



### WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 172 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. Yvonne V. Delk, *preacher*
- The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *officiant*
- Michael Weddle, *liturgist*
- Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
- Jamie Bobb, *organist*
- 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

Elevation

George Walker, 1994

Offertory

Florence Price, 1953

#### ENTER TO WORSHIP

Michael Weddle

**Leader:** The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**People:** **And also with you.**

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

**Leader:** Seek God; know God; trust God, O people.

**People:** **Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion.**

**Leader:** Declare God's deeds among the people, for the needy are remembered, the poor have hope.

**People:** **Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion.**

\*OPENING HYMN

Winchester Old, Esté's Psalmes, 1592

"God is our refuge and strength"

The New Metrical Version of the Psalms, 1909

1 God is our ref - uge and our strength, our  
 2 Though hills a - mid the seas be cast, though  
 3 Where God a - bides a riv - er flows; that  
 4 Since God is in the midst of it, the

ev - er - pres - ent aid, and there - fore, though the  
 foam - ing wa - ters roar, yea, though the might - y  
 cit - y will re - joice. But na - tions fear and  
 cit - y walls shall stand, se - cure and safe with

earth be moved, we will not be a - fraid;  
 bil - lows shake the moun - tains on the shore.  
 king - doms shake be - fore God's thun - dering voice.  
 God's sure help, when trou - ble is at hand.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**People: O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; 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

Dr. 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 at the end of the pew, sign it and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them by name.*

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

## THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 17:57-18:5, 18:10-16

Mr. Weddle

Leader: A reading from the First Book of Samuel, the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters.

On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul. So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army. David had success in all his undertakings; for the Lord was with him. When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## THE EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Mr. Weddle

Leader: A reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, the sixth chapter.

As we work together with Christ, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

\*THE GOSPEL HYMN  
"Wade in the water"

*Wade in the Water*  
African American Spiritual

Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,  
Wade in the wa - ter, God's - a gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
See that host all dressed in white, God's - a gon - na trou - ble the  
See that band all dressed in red,  
Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?  
wa - ter. The lead - er looks like the Is - real - ite,  
Looks like the band that Mo - ses led,  
The Ho - ly Ghost a - com - in' on me,  
God's - a gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

THE GOSPEL

Mark 4:35-41

Dr. Delk

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

When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"There Is A River"

Dr. Delk

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Dr. 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 the Depart to Serve leaflet:*



### MISSION INVITATION

Dr. Ahrens

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Strengthen the Church (STC)**. The STC offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. Thank you for your generosity.

### ANTHEM

To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord, BWV 684

Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685

### \*DOXOLOGY

*Old 100th*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Dr. Ahrens

### COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

Temple of Peace, William P. Rowan, 2000

“Light dawns on a weary world”

Mary Louis Bringle, 2001



1 Light dawns on a wea - ry world when eyes be - gin to  
2 Love grows in a wea - ry world when hun - gry hearts find  
3 Hope blooms in a wea - ry world when crea - tures, once for -



see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a  
bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a  
lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a



wea - ry world: the prom - ised day of jus - tice comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom - ised feast of plen - ty comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom - ised green of E - den comes.



The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;



the hills and moun - tains shall break forth with sing - ing!



We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,



as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

\*BENEDICTION

Dr. Delk

POSTLUDE

Toccata on “Life Every Voice and Sing”

Mark A. Miller, 1967

*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 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 and to our children Elizabeth, Frank, Foz, and Stephanie, and our grandchildren Alice, Talia, and Franky by Frank and Sue Cook.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Dr. Delk — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Dr. Ahrens — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

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

† MUSIC NOTES

Three of the four composers heard today are African American. George Walker and Florence Price were both trailblazing composers and performers. Walker was the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1996 for *Lilacs* for soprano and orchestra, a setting of Walt Whitman's 1865 elegy for Pres. Abraham Lincoln, *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd*. Florence Price was the first female African American symphonist to have her works played by major orchestras. Mark A. Miller fuses the style of 20th century French improvisors with the melody of the Johnson brothers' (James Weldon and John Rosamond) hymn to create a stirring interpretation of "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

"To Jordan came the Christ, Our Lord" is Bach's setting of Martin Luther's own hymn (text and melody, 1541), which expounds the meaning and benefits of baptism. Bach nestles the hymn melody in long notes in the tenor voice (the pedal, in this case), while the outer voices evoke the scene of Jesus' own baptism. Commentators have likened the rapid 16th note movement in the left hand to the muddy waters of Jordan and/or the 'rushing wind' of the Holy Spirit. The two highest voices constantly criss-cross each other to symbolize the 'sign of the cross' gesture made at the rite of baptism (and at other places in worship).

† PERMISSIONS AND COPYRIGHTS

"Light dawns on a weary world." Words: Mary Lou Bringle; ©2002 GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Music: William P. Rowan; © 2000 admin. GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted permission under OneLicense #A-717661. All rights reserved.







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

June 23, 2024

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, June 23**

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 4 p.m. Gladden Lecture (Sanctuary)

### **Monday, June 24**

- 10 a.m. Church Growth Committee Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 11 a.m. Memorial Service for John Firebaugh
- 6:30 p.m. Transition Team Mtg

### **Tuesday, June 25**

- 4:30 p.m. Church Vitality Commission Mtg (Zoom)
- 5:15 p.m. Laundry Love (Wash Land)
- 7 p.m. Deacons Mtg (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, June 26**

- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry Group Supervision Mtg (Fanning Rm)

### **Thursday, June 27**

- 7 p.m. Celebration Committee Mtg (Zoom)

### **Friday, June 28**

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

### **Sunday, June 30**

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 1:30 p.m. Greenlawn Cemetery Tour (Greenlawn Cemetery)

## **2024 Gladden Lecture Series:**

**The Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk**

**Today at 4 p.m.**

Join us today at 4 p.m. for the 2024 Gladden Lecture series featuring The Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk. For over 60 years, Rev. Delk has been a strong ally in the fight for human and civil rights for people of color, children, and the poor.

The 2024 Gladden Lecture is being co-sponsored by the Washington Gladden Social Justice Park and a reception following the lecture will be held in the Social Justice Park.

---

## **Memorial Service for**

**John Firebaugh**

**Monday, June 24 at 11 a.m.**

**in the Sanctuary**

---

## **First Serves June**

### **Donations for Laundry Love**

For First Serves in June, we will be collecting supplies for Laundry Love. Laundry Love needs detergent and fabric softeners to continue this mission. Please donate any size and type of liquid laundry detergent (no pods or powder). Fabric softener sheets (not liquid) are also needed. Visit the Giving Tree to pick up a reminder tag. First Serves envelopes are also available if you wish to make a monetary contribution. Please place your Laundry Love donations in the baskets under the Giving Tree through Sunday, June 30. Thank you for your generosity!

The next Laundry Love day is Tuesday, June 25.

## First Church Book Club News

### Planning Your Summer Reading?

Come enjoy lively conversation and fellowship with the First Church Book Club. We'll be reading and discussing the following books in the next nine months. All are welcome! The book club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. on Zoom, excluding holidays.

July 10 - *Poverty, by America* by Matthew Desmond (nonfiction; 284 pgs.); led by Todd Jacobson.

Aug. 7 - *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks (fiction; 401 pgs.); led by Janet Newcity.

Sept. 4 - *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng (fiction; 335 pgs.); led by Mary Jacobson.

Oct. 2 - *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe (nonfiction graphic novel; 239 pgs.); led by Kathy Reed. (According to the American Library Association, this was the most "challenged" books in 2022 for the second year in a row. From July 2021 to Dec. 2022, the book was banned in 56 school districts, the most of any book, according to PEN America. The book has been challenged for LGBTQIA+ and sexually explicit content.)

Nov. 6 - *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett (fiction; 309 pgs.); led by Andrew Welsh-Huggins.

Jan. 8, 2025 - *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride (fiction; 385 pgs.); led by Chris Farquhar.

Feb. 5, 2025 - *Master Slave, Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom* by Ilyon Woo (nonfiction; 410 pgs.); led by Jean Lebold. One of two winners of the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Biography.

March 5, 2025 - *North Woods* by Daniel Mason (fiction; 372 pgs.); led by Fran Panek.

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

## Greenlawn Cemetery Tour

Sunday, June 30

1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Jim Griffin will lead a tour of the Greenlawn Cemetery highlighting the famous Ohioans buried there. Register by clicking the QR code below.



---

### T-shirts Still Available

We still have some First Church Open and Affirming shirts available in both the tie-dye and solid lavender, as well as a few lavender tank tops left in some sizes for \$21. If your size is not currently in stock, we are placing another order, and it will be in stock soon.

We also have the grey First Church BREAD shirts available for \$10.

If you are interested, please email Melissa Kulwicky at [mkulwicky@first-church.org](mailto:mkulwicky@first-church.org) and include the size, color/style, and quantity, or see her after worship. Payments for shirts can be made through Realm, in person, or by placing cash or check in an envelope, marked with your name and a memo of either Pride Shirt or BREAD Shirt in the offering plate.

---

### Volunteer Opportunity

#### Columbus Relief

Columbus Relief is moving its base of operations from 800 Frebis Avenue to 2000 Parsons Avenue. This is a locally funded, faith-based ministry to our unhoused friends. They focus on building relationships as they minister to immediate needs such as food, laundry, and showers. First Church began supporting this ministry in 2024 and plans to continue. Currently, Columbus Relief needs many volunteers to move their ministry. Anyone with plumbing, carpentry, or electrical skills is especially needed as they prep the new building. Other, less strenuous jobs are also available. More information can be found at <https://www.cbusrelief.org> or by contacting Debi Cunningham at 614-324-6319 or [dinodebbblue@yahoo.com](mailto:dinodebbblue@yahoo.com)

## Keep in Prayer

**Congratulations** to Katie and Steven Deliman on the birth of twins Caroline May and Holden James, born on June 15. Grandparents are Shelly and Tom Gies and Cindy and John Deliman.

**Members** Maddie McWilliams; Lila Bendick; Beverly Halbe; Nancy Burba; Tim Holt; Dene Barnard; Mary Kay Beall Carter and John Carter; Carol Lowy; Scott Warrick; Clinton Brown; Tom Bishop; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; and Janice White.

**Family and friends** Wendy Kennedy's stepfather, Chuck; Nancy Loy's friend, Rev. Peggy O'Connor; Melva Fisher's sister and brother-in-law, Velma and Jamie Christy, and her daughter-in-law, Mindy Fisher; Torrence; Leslie Huntington's friend, Becky Edwards Williams; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Liz Kuhn; Mike Kennedy's father, Allan Kennedy; Tim Ahrens' mother, Lorene Ahrens, sister, Debbie Ahrens, and granddaughter and Sarah Ahrens Stadie's daughter, Aurelia Stadie; Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Margaret Cipriani's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; Barry Moenter's brother-in-law, Tom Huss; 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; 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 Cicenias; and Victor John's cousin, Devin Endlick, and his parents, Charles and Mary Jane, and sister.

**Those who mourn** Kate Erickson on the death of her father, John White; Francille Firebaugh on the death of her husband, John Firebaugh; and David Wyatt's friends Hugh and Joelle Endsley on the death of their son, Simon Endsley.

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

We pray for all people in war zones around the world including Gaza/Israel and other Middle East conflicts, Sudan, Ukraine, and Myanmar.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Kenya and Tanzania. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

## 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 **Strengthen the Church (STC)**. The STC offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. Thank you for your generosity.

---

## Upcoming Mission Offerings

June 23  
June 30

UCC Strengthen the Church  
Horizon Prison Initiative

# 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, Denise Vogt

**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:** Sebastian Kulwicki

## 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

*Bulletins are printed on recycled paper with a minimum 50% post-consumer content.*

*All music in the bulletin is reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-717661. All rights reserved.*

*Bulletins and audio podcasts of services are available on the website for each week:*

*[www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx](http://www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx)*

