



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. William R. Nirote, *celebrant*

Jill Hultin, *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

Jill Hultin

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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

Leader: Sing to the Lord a new song, a song of hope and rejoicing!

People: Praise God for wonderful acts of mercy and kindness!

Leader: God has remembered God's faithful ones.

People: God has poured blessing upon blessing upon us!

Leader: Praise the Lord, all the earth, shout your praise!

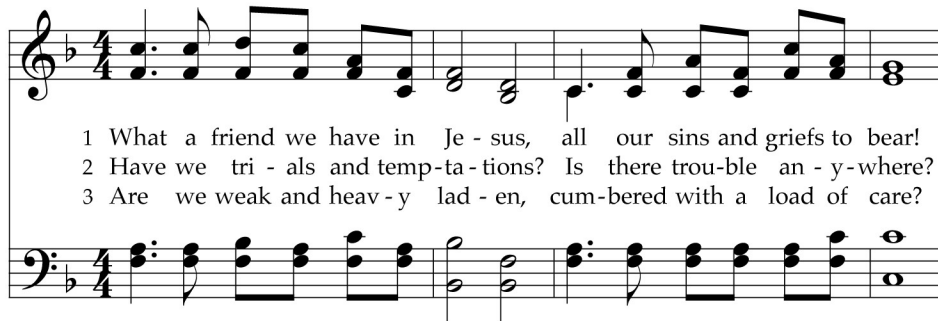
People: Rejoice, for God is truly with us. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Converse, Charles Converse, 1868

“What a friend we have in Jesus”

Joseph Scriven, 1855



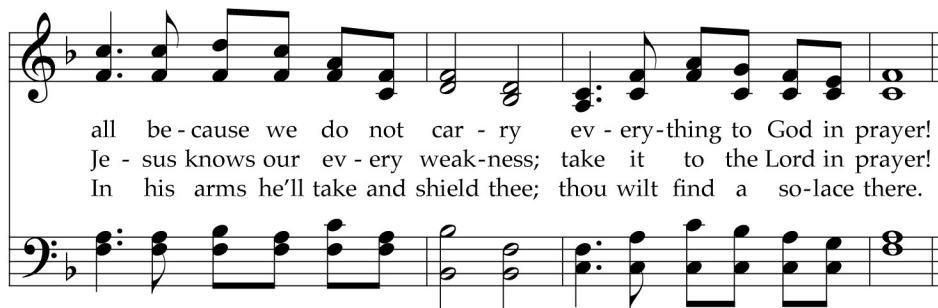
1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
2 Have we tri - als and temp-ta - tions? Is there trou-ble an - y-where?
3 Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, cum-bere'd with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - ery-thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis-cour-aged; take it to the Lord in prayer!
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge; take it to the Lord in prayer!



O what peace we of - ten for - feit; O what need-less pain we bear,
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor-rows share?
Do thy friends de-spise, for-sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!



all be-cause we do not car - ry ev - ery-thing to God in prayer!
Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak-ness; take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a so-lace there.

*INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. William R. Nirote

Leader: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

People: **O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love toward you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Joanna 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,
sign the pad 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 Amy Wagner.*

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 10:44-48

Jill Hultin

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

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALTER

Jill Hultin

Psalm 98

The St. Helena Psalter

Sing a new song to God,
who has done marvelous things.

**With your right hand, O God, and your holy arm,
you have won for yourself the victory.**

You have made known your victory;
your righteousness have you openly shown in the sight of the nations.

**You remember your mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel,
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.**

Shout with joy to God, all you lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

**Sing to God with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.**

With trumpets and the sound of the horn,
shout with joy before our God who reigns in majesty.

**Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it,
the lands and those who dwell therein.**

Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before God,
who will come to judge the earth;

**God shall judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with equity.**

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

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Theology of Mutuality"

Rev. Samuelson

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Nirote

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

Jill Hultin

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

OFFERTORY HYMN
"Jesus loves me, this I know"

Jesus Loves Me, William B. Bradbury, 1862
Anna B. Warner, 1859, David McGuire, 1971

1 Je - sus loves me! This I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so.
2 Je - sus loves me— he who died heav - en's gate to o - pen wide.
3 Je - sus loves me, this I know, as he loved so long a - go,

G C F C C/G G7 C

Lit - tle ones to him be - long; they are weak, but he is strong.
He will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
tak - ing chil - dren on his knee, say - ing, "Let them come to me."

Refrain F C G

Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me!

C F C/G G7 C

Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so.

COMMUNION
COMMUNION HYMN
"Eat this bread"

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

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The lyrics are: "Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread; drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst."

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Samuelson

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 till we meet again"

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.

The image shows a three-system musical score for the hymn "God be with you till we meet again". Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line. The first system covers the first line of lyrics, the second system covers the second line, and the third system covers the third line. The score ends with a double bar line.

*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

May 5, 2024

This Week at First Church

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)

Monday, May 6

- 12 Noon Congregational Care Ministry Mtg
(Fanning Rm)
- 6:30 p.m. House & Grounds Commission Mtg
(Classroom D & Zoom)
Transition Team Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 7 p.m. Faith Formation Commission Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, May 7

- 9 a.m. Good Sam Distribution Day (Church)
- 7 p.m. Justice & Mercy Commission Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)
Personnel Commission Mtg (Zoom)
Communications & Technology
Commission Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 8

- 12 Noon Lunch Bunch (J Liu Restaurant, Worthington)

Thursday, May 9

- 4:30 p.m. Choristers (Choir Rm)
- 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Friday, May 10

- 10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

Sunday, May 12

- 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 (Sanctuary & Virtual)

The Hunchback of

Notre Dame

Today at 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!

Nursery in Need of Donations

In recent months the Church Nursery has had a baby boom! As the weekly number of regular attendees grows, the nursery needs a few items to help accommodate the babies.

If your family no longer needs the gently used items listed below, please consider donating them to the Church Nursery. We ask that the items be gently used and manufactured within the past five years to keep up with current safety standards.

The items needed are:

1- baby swing

1- bouncy seat

1- exersaucer

If you would like to donate any of these items, please email Rev. Joanna (jsamuels@first-church.org). Thank you for your generosity!

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.



IACO Annual Main Event

Interfaith Engagement in Action

**Sunday, May 19, 4 p.m. to 7
p.m.**

**First Community – North
Campus**

**3777 Dublin Road,
Columbus OH 43221**

Speakers and Awardees

· Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, Senior Pastor,
First Congregational Church

· Rev. Dr. Jefferey P. Kee, Pastor, New Faith
Baptist Church

A vegetarian potluck dinner will follow the program. There will also be a reception with cake to honor our awardees, and their service to Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity (BREAD).

If you are attending the dinner, please bring a covered vegetarian main dish, salad, side dish, or dessert that will serve 8 to share. Cost is free but we would greatly appreciate a donation of \$15 to underwrite event costs.

Program sponsorship and recognition opportunities are available. Visit the registration page for details. Deadline to receive ads is May 5.

Click the QR Code to RSVP to attend by May 15, 2024.



Tickets for the Nehemiah Action

B.R.E.A.D. Network members will be distributing blue tickets to the Nehemiah Action on the next three Sundays. Tickets will also be available at the Church office, and online using the QR code that can be found on the B.R.E.A.D. website at www.breadcolumbus.com, Follow Bread Organization on Facebook or breadorg on Instagram for updates!

Please also note that on May 19 we will be selling B.R.E.A.D. t-shirts (from Adult S to XXXL, \$12.50 each) between the 9 and 11 a.m. services, and at the Coffee Hour from 12:15 to 1 pm. Melissa Kulwicki will be on hand on May 19 with art supplies to help us create posters that will be taken to the Celeste Center on May 21 to underscore our support for the issues presented by B.R.E.A.D. Please mark both May 19 as well as the May 21 Nehemiah Action date on your calendars.

B.R.E.A.D. rises!



The Golden Jubilee Service for G. Dene Barnard June 2 at 11 a.m.

Join us on Sunday, June 2, at 11 a.m. as we celebrate 50+ years with our beloved Minister of Music Emeritus, G. Dene Barnard. We'll honor Dene's half-century at First Church with a Festival Communion Service followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

We invite all choir alumni to join the First Church Choir to sing the service. We'll gather for fellowship and rehearsal on Saturday morning, June 1. If you'd like to sing with us, please visit firstchurcharts.org/dene and fill out the linked form. If you have a memory, greeting, or photos you'd like to share, please email music@first-church.org

Schedule of Events

Saturday, June 1

Alumni Choir Rehearsal

9:30 a.m. Registration and Refreshments

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Rehearsal

Sunday, June 2

10 a.m. Alumni Choir Rehearsal

11 a.m. Golden Jubilee Service

12:30 p.m. Reception in Parish Hall

Keep in Prayer

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

Family and friends Al Adcock's sister, Barbara Ontal; Shane Gillies' mother, Marie Gillies; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick, and niece, Abbie McCormick; Amy Wagner's friend, Brenda Jackson; Barry Moenter's brother-in-law, Tom Huss; Gilda Perry's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; Jim Griffin's friends, Andy Bell and John Alatsis; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; Todd and Mary Anne Jacobson's friend, Lisa Lang, and Mary Anne'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 India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Disciples of Christ Church in the Republic of Congo.

Give

At First Church, our financial resources enable us to "Enter to worship, depart to serve." You can support the mission and ministry of First Church now by using Realm, EasyTithe or PayPal, by visiting <https://www.first-church.org/give/>, or by sending your offering directly to First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For more information, please contact Annette McCormick at amccormick@firstchurch.org.

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

Upcoming Mission Offerings

May 5	B.R.E.A.D.
May 12	CelebrateOne

Save the Date:

Healthy Congregations Workshop

Sunday, June 9

12:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Parish Hall

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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www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx

