

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. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *celebrant*

Henry Gillies, *liturgist*

Leslie Fulford, *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

Henry Gillies

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: O God, open our lips.

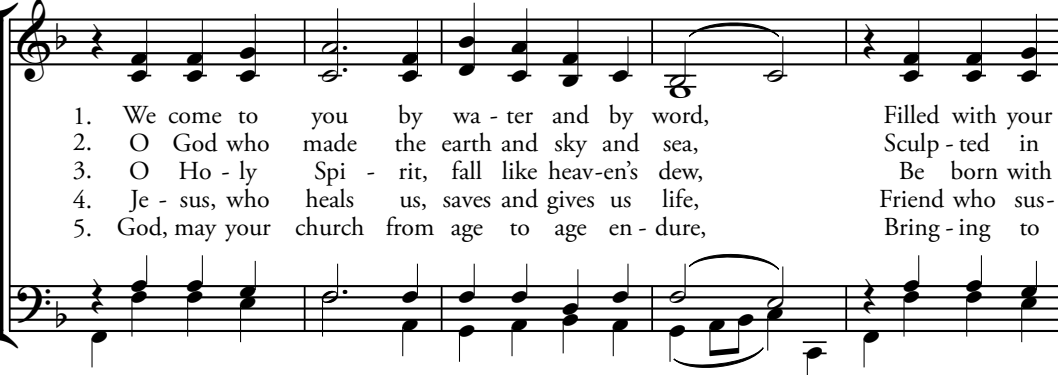
People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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
"We come to you"

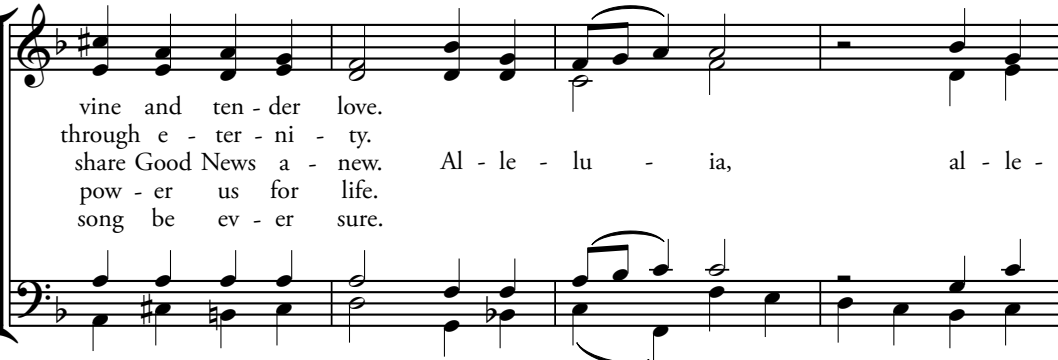
Mentor, Keith Mentor, 1998
Timothy C. Ahrens, 1998



1. We come to you by wa - ter and by word, Filled with your
2. O God who made the earth and sky and sea, Sculp - ted in
3. O Ho - ly Spi - rit, fall like heav-en's dew, Be born with
4. Je - sus, who heals us, saves and gives us life, Friend who sus -
5. God, may your church from age to age en - dure, Bring - ing to



Spi - rit, seek - ing Christ as Lord, Con - firm in us di -
love, di - verse hu - man - i - ty. Set stars in or - bit
in our hearts on fire for you, Set us a - blaze to
tains us in the midst of strife, O ris - en Lord, em -
Christ all peo - ple, rich and poor, and may our joy - ful



vine and ten - der love.
through e - ter - ni - ty.
share Good News a - new. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
pow - er us for life.
song be ev - er sure.



lu - ia. lu - ia.

*INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

** When you return to your seat, please find the blue Welcome notebook, sign the pad and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them by name.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Leslie Fulford and Rev. Ahrens

During the sermon time, the young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories"

with Leslie Fulford.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Henry Gillies

Leader: A reading from the Book of Esther, the seventh and ninth chapters.

The king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me-- that is my petition-- and the lives of my people-- that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king." Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: A reading from the gospel according to Mark, the ninth chapter.

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

"For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Hidden History"

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Samuelson

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

Todd Jacobson

Cash and designated gifts today go to support the **Legacy Fund**. First Church's Legacy Fund provides support to make major church repairs, pay property insurance, and make capital improvements and includes 2020 Project, funds for emergency repairs and the Repair, Restore Enhance Reserve Fund. Trustees approve disbursements in consultation with Church Council. Please give generously.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Maryton, attr. Freeman Lewis, 1814

"O master, let me walk with thee"

Henry Percy Smith, 1874, Washington Gladden, 1879

1. O Mas - ter, let me walk with Thee in low - ly
2. Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear,
3. Teach me Thy pa - tience; still with Thee in clos - er,
4. In hope that sends a shin - ing ray far down the

paths of ser - vice free; tell me Thy se - cret;
win - ning word of love; teach me the way - ward
dear - er com - pa - ny, in work that keeps faith
fu - ture's broad - 'ning way; in peace that on - ly

help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.
feet to stay, and guide them in the home - ward way.
sweet and strong, in trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong.
Thou canst give, with Thee, O Mas - ter, let me live.

COMMUNION

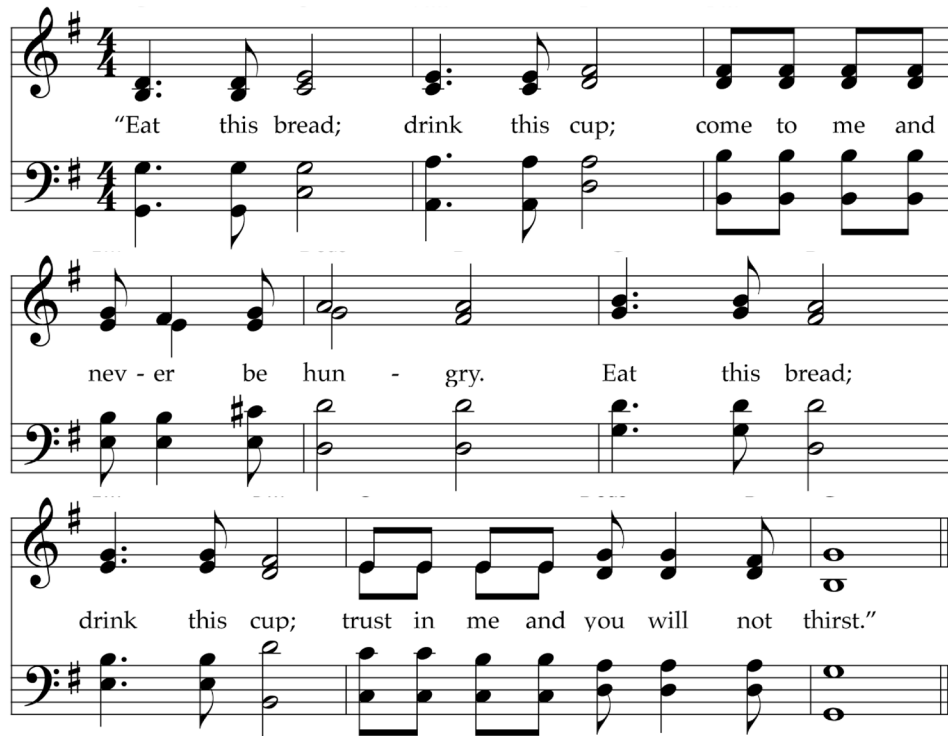
Rev. Samuelson

COMMUNION HYMN

Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984

“Eat this bread”

Robert J. Batastini and Taizé Community, 1984



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

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Ahrens

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

Rev. Ahrens

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 a hymn. 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: "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 music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes.

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

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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“Eat this bread.” Words: Robert Batastini and the Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier; ©1984 Less Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

ABOUT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

WELCOME TO FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. As you can see and hear from the soaring Gothic Revival architecture, the stained glass windows, and the sound of music in this space, beauty is truly a multi-media encounter here.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES are held at 9:00 a.m. (Morning Worship and Holy Communion, Parish Hall), 11:00 a.m. (Sanctuary), and 4:00 p.m. (Choral Evensong on the third Sunday of each month as announced). Following the Social Gospel tradition of Washington Gladden, senior minister of this church from 1882 to 1914, First Congregational Church welcomes all people and extends its mission and witness into the community.

AS A CONGREGATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, we believe that *God is Still Speaking* in the world today. Our church has a distinctive voice as a people of welcome, justice and passion for the Gospel, shaped in expressions and traditions of the historic church.

THIS BUILDING was designed by renowned architect John Russell Pope, dedicated in 1931 and renovated in 1997.

THE BRUSSELS TAPESTRIES were woven in 1575 in Belgium, embodying the artistic ideals of the Renaissance. Part of a larger series, they depict events in the life of Abraham.

THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS: Seven studios have placed their work in this church. Above the Chancel, the Jeffrey window, given in thanksgiving for the lives and generosity of J.A. and Celia Jeffrey (Nicola d'Ascenzo Studios, 1931), depicts Christ's earthly life and ministry, and the East Chancel window (Charles J. Connick Studios, 1937) honors Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The Friendship window (East wall, East Transept, Charles J. Connick Studios, 1931) represents Christ and Saint John, and in the South bay, two lancet windows portray the Good Samaritan (Connick Associates Studio, 1966), while the Gladden window (West wall, West Transept, Oliver Smith, 1931) honors the social justice witness of Washington Gladden, tracing Gladden's love of his alma mater, Williams College, and in the South bay, two lancet windows represent the Resurrection and the New Jerusalem (Gabriel Loire, built by Jacques Loire Vitraux, 1984). High above the Nave, the eight Clerestory windows (designed by Francis Deck, built by Emil Frei Studios, 1976–1983) depict the story of Creation, and the Fall of Adam and Eve. Below, the Aisle windows (Gabriel Loire, 1988) illustrate parables of Jesus from the Gospels. The Rose window (designed by Wilbert C. Ronan, built by Oliver Smith, 1931) above and behind the Beckerath organ case portrays Christian cardinal virtues. The Barnard window (Ellen Miret, the Willet Stained Glass Studio, 2004) in the East Narthex, which celebrates music, was inspired by Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G minor and honors G. Dene Barnard, who served First Church as Organist/Choirmaster for 30 years.

THE BANNER STAND is rolled steel and made by Albert Paley, sculptor, in 2003.

THE COLLECTION OF LITURGICAL BANNERS is made by artist Deb Anderson.

THE CHANCEL CROSS is made of red enameled copper facets on Brazilian rosewood, by William J. Thompson, sculptor, in 1963.

THE GALLERY ORGAN was installed in 1972 by the firm of Rudolf von Beckerath, Hamburg, Germany, and is comprised of three manuals and 73 ranks of pipes.

THE CHANCEL ORGAN was installed in 1931 by the firm of W.W. Kimball, Chicago, and is comprised of four manuals and 66 ranks of pipes.

THE WASHINGTON GLADDEN SOCIAL JUSTICE PARK, located at the corner of Broad Street and Cleveland Avenue, is the first park in the nation dedicated to the theme of social justice – bringing Columbus together to build the path to a better future through art, education, and constructive dialogue. The park is to be an oasis of hope where past achievements for social justice are recognized and current struggles are revealed. The park is open to all, regardless of beliefs and views, who are willing to offer open minds to seek understanding of diverse interests and values and to promote the common good. It is to be a safe haven for those feeling oppressed as well as a starting point for all to build the path to a better future. The park is dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Dr. Washington Gladden, a Columbus community leader with a national following. Gladden was viewed as the father of the Social Gospel Movement in the early 1900s. Gladden was a staunch advocate for social justice in terms of civil rights, workers' rights, voting rights, religious pluralism, school integration, and the needs of the poor and oppressed. First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, serves as a sponsor of the park, reflecting its commitment to social justice as a principle of its faith. As part of its commitment to support the community and serve others, the church has dedicated 18,000 square feet of its property for use by the Washington Gladden Social Justice Park, and has provided leadership and financial support for the park's development. For more information about the park and its work of social justice, please visit their website: www.socialjusticepark.org.



Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

September 29, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, September 29

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
Sunday Morning Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12:15 p.m. Legacy Sunday Picnic (Education Wing & North Lot)
(should it rain, Parish Hall)

Monday, September 30

- 12 Noon Grief Group (Classroom C & Zoom)
Healthy Congregations Mtg (Fanning Rm)

Tuesday, October 1

- 4 p.m. Church Vitality (Zoom)
7 p.m. Justice & Mercy Commission Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)
Personnel Commission Mtg (Zoom)
Communications & Technology Commission Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, October 2

- 12:15 p.m. Midday Music (Sanctuary)
6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg (Fanning Rm)
7 p.m. Book Club (Zoom)

Thursday, October 3

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

Saturday, October 5

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

Sunday, October 6

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
Sunday Morning Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
BREAD House Mtg (Parish Family Rm)
11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion (Sanctuary & Virtual)
12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)
4:30 p.m. Evensong Service in remembrance of G. Dene Barnard
(Sanctuary)

Dedication of the Handbells

Today we celebrate the arrival of our new five-octave set of Malmark Handbells and seventh octave of Choirchimes. After their dedication at the 11 a.m. service, we invite everyone to visit with the First Church Ringers and director Jennifer Fry to see the new bells and view all of the dedicatory inscriptions.

**First Church
Book Club:
Wednesday,
October 2, 2024**
*Gender Queer:
A Memoir*
**Wednesday,
November 6, 2024**
Tom Lake
7 p.m. on Zoom

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

Choral Evensong in Remembrance of G. Dene Barnard

We celebrate the life of our beloved Dene Barnard on Sunday, October 6, with a service of choral evensong. An extended prelude will be offered at 4:30 p.m., with Evensong following at 5 p.m.. Choir alumni will return to sing with the First Church Choir, and we welcome the return of Dene's successors Timothy Smith, Jamie Bobb, and Kevin Jones to play for the service. A reception follows in the Parish Hall where you will be welcome to share remembrances of Dene. To sing with the alumni choir, please contact Joshua Stafford, jstafford@first-church.org

Dene Barnard Items

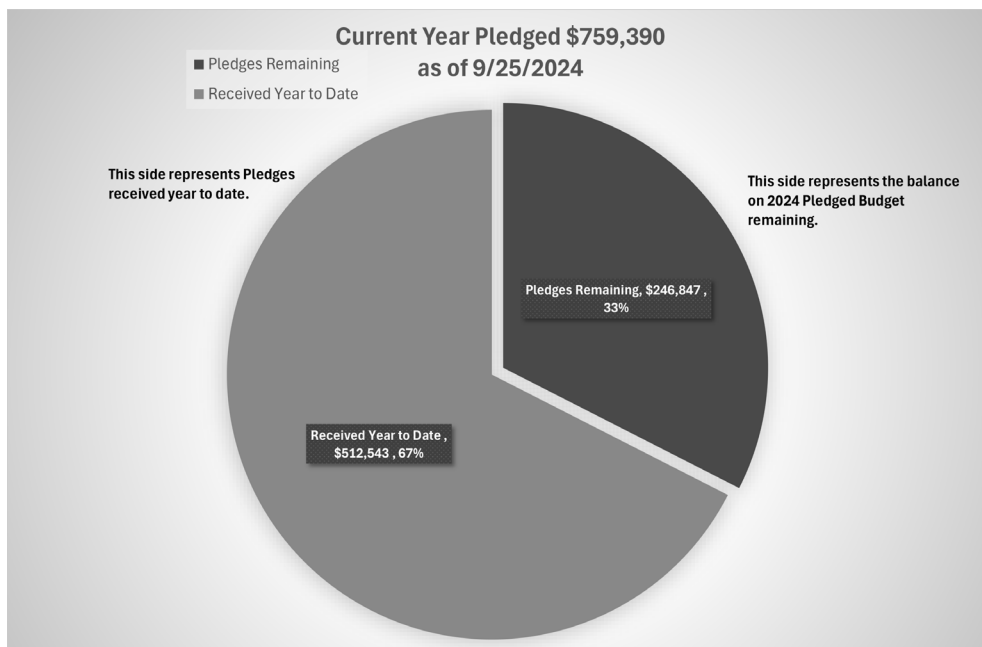
In his lifetime, Dene Barnard amassed an impressive collection of books, vinyl records, CDs, travel guides, city & country maps, art work, organ music, and more. Much of it has been sorted and arranged in the basement room directly under the Fanning Room, across from the Adult Library. Please come and view it before and/or after services and take whatever you would like. Dene's treasures in this room will be available to you only until the end of October.

Transitions News

Twenty-five years ago, when First Congregational Church was searching for a new settled pastor, there were close to 150 applications to consider. It is not that way today. A generation of pastors are reaching retirement age and the number of people entering ministry as a vocation has dwindled significantly. Our transition team is experiencing the effects of this shift. The number of applicants for our interim ministry position is a small fraction of what it was when we sought an interim pastor 27 years ago. Given this situation, it is not likely that we will meet our goal to have an Interim in place on December 1st. Despite this challenge, we will not compromise our goal to hire the most qualified person as our interim spiritual leader. The good news is that Rev. Samuelson has assembled an excellent bridge team to lead the church in worship and congregational care. With their help, strong leadership, our love and care for one another, and the help of God, we will continue to thrive when Rev. Ahrens retires. Today, tomorrow and the tomorrow after that, together, we serve our God together!

Upcoming Listening Sessions

- 10/7 at 7 p.m. an open session on Zoom
- 10/13 at 10 a.m. in Classroom D



Keep in Prayer

Members Twink Starr; Victor John; Elaine Warren; Janice Taft; Ashton Smith; Margot Connor and John Anderson; Francille Firebaugh; Pauline Fritz; Nancy Burba; Mary Kay Beall Carter and John Carter; Carol Lowy; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; and Janice White.

Family and friends George Ferzli's family, Tanios, Julie, Maher, Michel, Cynthia, Gabriel, and Lynn; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Rose and David Kandel's friend, Lou Kline; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Tim Ahrens' granddaughter and Sarah Stadie's daughter, Aurelia Stadie; Nancy Loy's friend, Rev. Peggy O'Connor; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood, and her sister and brother-in-law, Velma and Jamie Christy; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; 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 Greg Buzzell and family on the death of his father, Robert Buzzell; Sallie Danneberger on the death of her friend, Lisa Colosimo; and Margaret Cipriani on the death of her friend, Kathryn Schlarb.

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 Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Middle East council of Churches in the Middle East.

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.

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First Church Choristers Rehearsals Resume

Any youth in grades 2 through high school are welcome to become a part of First Church Choristers! Led by Joshua Stafford, our Minister of Music and Organist, we meet each Thursday afternoon from 4:30-6 p.m. in the Music Activities room. Together we develop our vocal and musical skills and have great fun singing and making music together!

Join us beginning Thursday, October 10 at 4:30 p.m.! We'd love to see you there!

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.

Interim Director of Faith Formation: Leslie Fulford

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:

Nominating Chair: Sarah Reed

COMMISSIONERS

Church Stewardship and Church Growth:

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

