care for your mother.

People: May our cross-bearing never keep us from caring for our families.

Leader: As you struggled to bear your cross to Calvary, a passerby was drafted to help you.

People: Make us as willing as Simon to bear the burdens of those in need.

Leader: Others also took risks to comfort you.

People: Strengthen our faith to take loving risks for our needy sisters and brothers.

Leader: Sin weighed heavily upon you as you stumbled along the way.

People: Forgive us, Lord, for the sin which makes us fall.

Leader: Your suffering under the cross caused the women of Jerusalem to weep.

People: Make our suffering in life a share in your suffering.

Leader: The full burden of our sin crushed you mightily to the earth.

People: Do not forsake us in our falling, but bring us to repentance and faith.

Leader: Stripped and jeered, you endured humiliation without complaint.

People: Humble us in our work and daily lives.

Leader: Nailed to the cross, you took your place among the condemned.

People: Take your place beside us sinners, and bring us through faith to the Paradise of God.

Leader: When your sacrifice was complete, you handed your life to the Father, and he did not forsake you.

People: Keep us close to your cross and death, now and at the hour of our death.

Leader: Faithful friends took loving care of your lifeless body.

People: Turn the darkness of death into the brightness of day for those we love.

Leader: In the tomb you were laid, but from the tomb you arose.

People: Be the Lord of the resurrection for us and for all the baptized.

Leader: Loving Jesus, for the sake of your cross and passion, we are justified in faith, washed clean of our sins by baptism and repentance, and made one with God. We thank you for your cross and for the depths of your love for us. Help us to bear our cross in the world and follow you until you bring us into your heavenly kingdom; where you reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OUR 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, or see additional instructions in the Depart to Serve leaflet:



MISSION INVITATION

Deb Thompson

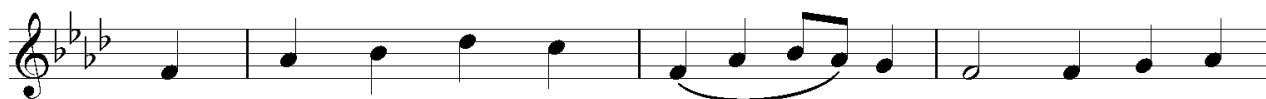
Designated gifts go to **GivePower**. GivePower uses solar and battery storage technologies to deliver essential services to the developing world. All gifts received will go towards an installation at the Ride 4 a Woman Community Center, a charitable organization that supports women struggling with HIV, domestic violence, and poverty in Uganda and currently employs over 300 women from 11 villages. GivePower is a Guide Star Gold Rated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, awarded by Fast Company Magazine as one of the top World-Changing Ideas of 2021. Thank you for your generosity.

*HYMN

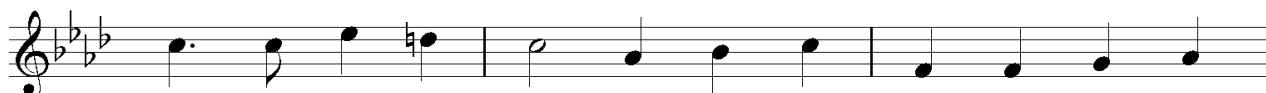
The King's Majesty, Graham George, 1939

“Ride on! Ride on in majesty!”

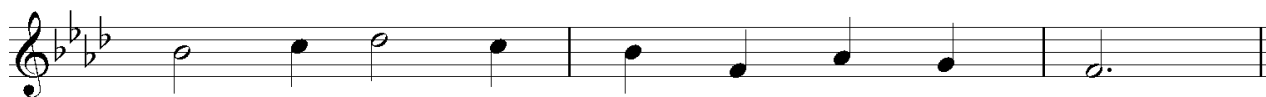
Henry Hart Milman, 1827



1 Ride on! ride on in ma - jes - ty! Hark! all the
2 Ride on! ride on in ma - jes - ty! In low - ly
3 Ride on! ride on in ma - jes - ty! The an - gel
4 Ride on! ride on in ma - jes - ty! Thy last and
5 Ride on! ride on in ma - jes - ty! In low - ly



1 tribes ho - san - na cry; thy hum - ble beast pur - sues his
2 pomp ride on to die; O Christ, thy tri - umphs now be -
3 ar - mies of the sky look down with sad and won - dering
4 fierc - est strife is nigh; the Fa - ther on his sap - phire
5 pomp ride on to die; bow thy meek head to mor - tal



1 road with palms and scat - tered gar - ments strowed.
2 gin o'er cap - tive death and con - quered sin.
3 eyes to see the ap - proach - ing sac - ri - fice.
4 throne ex - pects his own a - noint - ed Son.
5 pain, then take, O God, thy power, and reign.

A period of silence is kept.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD ACCORDING TO MARK

*All sit through the Passion until the verse that mentions “Golgotha, which means place of a skull.”
The congregation speaks the parts printed in bold type.*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Mark, beginning in the forty-third verse of the fourteeneth chapter. Listen for the word of God.

Mark 14:43–65

. . . Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, **“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”** . . .

. . . All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, **“Prophecy!”** The guards also took him over and beat him.

Mark 14:66—15:15

. . . But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” They shouted back, **“Crucify him!”** Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, **“Crucify him!”** So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Mark 15:16–32

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, **“Hail, King of the Jews!”**

. . . It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, **“Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!”** In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, **“He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.”** Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

Mark 15:33–47

. . . “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, **“Listen, he is calling for Elijah.”** . . .

. . . He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body was laid.

After the Passion is concluded, all sit. Silence is kept.

Please stand as you are able.

*CLOSING PRAYER

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: Let us pray. Everliving God, in your tender love for us, you sent your Son to take our nature, and to suffer death on the cross, giving us the example of great humility:

All: **Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN

Passion Chorale, Hans Leo Hassler, 1601

"O sacred head, now wounded"

Latin, 12th or 13th cent.; trans. James Waddell Alexander, 1830

1 O sa - cred head, now wound-ed, with grief and shame weighed down;
2 What thou, my Lord, hast suf - fered was all for sin - ners' gain:
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear-est friend,

now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown;
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?

O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine!
Lo, here I fall, my Sav - ior! 'Tis I de - serve thy place;
O make me thine for - ev - er; and should I faint - ing be,

Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call thee mine.
look on me with thy fa - vor, and grant to me thy grace.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.

There is no postlude on this Holy Day. Please depart in silence.

You are invited to add your palms to the Palm Cross on the chancel steps.

You are also invited to proceed downstairs to Parish Hall to walk the labyrinth.

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 and in honor of our granddaughters, Elise and Alice, on their third birthday by Tom and Christine Farquhar.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Ahrens — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Rev. Samuelson — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Ms. Kulwicki — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

ON THE COVER

Suffer the Children

Artist Sketch for the Jeffrey Window, Nicola D'Ascenzo Studios, Philadelphia, PA, 1931

Leftmost medallion in the top band of the Jeffrey Window

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

March 24, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, Mar. 24

- 9 a.m. Morning Worship &
Holy Communion (Parish Hall &
Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
First Serves (Classroom D)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 6 p.m. Youth Group (Parish Hall)

Monday, Mar. 25

- 10 a.m. Church Growth Committee Mtg
(Fanning Rm)
- 12 Noon Grief Support Group (Classroom C)
- 5:30 p.m. Time Out Monday
(Matt the Miller's Tavern, Dublin)

Tuesday, Mar. 26

- 5:15 p.m. Laundry Love (Wash Land)

Thursday, Mar. 28

- 4:30 p.m. Choristers (Choir Rm)
- 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
(Parish Hall & Sanctuary)

Friday, Mar 29

- 12 Noon Good Friday Service (Sanctuary)

Sunday, Mar. 31

- 7 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service
(Washington Gladden Social
Justice Park)
- 8:45 a.m. Easter Worship Service
(Sanctuary)
- 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt & Donut Offering
(West Lawn)
- 11 a.m. Easter Worship Service
(Sanctuary & Virtual)

Holy Week Services

March 24, 2024, Palm/Passion Sunday
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
"Jesus and the Children"
Worship at 9 & 11 a.m.

March 28, 2024, Maundy Thursday
7 p.m. Communion, followed by the Office of
Tenebrae Service

March 29, 2024, Good Friday
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
"Jesus and the Way of the Cross"
Service at 12 Noon

March 31, 2024, Easter Sunday
The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching
"Jesus: Rising Now and Forever"
7 a.m., 8:45 a.m. & 11 a.m.

**Easter Egg Hunt &
Donut Offering
Easter Sunday, March 31
10:15 a.m.**

Everyone is invited to join the fun on the Playground area on Easter Sunday, March 31, at 10:15 a.m. for an Easter Egg Hunt. Children, toddlers through 5th grade are invited to join the hunt for treat-filled eggs. Church Vitality will provide donuts, coffee, and juice for parents and spectators as they cheer on the egg hunters!

**Time Out Monday
March 25 at 5:30 p.m.
Matt the Miller's Tavern**

No Coffee Hour this Week



Youth Group Today, 6-7:30 p.m. Parish Hall

Questions? Contact Melissa Kulwicki (mkulwicki@first-church.org or text 614-260-1088)

Become a Stephen Minister

Be involved in a meaningful ministry that uses your spiritual gifts. Serving as a Stephen Minister gives people an opportunity to put their spiritual gifts into action—gifts such as faith, mercy, compassion, and encouragement. Ministry that draws on your gifts is personally fulfilling and touches people's lives in powerful ways. One of the blessings of being a Stephen Minister is being part of a community of people who care, all of whom lift one another up as they strive together to provide the best possible ministry for the members of our congregation. The strong relationships you'll form as a Stephen Minister are both rewarding and a great source of support. To find out more about becoming a Stephen Minister at First Church, contact Gary Glover at stephenministrycoordinator@first-church.org. Our next Stephen Minister Training Course begins on Wednesday, May 1.

Healthy Congregations

Plan to attend the next Healthy Congregations workshop on Sunday, April 7, after the 11 a.m. service. Join Dr. Emyln Ott in Parish Hall for a session on our church history and how that forms our future. Participants will create a 30-foot timeline beginning with the first church in 1856 and through the current year. It's not too early to think about what church milestones have had the greatest impact on our community. A buffet lunch from Freedom ala Cart will be served. Register by scanning the QR code below. See you there!



The Spring Retreat: “One Last Time in the Hills” Friday, April 26- Sunday, April 28 Templed Hills Camp & Retreat Center, Bellville, Ohio

Our intergenerational spring retreat will take place Friday evening, April 26, through Sunday morning, April 28 at Templed Hills, the camp and retreat center of our conference, Heartland Conference United Church of Christ. Templed Hills is located one hour north of Columbus in Bellville among the rolling hills just outside of Mansfield. There are planned activities, but also plenty of “downtime.” We will end the weekend with an informal worship gathering on Sunday morning. All our meals will take place in the dining hall and will be prepared by the staff of Templed Hills and lodging is available in two of the camp houses. Most of the rooms have single and/or bunk beds.

The total cost for the weekend is \$100/ Adult. Costs for children are covered through the generosity of the Alma Keeler Fund. Please register by clicking the QR Code below. If you need assistance with the cost, please contact Rev. Joanna at jsamuelson@first-church.org. If you have any additional questions, please contact Melissa Kulwicki at mkulwicki@first-church.org.



Learn About Our Congregation Through Our New Member Class

We invite persons interested in potentially joining our faith community to attend our New Member Class on Saturday, April 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church.

The class is an opportunity to meet our ministers and lay leaders, to learn our church's history, and to see how you might serve and grow spiritually through our activities and programs. The class also includes a boxed lunch and a tour of our historic church building.

Please register for the new member class through the church office at 614-228-1741 by Tuesday, April 9.

Our congregation's Stewardship and Growth Commission is planning a two-session new member class on August 25 and 26. A new member class also is planned for November, but the dates haven't been set yet.

Summer Camp Registration

Throughout the summer months, a variety of weeklong camps are planned at Templed Hills for children/youth who have completed the second grade and older. Camper scholarships are available for First Church children and youth because of the generosity of the late Alma Keeler, a longtime First Church member. For more information about camp, Camper Scholarships, and how to register, click the QR Code below.



First Church Book Club Wednesday, April 3, 2024

A Long Petal of the Sea

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

The Wright Brothers

7 p.m. on Zoom

Come enjoy lively conversation and fellowship this April and May with the First Church Book Club.

On Wednesday, April 3, Jackie Dean will lead a discussion of *A Long Petal of the Sea* by Isabel Allende. This epic novel follows two young people fleeing the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, searching for a place to call home. As the battle between freedom and repression plays out across the world, they create a new life in Chile while still hoping to someday return to Spain. A story of political upheaval, war, loss, survival, and love.

On Wednesday, May 1, Jean Lebold will lead a discussion of David McCullough's biography *The Wright Brothers*. Ohio inventors Wilbur and Orville Wright were modest bicycle mechanics from Dayton at the turn of the 20th century. Neither had a college education or much money but did have lots of ingenuity. Dedicated to the idea that man could fly, they felt they could find the secret. Together they risked their lives in the first attempts at human flight—and their success paved the way for airplanes, aviation, and space flight. You'll be amazed at their story!

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

Keep in Prayer

Members Tom Bishop; Elaine Borling; Jason Allen; Ron Jenkins and Will Davis; Kathy Brownfield; Wendy Reber; Steve Anderson; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; Janice White.

Family and friends Gilda Perry's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; L.J. and Gretchen Cooks' brother, Kione Cooks; David Kandel's mother, Dottie Kandel; Jim Griffin's friends, Andy Bell and John Alatsis; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; Mary Ann Jacobson's nephew, Peter Poppleton; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; Susie Loik's grandson, Alex Glover and his parents, Kristen and Wes; 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 Sandra Geronimo on the death of her brother, Tony Geronimo; the Samuelson/Gillies family friend, Elyshua Franklin on the death of her husband, Aaron Franklin; the Haslett family on the death of their neighbor and friend, Dave Amundson.

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 the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in Cuba.

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.

Designated gifts go to **GivePower**. GivePower uses solar and battery storage technologies to deliver essential services to the developing world. All gifts received will go towards an installation at the Ride 4 a Woman Community Center, a charitable organization that supports women struggling with HIV, domestic violence, and poverty in Uganda and currently employs over 300 women from 11 villages. GivePower is a Guide Star Gold Rated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, awarded by Fast Company Magazine as one of the top World-Changing Ideas of 2021. Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Mission Offerings

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| March 24 | Give Power |
| March 31 | One Great Hour of Sharing |
| April 7 | Green Columbus |
| April 14 | CRIS |

Save the Date:
Bread Nehemiah Action
Tuesday, May 21, at 6:15 p.m.
The Celeste Center

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, Bill McCabe

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: Tom Kiesel

Deacons: Allen Baker, Heather Jones, Brian Kemp, Nan Kreimer, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Fran Panek, Andy Smith Verhage, Thom Smith, Lynn Wallich, 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

Church Stewardship and Church Growth: Janice Taft

Church Stewardship and Church Growth-elect:

Church Vitality: Pat Patterson

Church Vitality-elect:

Communications and Technology Commission: Mike Kennedy

Communications and Technology Commission-elect: Stefan Duga

Faith Formation Commission: Mariner Taft

Faith Formation Commission-elect: Cami Curren

House & Grounds: Eric Klintworth

House & Grounds-elect:

Justice & Mercy: Janet Miller

Justice & Mercy-elect:

Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson

Members-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean

Personnel: David Hogrefe

Personnel-elect: Sandra Mathias

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairperson: Frank Cook

Trustees: David Holt (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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