



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT NINE
APRIL 7, 2024
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

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. Joanna Samuelson, *preacher*

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

The Rev. Dr. Emlyn Ott, *liturgist and co-celebrant*

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

The Rev. Dr. Emlyn Ott

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

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

Leader: This is the good news which we proclaim to you.

People: **Jesus Christ is raised from the dead!**

Leader: Walk in the light of Christ's love.

People: **Live in the light of his teachings and healing mercies.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the One who overcame death.

People: **Let us celebrate the triumph of our Lord. Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN

“Christ is alive”

Truro, Musica Sacra, c. 1778

Brian Wren, 1968, rev. 1995

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
 2 Christ is a - live! No lon - ger bound to dis - tant
 3 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where col - or,
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
 this and ev - ery age, till earth and sky and

prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - ery place and time.
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

*INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: God be with you.

People. And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and 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. Tim.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 4:32-35

Dr. Ott

Leader: A reading from the book of Acts, the fourth chapter.

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALTER

Psalm 133

Dr. Ott

Oh, how good and pleasant it is,
when brethren live together in unity!
**It is like fine oil upon the head
that runs down upon the beard,**
Upon the beard of Aaron,
and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
**It is like the dew of Hermon
that falls upon the hills of Zion.**
For there the Lord has ordained the blessing:
life for evermore.

THE GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to John, the twentieth chapter.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Wounded Healer"

Rev. Samuelson

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

Designated gifts go to support **Freedom a la Cart**. Freedom a la Cart is a nonprofit social enterprise that makes meals more meaningful by tastefully combining fresh, from-scratch cuisine with life-changing employment and long-term support to local survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation. This program provides supportive services for more than 400 survivors a year, including workforce development and comprehensive life skills training. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN
"We walk by faith"

St. Botolph, Gordon Slater, 1929
Henry Alford, 1844

1. We walk by faith, and not by sight; no gra-cious words we hear
2. We may not touch His hands and side, nor fol-low where He trod;
3. Help then, O Lord, our un-be-lief; and may our faith a-bound
4. That, when our life of faith is done, in realms of clear-er light,
from Him who spoke as none e'er spoke, but we be-lieve Him near.
but in His prom-ise we re-joice and cry, "My Lord and God!"
to call on You when You are near and seek where You are found.
we may be-hold You as You are with full and end-less sight.

COMMUNION
COMMUNION HYMN
"Eat this bread"

Rev. Ahrens and Rev. Ott
Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984
Robert J. Batastini and Taizé Community, 1984

"Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and
nev-er be hun-gry. Eat this bread;
drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst."

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

Randolph, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

“God be with you till we meet again”

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

Rev. Samuelson

POSTLUDE

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.

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

April 7, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, Apr. 7

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Study School for Children & Youth (Various Classrooms)
Confirmation Class (Parlor)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:15 p.m. Healthy Congregations History Session (Parish Hall)

Monday, Apr. 8

- 9:30 a.m. Park Executive Committee Mtg (Classroom C)
- 10 a.m. Stewardship & Growth Commission Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 12 Noon Congregational Care Ministry Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 6:30 p.m. Transition Team Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)
Faith Formation (Classroom D)

Tuesday, Apr. 9

- 7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Wednesday, Apr. 10

- 9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day (Church)

Thursday, Apr. 11

- 4:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)
Choristers (Choir Rm)
- 6 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm, Classroom J)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Saturday, Apr. 13

- 10 a.m. New Members Class (Classroom C)

Sunday, Apr. 14

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Study School for Children & Youth (various classrooms)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 4 p.m. Concerts at First Church (Sanctuary)

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 by completing the form in the pew pad and placing the form in the offering plate. You also may register by calling 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 Temple 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.



Concerts at First Church Richard Elliott, organist Sunday, April 14, 4 p.m.

Richard Elliott is the Principal Organist for The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah. For the past 32 years, he has accompanied the choir on its weekly radio and TV broadcast, “Music & the Spoken Word,” as well as in general conferences of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, on dozens of CDs and DVDs, and in the choir’s annual Christmas concerts, which are broadcast each year on PBS. As accompanist for the Tabernacle Choir, he has performed in many of the world’s great halls and appeared on numerous TV and radio programs, including the NBC “Today Show,” the “CBS Morning Show,” “A Prairie Home Companion,” and the nationally syndicated “Pipedreams” radio program. In his work with the choir, Dr. Elliott has collaborated with many guest artists including Andrea Bocelli, the Canadian Brass, Kristin Chenoweth, Renée Fleming, Evelyn Glennie, the King’s Singers, the Sesame Street Muppets, Robert Shaw, James Taylor, and Bryn Terfel.

Rev. Tim’s Book Study on *Poverty, by America* by Matthew Desmond Wednesday, April 17, 10:30 a.m. Classroom C or on Zoom.

Please join us Wednesday, April 17 for a study on *Poverty, by America*, by Matthew Desmond.

Desmond, the author of *Evicted*, illustrates how poverty injures the impoverished — physically, financially, and spiritually — and how the wealthiest country in the world has developed a bifurcated system that favors those who are better off (in the form of tax breaks, hoarded benefits, and walled-off communities).

Come join the conversation!

**First Serves April:
CWS Disaster Hygiene Kits
April 28, 10-10:45 a.m.**

Thank you to all who made monetary donations, donated supplies, and time to help assemble Period Packs for First Serves March. Through your generosity, we were able to assemble and donate 100 kits, as well as donate additional feminine hygiene products to the Coalition for the Homeless.

We will assemble Church World Service Hygiene Disaster Kits for First Serves on April 28. For someone who has just experienced a disaster, these kits help ensure that the person has the hygiene supplies they need to start their day out right. We will be collecting supplies as well as monetary donations. The total cost to assemble each kit is \$15.

A list of items needed can be found by clicking the QR Code below, or on cards located on the Giving Tree. Envelopes will also be available and can be returned in the offering plate or to the church office. Thank you for your generosity!



Stephen Ministry at First Church

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.

Check it Out!

Have you seen the Stephen Ministry bulletin board near the church office? It's new and changing! Meet your Stephen Ministers and Leaders and get to know them. See our current book recommendation *The Gift of Empathy*.

“Empathy is something we all need and something we can all give.” *The Gift of Empathy* explains what empathy is, how to use it well, and ways to practice it in all types of situations. “This book will empower you to better understand, connect with, and empathize with family, friends, coworkers, and others you may relate to.”

If you'd like to read *The Gift of Empathy* please tell a Stephen Minister. We will be sure you receive a copy.



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 a woodsy setting in Bellville among the rolling hills just outside of Mansfield. You are welcome to stay the entire time or for just one night or even part of the day on Saturday – whatever works best for you!

It will include some planned activities, walks in the woods, arts and crafts, plenty of “downtime,” camp songs around the campfire (and yummy s’mores, of course!) as well as 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 button below. If you need assistance with the cost, please contact Rev. Joanna at jsamuels@first-church.org. If you have any additional questions, please contact Melissa Kulwicki at mkulwicki@first-church.org.



Keep in Prayer

Members Tom Bishop; Elaine Borling; Jason Allen; 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 Amy Wagner's friend, Brenda Jackson; Barry Moenter's brother-in-law, Tom Huss; Joanna Samuelson's friend, Tijuana Scott; 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; and Amy Brooks' father, Michael Hamlin.

Those who mourn loved ones Karl and Sallie Danneberger on the death of their friend, Ron Kendzier; Steve and Karen Sterrett on the death of Steve's mother, Barbara Sterrett; 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 Balkans – Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa.

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 support Freedom a la Cart. **Freedom a la Cart** is a nonprofit social enterprise that makes meals more meaningful by tastefully combining fresh, from scratch cuisine with life-changing employment and long-term support to local survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation. This program provides supportive services for more than 400 survivors a year, including workforce development and comprehensive life skills training. Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Mission Offerings

April 7	Freedom a la Cart
April 14	CRIS
April 21	Green Columbus
April 28	Good Samaritan

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

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

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

Member-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean

Personnel: David Hogrefe

Personnel-elect: Sandra Mathias

Youth Member-at-Large:

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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