



## 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. Amanda Conley, *preacher*

The Rev. Ronald Botts, *officiant*

The Rev. Dr. Marti Baumer, *liturgist*

Ethan Murray, *crucifer*

Joshua Stafford, *organist and director*

Pat Patterson, *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

*Allegro moderato e serio* from Sonata No. 1

Felix Mendelssohn, 1845

### ENTER TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Marti Baumer

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

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

Leader: God is in our midst, forming us to be God's own people.

**People: Though the way may be difficult, God will be with us.**

Leader: We need not fear.

**People: In the Lord we will take our refuge, for God is our strength.**

Leader: Come to the Lord who will surround you with God's own righteousness.

**People: Lord, open our hearts and our spirits so that we may faithfully follow you. Amen.**

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN  
"God is Love"

*Abbot's Leigh*, Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941  
Timothy Rees, 1922

1. God is love! The heav'ns are tell - ing, God is love, let earth re - joice;  
2. God is love, and love en - folds us, All the world in one em - brace:  
3. God is love! With mer - cy bound - less God sus - tains all hu - man life.

All cre - a - tion sing - ing, prais - ing And ex - alt - ing with one voice.  
With un - fail - ing grasp God holds us, Ev - 'ry child in ev - 'ry place.  
God's e - ter - nal lov - ing kind - ness Guides us through our earth - ly strife.

God who laid the earth's foun - da - tion; God who spread the heavens a - bove;  
And when hu - man hearts are break - ing Un - der sor - row's i - ron rod,  
Sin and death and hell shall nev - er O'er us fi - nal tri - umph gain.

God who breathes through all cre - a - tion: God is love, e - ter - nal love.  
Then we find that self - same ach - ing Deep with - in the heart of God.  
God is love, so love for ev - er O'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Ronald Botts

Leader: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**People: Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

\*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Amanda Conley

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

Rev. Botts

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 8:26-40

Rev. Baumer

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

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth."

The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

“I am the true vine”

Darius Julian Revie, 2018

John 15:5

I am the true vine, and you the branches.

If you remain in me, and I in you, you will bear great fruit. Alleluia.

THE EPISTLE

1 John 4:7-21

Rev. Baumer

Leader: A reading from the first Letter of John, the fourth chapter.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

\*THE GOSPEL HYMN

*Bridegroom*, David Peter Cutts, 1969

“Like the murmur of the dove’s song”

Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982



1 Like the mur - mur of the dove's song, like the  
 2 To the mem - bers of Christ's Bo - dy, to the  
 3 With the heal - ing of di - vi - sion, with the



chal - lenge of her flight, like the vig - or of the  
 branch - es of the Vine, to the Church in faith as -  
 cease - less voice of prayer, with the power to love and



wind's rush, like the new flame's ea - ger  
 sem - bled, to her midst as gift and  
 wit - ness, with the peace be - yond com -



might: come, — Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.  
 sign: come, — Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.  
 pare: come, — Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.

THE GOSPEL

John 15:1-8

Rev. Conley

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

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Blessings on the Blossom, Blessings on the Fruit”

Rev. Conley

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Botts

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 the Depart to Serve leaflet:



### MISSION INVITATION

Melody Leidheiser

Cash and designated gifts go to support the **Good Samaritan Fund**. The Good Samaritan Fund provides help every month to those who come to First Church in need. Thank you for your generosity.

### ANTHEM

Philip Wilby, 1992

“If ye love me”

John 14:15-18

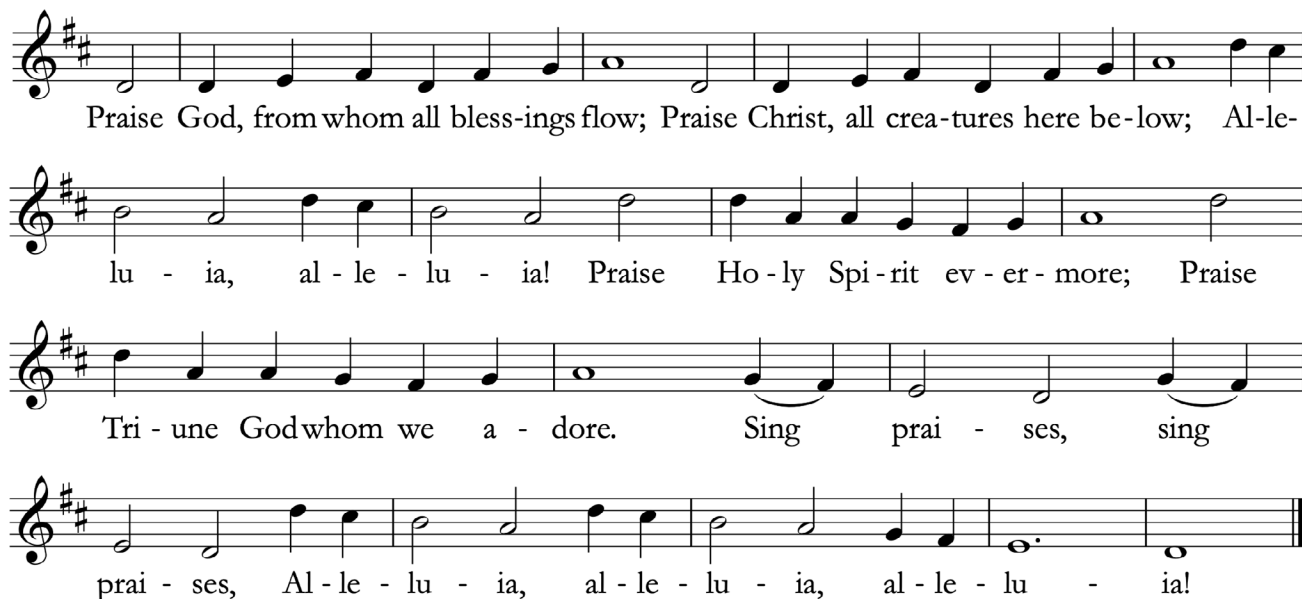
If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father,  
and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever,  
even the Spirit of truth.

And ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you.

### \*DOXOLOGY

*Lasst uns erfreuen*, Auserlesene Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1623



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise Christ, all crea-tures here be-low; Al-le-  
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more; Praise  
Tri - une Godwhom we a - dore. Sing prai - ses, sing  
prai - ses, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Botts

**O Resurrected One, we offer our gifts this morning not to the church historical—the church that was—but to a church that is becoming, that is still being born, that Christ will bring into the future. May our eyes and ears and hearts continue to hold on to Christ as we help him lead his church forward! In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

### COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Rev. Botts

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

“Love divine, all loves excelling”

*Hyfrydol*, Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

Charles Wesley, 1747

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to  
 2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery  
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy  
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing; all thy  
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us  
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -  
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion;  
 find the prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion; en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Conley

POSTLUDE

*Allegro assai vivace* from Sonata No. 1

Felix Mendelssohn, 1845

*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 one of our pastors or anyone wearing a name tag. We would be delighted to assist you.*

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God from the class of 1970 in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Columbus School for Girls.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Conley — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

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

Mr. Stafford — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

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

**April 28, 2024**

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, April 28**

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)  
First Serves (Classroom D)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:30 p.m. Picnic in the Park  
(Gladden Social Justice Park)
- 2 p.m. Park Tree Dedication  
(Gladden Social Justice Park)

### **Monday, April 29**

- 12 Noon Grief Support Group  
(Classroom C & Zoom)

### **Tuesday, April 30**

- 10:30 a.m. Archives Workday  
(Adult Library & Lower Narthex)
- 4:30 p.m. Church Vitality Mtg (Zoom)
- 5:15 p.m. Laundry Love (Wash Land)

### **Wednesday, May 1**

- 10:30 a.m. Book Study (Classroom C & Zoom)
- 12:15 p.m. Wednesday Meditations (Sanctuary)
- 5:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Meet & Greet (Parlor)
- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg  
(Fanning Rm)
- 7 p.m. Book Club (Zoom)

### **Thursday, May 2**

- 1:30 p.m. Healthy Congregations Leadership Team  
(Parish Family Rm)
- 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)

### **Saturday, May 4**

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

### **Sunday, May 5**

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion  
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)  
Sunday School Classes (Various Classrooms)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion  
(Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)
- 4 p.m. Concerts at First Church (Sanctuary)

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## **Washington Gladden Social Justice Park Earth Day Event Today**

**Picnic at 12:30 p.m., Dedication at 2 p.m.**

Mark your calendars! In the week when we celebrate Earth Day, more than 40 trees – including elm, hornbeam, redbud, cherry, and Japanese maple – will be dedicated at Sunday, April 28, at 2 p.m. These trees have been given in honor or in remembrance of a variety of people. They help to beautify the unique Social Justice Park while supporting the City's Urban Forestry Masterplan. All are welcome to attend this brief ceremony. You also are invited to a Picnic in the Park that will begin at 12:30 p.m. prior to the dedication event. Food and beverages will be provided.

## **Calling All Archives Supporters!**

We need many willing hands to help file important documents from our church history into the appropriate year boxes. We will work on **April 30 from 10:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.** Come as little or as long as you like and feel free to bring your lunch, if you choose. The work session will start in the Adult Library at 10:30 a.m.; if you come later, please go straight to the Lower Narthex which will be the main staging area. Please let Greg Duncan know of your availability ([interpret@earthlink.net](mailto:interpret@earthlink.net)) or if you can lend a helping hand at the last minute, just come!

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### **Wednesday Meditation**

**Joshua Stafford, organist**

**Wednesday, May 1, 12:15 p.m.**

Join us as our Minister of Music, Joshua Stafford, offers the final Wednesday Meditation of our 2023-2024 Season on the Beckerath organ.

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### **The Hunchback of Notre Dame**

**Sunday, May 5, 4 p.m.**

Organist Joshua Stafford provides the improvised soundtrack to this 1923 silent masterpiece on our glorious Kimball Organ. Lon Chaney gives an unforgettable performance starring as the tragic Quasimodo.

### **Dress Like it's 1923**

Don your favorite fascinator, cloche, Derby hat, pinstripe suit, vest, flapper dress, or fedora when you attend our First Church Arts showing of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" accompanied by Joshua Stafford. Create your 1920's outfit and join the fun!

## **First Church Book Club: Wednesday, May 1, 7 p.m.**

*The Wright Brothers*

**Wednesday, June 5, 7 p.m.**

*The Fraud*

**Both on Zoom**

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

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 in Dayton at the turn of the 20th century. Dedicated to the idea that man could fly, 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!

On Wednesday, June 5, Andrew Welsh-Huggins will lead a discussion of Zadie Smith's smart, funny historical novel *The Fraud*, based on a famous 1873 British trial that was a media sensation. An uneducated butcher from east London claims to be the heir to a grand estate. Is it true? Smith's novel travels between England and Jamaica, examining freedom, self-delusion, women's independence, racism, slavery, class disparity, storytelling, and the nature of truth. In a world of hypocrisy and self-deception, deciding what's real is complicated.

Questions? Want to receive book club emails? Please call Kathy Reed at 614-442-7742.

## **The Times, They Are a Changing....**

First Congregational Church has embarked on a years-long transition process to become a healthier congregation that continues to offer vital and justice-minded ministry in Columbus and Central Ohio. The Transition Team, comprised of members Todd Cunningham, Jackie Dean, Scott Graham, Greg Halbe, Pavan Peter, Sarah Reed, Rev. Joanna Samuelson, and Joshua Stafford, defines their purpose: Through the leading of the Holy Spirit, the Transition Team a) will oversee a practical plan for celebrating the retirement of Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens; b) create an interim ministry plan; c) envision ministry that moves First Congregational Church into the future; and d) create a long-term plan for professional leadership. The process to envision our future will also re-energize the congregation and strengthen our connections to the denomination.

On Saturday, October 19, 2024, the congregation, friends, and family of Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens will gather to celebrate the ministry of First Church in the last twenty-five years. On October 20, Rev. Ahrens will lead worship for the last time as Senior Minister. After that, he will take a month-long vacation, with his employment at First Congregational Church ending on November 21. The Transition Team plans for an Interim Minister to begin leadership on December 1, 2024.

A Transition Team will continue to work with our Interim Minister and our Designated Minister, Rev. Joanna Samuelson, to guide us as we embrace our strengths and opportunities, while also identifying the weaknesses and threats that may hinder our future development as a healthy congregation.

I invite every member of First Church to join one of the listening sessions that will be led by Transition Team members. Everyone's voice is important and needed, as we become a stronger community in Christ's church. Please seek out any member of the Team to share your concerns and dreams for the future. The times, they are a changing.... And we are all part of the change.

Peace and grace,  
Sarah Reed, Moderator-Elect

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**Wednesday Brunch**  
**Wednesday, May 8, 12 p.m.**  
**J Liu's**  
**6880 N. High Street, Worthington**

Join us at J Liu's for a midweek lunch together with others from First Church. The atmosphere is a unique vision of modern, fusion-style fine dining, offering Asian, Italian, and American. Click the QR Code below to register.



## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Scott Warrick; Clinton Brown; John and Francille Firebaugh; Nick Boriin; Tom Bishop; Kathy Brownfield; Steven Anderson; John Carter and Mary Kay Beall Carter; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; Janice White.

**Family and friends** Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Margaret Cipriani's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; 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; 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 Cicenas; Victor John's cousin, Devin Endlick, and his parents, Charles and Mary Jane, and sister; and Martha Huey's sister, Stephanie Childs and cousin, Martha Dieckmann.

**Those who mourn loved ones** Matt Bendick on the death of his mother, Jan Bendick; and Kelly Dodd on the death of her mother, Estelle Stout.

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 Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the National Council of Churches in Korea.

## 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](mailto:amccormick@firstchurch.org).

Cash and designated gifts go to support the **Good Samaritan Fund**. The Good Samaritan Fund provides help every month to those who come to First Church in need. Thank you for your generosity.

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## Upcoming Mission Offerings

<b>April 28</b>	<b>Good Samaritan</b>
May 5	B.R.E.A.D.
May 12	CelebrateOne

# 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:** 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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