Worship at Nine March 30, 2025 Fourth Sunday in Lent

# Welcome to First Church!

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.

Welcome to the season of Lent. As you worship with us during this season, you will notice many things in our service are different than usual. Lent is a wilderness time of sorts that prepares us for Easter Resurrection. Every change we have made is intended to help you drop into that mystery more deeply. Worship is more solemn, more penitent, more quiet. We hope these changes help you find your way inward.

Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.

# **GATHERING**

Prelude

A period of silence is observed at the ringing of a bell.

\*Invocation Pavan Peter

Leader: Shepherding God,

You look for us. You search for us.

You turn every corner and climb every mountain. You call our name until your voice is hoarse.

When we lose our way, you never stop seeking after us.

People: So once again we pray, find us in the moment.

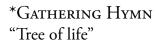
Leader: Look for us.

And then surround us with your presence,

so that we might feel you near.

People: With hope we pray, with hope we listen. Amen.

Welcome Rev. Joanna



Thomas, Marty Haugen, 1984 Marty Haugen, 1984



Tree ofLife and awe-some mys - t'ry, in your death we re born, though you are 2. Seed that dies to rise in glo - ry, may we see our-selves in you, if

re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed on through act and We word.

ev - 'ry Je -Spir - it, come in - flame our hearts a -4. Gen - tle sus might - y new. we may see you clear - ly, make us child - ren 5. Give eyes to of your light; give us



his-t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn. die in all of learn to live your sto-ry we may die to rise a - new, we may die to rise a - new. per - son lost and bro-ken wears the bo - dy of our Lord, wears the bo - dy of our Lord. if we bear the cross with you, if we bear the cross with you. all your joy in - her - it hearts to live more near-ly as your gos-pel shin-ing bright, as your gos-pel shin-ing bright.

### \*Pardon and Assurance

Rev. Sarah

Let us confess ourselves before God. Leader:

In the blazing light of your love, O God,

our failings are illuminated

our failure to give our failure to love our failure to follow our failure to serve

our failure to be the people you would have us be.

People: Forgive us and renew us.

You know our nature and

know our failings. Enfold us in your arms that we might daily know

your forgiveness and healing love.

My friends, The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness. Leader:

Be assured of God's grace and forgiveness,

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

\*Passing of the Peace

Rev. Sarah

CHILDREN'S TIME Melissa Kulwicki

> During the sermon time, the young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories" with Melissa Kulwicki and Terri Young.

# LISTENING

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Pavan Peter

Leader: A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians, the fifth chapter.

From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 Rev. Joanna

Leader: A reading from the gospel according to Luke, the fifteenth chapter.

All the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So Jesus told them this parable:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that

is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "The Gift of the Unheard Voices"

Rev. Joanna

# Responding

HYMN OF PREPARATION "Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling"

Softly and Tenderly, Will L. Thompson, 1880 Will L. Thompson, 1880



Prayers of the People Rev. Sarah

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 Ashlesha Onawale

Cash and designated gifts go to support the **Deep Griha Society**. Deep Griha means "house of lamps" in many Indian languages. Through the illuminating paths of education, healthcare, and community building, they equip individuals in marginalized communities with the skills and confidence to build brighter futures. In 1975, Dr. Neela Onawale and her husband, Rev. Bhaskar Onawale, began a one-room clinic to treat the residents of Pune's marginalized communities. Since then, Deep Griha has constantly expanded and adapted its services in response to community needs and opportunities. Thank you for your generosity.

Offertory Music

Prayer of Dedication Rev. Sarah

All: Accept these gifts, we humbly pray, O God.

Let them give you honor and glory as we serve the needs of your people.

And let the called and redeemed of God say, "Amen."

Communion

Rev. Joanna and Rev. Sarah

Communion Hymn "Adoramus te Christe"

Adoramus Te Christe, Marty Haugen, 1984 Antiphon from Good Friday Liturgy



Post-Communion Prayer

Rev. Sarah

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

Melissa Kulwicki

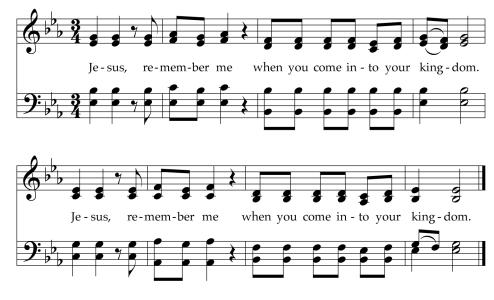
Let us depart with a heart to serve. Leader

People: Thanks be to God.

\*Benediction Rev. Joanna

\*Closing Hymn

Remember Me, Jacques Berthier, 1981 "Jesus, remember me" Taizé Community, 1981



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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"Jesus, remember me" Text: Taizé Community, 1981. Music: Jacques Berthier, 1981. © Words and Music 1981 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

> Leadership in Today's Liturgy The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, preacher The Rev. Sarah Reed, worship leader Pavan Peter, liturgist Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader David Hogrefe, pianist Peter Murray, livestream ministry



March 30, 2025

# This Week at First Church

# Sunday, March 30

Informal Worship Service & 9 a.m.

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Deep Griha Coffee Hour (Parlor)

Middle & High School Classes

(Parlor)

Godly Play (Classroom B) Parent Conversations

(Adult Library)

Adult Education (Classroom C)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:15 p.m.

Deep Griha Society Fellowship

Luncheon (Parish Hall)

Deep Griha Meeting 2:15 p.m.

(Parish Family Rm)

# Monday, March 31

6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

### Tuesday, April 1

4 p.m. Church Vitality Mtg (Zoom)

7 p.m. Justice & Mercy Meeting

(Classroom C & Zoom) Personnel Mtg (Zoom)

Communications & Technology

Mtg (Zoom)

Northwest Lenten Study Group 7:15 p.m.

(Home of Sheri Moreen)

# Wednesday, April 2

12:15 p.m. Music at Midday (Sanctuary) Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg

6:30 p.m.

(Fanning Rm)

Book Club (Zoom) 7 p.m.

### Thursday, April 3

Fiber Arts Ministry Gathering 10 a.m.

(Fanning Rm)

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

# Friday, April 4

10 a.m. Westminister-Thurber

Lenten Group

(8th Fl Community Rm)

6 p.m. 50 Years of Deep Griha

(First Community Church)

# Saturday, April 5

10 a.m. Verger Mtg (Fanning Rm)

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

# Sunday, April 6

Informal Worship Service & 9 a.m.

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Sunday School

> (Classrooms B, E & F) Parent Conversations

(Adult Library)

Adult Education (Classroom C)

Worship Service (Sanctuary) 11 a.m. Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales 12:15 p.m.

(Parish Hall)

# Music at Midday Andrew Sords, violin Wednesday, April 2 12:15 p.m.

Be captivated by the fiery brilliance and delicate mastery of violinist Andrew Sords! Praised for his "flawless performance" and musicianship," "consummate Andrew has thrilled audiences worldwide with his expressive and passionate playing. Join us for an extraordinary performance and experience the artistry of a true virtuoso.

# Lunch Bunch April Red Door in Grandview Thursday, April 10 12 noon - 1:30 p.m.

Come have lunch at the Red Door in Grandview with others from the church.

The Red Door Tavern has been a local favorite since 1964. Home of the famous Twisted Pelican. There is outdoor seating in a very casual, comfortable setting. We'll have a good lunch and relaxing time together.

Please join us at the Red Door!



# First Church Book Club April 2

The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store by James McBride

If you're looking for your next good read, consider some of the books the First Church Book Club will be discussing. Book Club is a fun opportunity to get to know other church members better as we enjoy great discussions about books and the world.

We gather on Zoom on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. for lively conversation. All are welcome!

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

# Summer Camps for Kids at Camp Christian

The summer programs like MMADD, Sports Camp, Camp Out, and Grands Camp previously offered at Templed Hills will now be run by Camp Christian in Marysville. Click the button below to view camp options and to register. First Church is pleased to offer scholarships from the Alma Keeler Fund for 50% of the cost. You can download the Camp Scholarship Request form by scanning the QR code below. Please return the form to Annette McCormick (amccormick@first-church.org) or Leslie Fulford at lfulford@first-church.org.







Scholarship Request

# **Mission Trip Opportunity**

We are excited to offer an urban immersion youth mission trip to Camp Washington UCC in Cincinnati this summer. Dates (see below) are being selected and your voice matters. We invite interested youth (ages 13 and up) as well as adult chaperones to weigh in on your choice of dates. If interested, please email Leslie Fulford (lfulford@first-church. org) and let her know which dates you'd be available.

June 8-12 June 22 – 26 July 6-10 July 20-24



Learn More

# **Last Chance for Mailbox**

Mailboxes for First Church members located on the first floor near the elevator were established, maintained, and used for many years. Covid disrupted the pattern and now many use electronic communication instead. A few months ago, we asked who would like their mailbox removed and who would like one (old or new) and received 30 responses, half yes and half no. We are ready to move forward with only those who want a box, so if you did not answer the first time, please respond to the following poll, As of April 3, we will proceed to remove all "no" and "no answer" names and install the names of those who desire a box. Click the QR code below to answer "Would you like a church mailbox?"



# Broad Street Presbyterian Justice Camp for Kindergarten – 5th graders June 2 - June 5, 9 a.m.- 12 noon

Young justice warriors are invited to join our Broad Street neighbors for a fun week of exploring multiple justice themes like Animal Justice, Environmental Justice, Housing Justice, and Water Justice. Kids will learn about animal conservation through a virtual trip to Costa Rica, see bugs and insects from the OSU bug mobile, go on a field trip to a park to do environmental education near a water source, and even do a protest along Broad Street.



# Church Coordinator Needed: Columbus Pride Parade

First Church has been represented in Columbus' Pride Parade for several years and it takes organization to make that happen. The parade this year will be Saturday, June 14. Registration to sign groups up is now open and Church Vitality needs someone to organize us. Last year we had 25 marchers. It takes time to get this all organized and Church Vitality is available to support. If you want to make sure First Church is in the Pride Parade, please contact Pat Patterson (ppatterson@first-church.org). Your leadership will be greatly appreciated.

# Sign Up for Family Camp at Camp Akita!

In lieu of the spring retreat at Templed Hills, we are offering a fun new family retreat at Camp Akita in the beautiful Hocking Hills. Run by First Community UCC, Akita offers a lake, kayaking, giant soap slide, nature hikes, crafts, and an opportunity for meaningful family time with church friends while joining others in the UCC conference. Family Camp is August 8-10, \$175 per person, children under 3 are free. First Church will pay for kids 3-18. Register with your deposit, listing all family members attending, then let Leslie Fulford (lfulford@first-church.org) so we can contribute on our end. Spots are limited for this popular camp, so register soon by clicking the QR code below.



# Keep in Prayer

**Members** James Velo; Tom Worley; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Mike Weddle; Margot Connor and John Anderson; Francille Firebaugh; Pauline Fritz; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Carol Lowy; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; and Janice White.

Family and friends Melissa Kulwicki's cousin, Nancy Lamie; the Speakman family; Michael Russell's friends, Donald Featheroff, Jr. and Ryan Featheroff; Wendy and Robert Reber's sister-in-law, Judy Reber; Tom Kiesel's friend, Carrie; Robyn and Mike Petras; Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers; BOBS volunteers, John Holly and Sandy Waters-Holly; Shelly Gies' brother, Mike Simms; Victor John's father, Charles John and mother, Mary Jane John; Amy Wagner's friend, Lee Gatton; Michael Russell's friend, Teresa Elliott; Amanda Butler's aunt, Hattie Coatney; Pat Patterson's son, Jay Patterson, and brother, Dan Stone; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; Arevena Nirote's sister and brother-in-law, Marlene and Gary Gallion; and Fran and Bruce Panek's friends, Richard and Beverly Cicenas.

**Those who mourn** Victor John on the death of his cousin, Devan Endlich; Joel and Sandy Mathias on the death of his sister, Kate Meek; Kathryn Bamberger and Steve Brandehoff on the death of their nephew, Daniel Bamberger; Amy Wagner on the death of her friend, Bill Kelley; and John Carter on the death of his wife, Mary Kay Beall Carter.

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 Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission at The United Theological College of the West Indies in Jamaica.

# We're Looking for Coffee Hour Hosts!

There is a sheet posted on the bulletin board on the first floor near the water fountain where you can sign up to host a coffee hour. We encourage families, friends, committees, and commissions to host a coffee hour, so find a date and sign up! Our Neighborhood Care Circles will continue to host on the first and third Sundays so please help us by signing up to host on one of the other Sundays.

Please talk to Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen or Pat Patterson if you have questions.

# Sunday Story Readers Needed

Join the children of First Church for story time during the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services. Thoughtful stories for you to read are selected by Miss Melissa and the youthful energy in the room is a great way to start your Sunday! Spots are open, pick your date!

Please contact Leslie Fulford at <u>lfulford@first-church.org</u>

# Church Leadership

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Becky David, 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

Maintenance: Mike Sharrock

Custodians: Alexis Wayne, Bill McCabe, Bob O'Brien

Handbell Director: Jennifer Fry

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

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: Martha Worth

Deacons: Allen Baker, Heather Jones, Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery Justice & Mercy: James Lowe Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Fran Panek, Gary Seigerst,

Thomason Smith

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** Chairperson: Frank Cook

Trustees: Matthew Bendick, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Melody Leidheiser, Janet Miller, Sarah Reed, Judy Smith, (Secretary),

Hugh Schultz

CHURCH COUNCIL LEADERSHIP Moderator: Sarah Reed **Moderator-elect:** 

Treasurer: Ramona Moenter

Treasurer-elect:

Secretary: Amanda Butler

Secretary-elect:

Nominating Chair: Gregory Halbe

**COMMISSIONERS** 

Church Stewardship and Church Growth: Stephen Sterrett Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction: Church Stewardship and Church Growth-elect: Kathy Reed

Church Vitality: Pat Patterson

**Church Vitality-elect:** 

Communications and Technology Commission: Mike Kennedy

Communications and Technology Commission-elect:

Faith Formation Commission: Cami Curren Faith Formation Commission-elect: Mariner Taft

House & Grounds: Eric Klintworth

House & Grounds-elect: Justice & Mercy-elect: Janice Taft Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson

Member-at-Large: Martha Wilson Personnel: Sandra Mathias

Personnel-elect:

Youth Member-at-Large: Sebastian Kulwicki

### FIRST CHURCH IS A FAITH COMMUNITY

† Called together by God, the Creator, Redeemer, 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.

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.

### 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



