



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.

- The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *preacher and co-celebrant*
- The Rev. Ronald Botts, *co-celebrant*
- Martha Worth, *liturgist*
- Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
- Jamie Bobb, *organist*
- Victor John, *soloist*
- Mike Kennedy, *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

Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, BWV 668

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Martha Worth

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: I was glad when they said to me,

People: Let us go to the house of the Lord.

Leader: O God, open our lips.

People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Leader: Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God;

People: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Darwall, John Darwell, 1770

"Come sing, oh church in joy!"

Text: Brian Dill, 1988

1 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!
 2 Long years have come and gone, and still God reigns su - preme,
 3 Let cour - age be our friend; let wis - dom be our guide,
 4 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!

For Christ the Lord has led us through the a - ges long!
 em - power - ing us to catch the vi - sion, dream the dream!
 as we in mis - sion mag - ni - fy the Cru - ci - fied!
 For Christ the Lord has tri - umphed o'er the a - ges long!

In bold ac - cord, come cel - e - brate the jour - ney now and praise the Lord!

INVOCATION

The Rev. Ronald Botts

Leader: God be with you.

People. And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; 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 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 Camilla Curren.*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Ezekiel 2:1-5

Mrs. Worth

Leader: A reading from the book of Ezekiel, the second chapter.

The Lord said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord God." Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL HYMN

Spiritus Vitae, Mary Jane Hammond, 1920

"O Breath of life, come sweeping through us"

Text: Elizabeth A.P. Head, 1914

1. O Breath of life, come sweep - ing through us, re - vive your church with life and power,
 2. O Wind of God, come bend us, break us till hum - bly we con - fess our need,
 3. O Breath of love, come breathe with - in us, re - new - ing thought and will and heart,

O Breath of life, come, cleanse, re - new us and fit your church to meet this hour.
 then, in your ten - der - ness re - make us, re - vive, re - store—for this we plead.
 come, love of Christ, a - fresh to win us, re - vive your church in ev - ery part.

THE GOSPEL

Mark 6:1-13

Rev. Samuelson

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

Jesus came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them.

And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

"Making Space for Growth"

Rev. Samuelson

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Botts

THE OFFERTORY

To give online, please scan this QR code, or see additional instructions in the Depart to Serve leaflet:



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. Samuelson

Cash and designated gifts go to support the **Gladden Food Pantry**, which provides emergency food assistance to households living within their service area. Persons in need may shop through the pantry once a month and return for just fresh produce any day during their open times. Home delivery is also available to seniors and disabled residents. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY

The Holy City

Stephen Adams (1841-1913)

*DOXOLOGY

Old 100th

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow"

arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1953

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all creatures here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

We practice open communion: Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at the Lord's table.

As directed by the deacons, please come forward down the center aisle, receive the elements of communion, partake them, and place the cup in the basket provided. Individual bread and cup will be offered to you by the communion ministers.

Gluten-free wafers are available. Please deposit the plastic cups in the bins by the side aisles.

*INVITATION

Rev. Samuelson

Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

*SURSUM CORDA

Plainsong

The musical notation is arranged in three systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system shows the Leader's part (left) and the People's part (right). The lyrics are: "The Lord be with you. And also with you." The second system continues the melody with lyrics: "Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord." The third system concludes with lyrics: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise." The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and fermatas.

*COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Samuelson

We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being. We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none. We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless. We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory.

We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory. And now we give you thanks for the hope to which you call us in your Son, that following in the faith of all your saints, we may run with perseverance the race that is set before us, and with them receive the unfading crown of glory. We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons, daughters, and all children of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 hea - ven and earth are full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bles - sed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The congregation may be seated.

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory. We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service on behalf of all people. We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us. Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

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.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

Please come forward as directed by the deacons to receive the common elements for communion.

Receive the bread and grape juice at one of the stations. You are invited to consume the elements as you receive them.

Gluten-free bread is available in the center of the tray. Place empty cups in the baskets on the tables by the transepts.

If you are worshipping online, you are invited to gather elements of communion in your home.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

“Know ye that the Lord he is God”

Johann Christian Geisler (1729-1815)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: Let us pray.

People: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ’s gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. Kulwicki

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

*CLOSING HYMN

Sine Nomine, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

“Go to the World!”

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1985

1 Go to the world! Go in - to all the earth.
2 Go to the world! Go in - to ev - ery place.
3 Go to the world! Go strug - gle, bless, and pray;
4 Go to the world! Go as the ones I send,

Go preach the cross where Christ re - news life's worth,
Go live the word of God's re - deem - ing grace.
the nights of tears give way to joy - ous day.
for I am with you till the age shall end,

bap - tiz - ing as the sign of our re - birth.
Go seek God's pres - ence in each time and space.
As ser - vant church, you fol - low Christ's own way.
when all the hosts of glo - ry cry "A - men!"

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

POSTLUDE

Praeludium in Eb, BWV 552

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

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 in remembrance of Peter R. Boriin by Ellen and Pete Boriin.

† COFFEE HOUR THIS MORNING is hosted by the Joyous Neighborhood Care Circle.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Samuelson — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

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

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

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

July 7, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, July 7

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion
(Sanctuary & Virtual)
12 Noon Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales

Monday, July 8

- 9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day
10 a.m. Stewardship & Growth Commission
(Fanning Rm)
6:30 p.m. Transition Team Mtg
(Fanning Rm & Zoom)
7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, July 9

- 5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)
7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)
Communications & Technology
Commission Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, July 10

- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg
(Fanning Rm)
7 p.m. Book Club (Zoom)

Thursday, July 11

- 6 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal
(Gallery & Sanctuary)

Friday, July 12

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

Sunday, July 14

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12 Noon Coffee Hour

Summer Sermon Series

“Then and Now: A Final Sermon Series”

The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens Preaching

Sundays at 9 and 11 a.m.

In-person and Livestreaming on YouTube and Facebook

Sunday, July 28 “**Christian Nationalism: Not Christian or Patriotic**”

Sunday, August 4 “**Racism and Caste: The Skin and Bones of the Matter**”

Sunday, August 11 “**What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?**”

Sunday, August 18 “**The Devil and the Arch Villains**”

Sunday, August 25 “**A Parable of Madness**”

Sunday, September 1 “**To Love and to Work**”

First Church Book Club

Wednesday, July 10 at 7 p.m.

Todd Jacobson will lead a discussion of *Poverty, by America* by Matthew Desmond. Why does the U.S., the richest country on earth, have more poverty than any other advanced democracy? One in every eight of our children go without basic necessities, scores of citizens live and die on the streets, and corporations pay poverty wages. Desmond argues that affluent Americans benefit from corporate and government policies that keep people poor and that choices we make as consumers contribute to the poverty of others.

Questions? Want to receive book club emails? Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742. Your voice is important! Please join us once, or often, to share your perspectives. Let's all be part of the change.

Park Construction

In July, the park is installing some additional sidewalks and some bluestone landscaping features. In addition, a separate project involves the creation of a small landing off of the Cleveland Avenue sidewalk where a marker will eventually be placed that will describe the corner sculpture.

Despite the mess that is made in the process, our landscape architects (Charlie Weaver of Architectural Gardens and Mark Schieber of Schieber and Associates) assure us that the final result will be worth it. These two projects are being funded by a grant of the Tad and Nancy Jeffrey Fund of the Columbus Foundation and by gifts of the Crane Family in memory of LoAnn Crane.

Transition News

When Rev. Tim leaves at the end of October, we will enter our time of interim ministry. During this time, which may last two years, we will be led by an Interim Senior Minister and our Designated Minister, Rev. Joanna Samuelson, to grieve our loss, explore our congregational mission, and continue our ministry through preaching and pastoral care. The task of the church and its leaders will be to identify effective ways to approach ministry in the future, while also recruiting and training new leadership.

The Transition Team process continues to move forward. The team has put together a schedule for Listening Circles and a churchwide survey to receive thoughts and concerns from every constituent. You'll see the survey, which will be available online and on paper, published in the next couple of weeks.

Schedule for Listening Circles

July 10, 9:30 a.m., FCC staff
July 14, 10 a.m., Open meeting for members
July 16, 7 p.m., Council members
July 20, 9:30 a.m., Open meeting for members
July 28, 10 a.m., Open meeting for members
August 6, 10 a.m., Open meeting for members
August 14, 7 p.m., Zoom meeting for members

Your voice is important! Please join us once, or often, to share your perspectives. Let's all be part of the change.

National Grant Strings by Tom Worley

Last week, an article announced that our church is one of 38 finalists for a potential \$250,000 building repairs grant from The National Fund for Sacred Places. Twenty winners will be announced in October. This week's article outlines grant conditions.

The church is aware of one or more community funds that can provide major support. One fund previously awarded the church a \$400,000 grant to establish a park maintenance endowment. The National Fund will not recognize any early gifts or early grants to support the building project as a match of its grant dollars. Only those gifts or grants provided after the award is announced can be considered.

The National Fund will send staff to Columbus to meet with the church and inspect the property before construction begins. Grant dollars are dispersed periodically as we meet fundraising goals and construction timelines. The project must be completed within 18 months from when the grant award is announced.

Like any other grant, you will see that there are strings attached. With careful planning, we can take the strings and make a festive bow on what would be a \$250,000 gift to our church.

Opportunity for a History Buff

Your archive team is interested in compiling information about the Gladden Lecture Series, which is in its 101st year of existence. It seems fitting that we create a document that chronicles that path.

All of the information that would be needed to create this document is in our church's archives. We just need an interested history buff (or buffs) to go through the material and to write it up. If writing it up gives you pause, worry not because we can find editors to do the polishing. The archive team will provide assistance to help you access the materials needed. This is a great opportunity to handle a lot of our church history and to have the joy and satisfaction of creating a new resource that helps tell our always-evolving story. Contact Greg Duncan interprep@earthlink.net or 404-401-8363 to enlist.

Keep in Prayer

Members Jean Wetmore; Alex Palmer; Bill Rhodes; Sheri Moreen; 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 the Gillies and Samuelson's neighbor and friend, Rev. Dr. George Zoebel; 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; 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 Cicenas; and Victor John's cousin, Devin Endlick, and his parents, Charles and Mary Jane, and sister.

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

We continue to pray for all people involved in mass shootings, especially the victims both in Columbus and across the nation.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Eritrea and Ethiopia. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka.

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 the **Gladden Food Pantry**, which provides emergency food assistance to households living within their service area. Persons in need may shop through the pantry once a month and return for just fresh produce any day during their open times. Home delivery is also available to seniors and disabled residents. Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Mission Offerings

July 7	Gladden Food Pantry
July 14	Sandy Hook Promise
July 21	Broad Street Food Pantry
July 28	Faith in Public Life

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

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www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx

