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.

Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.

GATHERING

Prelude

*Call to Worship Rev. Becky

Leader: On this day, Jesus marched

People: in between the city walls and the Temple,

in between joyful Hosannas and doubtful whispers, in between oppressive poverty and greedy power, in between rampant fear and hope unfurled.

Leader: On this day, Jesus marched in between what had been and what could be.

People: So may we meet Christ in that liminal space.

May we lay down our coats in that messy middle.

Leader: Hosanna in the highest!
People: Hosanna in between!

WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Becky

Palm Sunday Proclamation

Rev. Joanna

LUKE 19:28-40

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

After telling a parable to the crowd at Jericho, Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king

who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven.

and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Blessing of the Palms Rev. Becky

Leader: Bless these parade palms, O God of Celebration.

May they remind us of the simple joys of living.

May we remember the excitement that comes with following Christ.

Bless these protest palms, O God of Justice.

May they remind us that Empire is not a thing of the past.

May they make us bold and brave to stand up against injustice.

Bless these funeral palms, O God of Comfort.

May they remind us of the road that lies ahead. May they encourage us in times of grief and pain.

People: We give you thanks for the parade, the processional.

Guide our steps through this holiest of weeks

as we cry out together "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna!" Amen.

During the singing of the hymn, please lay palms on the steps to the mezzanine, forming the shape of the cross.

Theodulph of Orleans, c. 820; trans. John Mason Neale, 1851



*Invocation Rev. Joanna

Leader: God of the cross, tottering down the streets of Jerusalem on a donkey,

You are not the savior we expect.

Your power doesn't look like the power we want our God to have.

Your wisdom makes no sense to us.

We are happy to join the crowd, waving branches,

but not so sure we want to follow you through this Holy Week:

into the temple courts

into the upper room

into the Garden of Gethsemane

to the high priest's house,

to the assembly of elders,

to Pilate,

to Herod,

to the place of The Skull,

to the foot of the cross.

People: We need you to go with us on this journey.

Grant us clear vision, courageous hearts,

persistent steps.

Even though we know what this week will bring, we sing:

Hosanna, hosanna.

Save us, we beseech you! Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Joanna

Leader: When the parade is over, do we pick up our lives, brush them off, and live in the old way?

Do we toss our palm branches aside, so we can grasp the seductions of the world? As we begin the journey through the holiest of weeks, let us speak the truth,

as we confess to our God, praying together,

People: Ever constant Love, you pave the way to the kingdom,

but we prefer to stub our toes on the potholed roads of temptation.

You would touch the cup of grace to our parched lips, but we seem to hunger for the ashy taste of bitterness.

You beg us to learn the songs of salvation,

but we hum along with the chorus death plays in the background of our lives.

Have mercy upon us, God of Holiness.

As you come to us, you bring healing for our brokenness, peace for our troubled lives, hope for our doubting minds.

May we empty ourselves of everything which keeps us from following you, so we may receive these gifts, and more, from Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Leader: Laying aside judgment, God offers us redemption;

setting aside anger, God embraces us with love; letting go of grief, God pours living water upon us.

This is the good news, my friends: God's steadfast love endures forever.

People: Hosanna! Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who brings us the kingdom of God!

Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME Melissa Kulwicki

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

LISTENING

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Isaiah 50:4-9a Rev. Joanna

Leader: A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah, the fiftieth chapter.

The Lord God has given me

the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain

the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—

wakens my ear

to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious,

I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face

from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me;

who will declare me guilty?

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "Even the Stones Cry Out"

Responding

Hymn of Preparation "Tree of life"

Thomas, Marty Haugen, 1984 Marty Haugen, 1984



Prayers of the People

Rev. Becky

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

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Laundry Love**, an initiative in partnership with individuals, groups and local laundromats throughout the country to wash the clothes and bedding of individuals and/or families living in poverty. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

G. Alan Smith

Antiphonal Hosanna

Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Becky

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

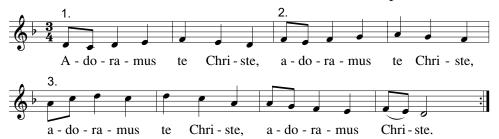
Let them give you honor and glory as we serve the needs of your people. And let the called and redeemed of God say, "Amen."

Communion

Rev. Becky and Rev. Joanna

Communion Hymn "Adoramus te Christe"

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



Post-Communion Prayer

Rev. Becky

Leader: Let us pray.

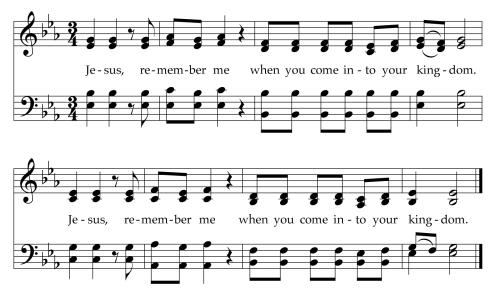
All:

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.

SENDING

*Benediction Rev. Joanna

"Jesus, remember me"



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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Leadership in Today's liturgy
The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, preacher
The Rev. Becky David, worship leader
Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader
The First Church Choristers
Joshua Stafford, pianist
Geoff Dean, livestream ministry



April 13, 2025

This Week at First Church

Sunday, April 13 - Palm Sunday

9 a.m. Informal Worship Service & Holy

Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Godly Play (Classroom B)

Camp & Mission Trip Info Session/

Parent Conversations (Adult Library)

Adult Education (Classroom C)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

Monday, April 14

9 a.m. WGSJP Executive Committee Mtg

(Zoom)

6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

Wednesday, April 16

10 a.m. Largest Table Food Prep & Delivery

(Kitchen)

Thursday, April 17 - Maundy Thursday

7 p.m. Liturgy of the Lord's Supper

(Sanctuary)

Friday, April 18

7 p.m. Tenebrae Service (Sanctuary)

Sunday, April 20 – Easter Sunday

7 a.m. Sunrise Service (WGSJ Park)

8:45 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Sanctuary)

10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt & Donut Hour

(S. Gordon Playground)

11 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Sanctuary)

First Church Visitation Ministry

At First Congregational Church UCC, we share in worship, the nurture of our faith development, our calling to social justice, music and arts, and the care of our church home—building a strong, loving community through faith and fellowship.

When life's challenges—illness, hospitalization, or mobility concerns—keep us apart, our Visitation Ministry helps to keep us connected. Through visits, prayer, and companionship, we remind one another that no one is forgotten and that we are always one in Christ.

This ministry is a blessing to all involved. Those receiving care feel supported and uplifted, while those who serve find their own faith and hearts enriched. In giving, we receive—and in community, we are made whole.

If you would like to become part of our Visitation Ministry Team please contact Gary Glover through care@first-church.org.

HoneyBaked Ham Spring Gift Card Sale to Benefit Mission Trip

We are once again selling HoneyBaked Ham gift cards for Easter and Graduation season entertaining. Purchase by scanning the QR code below and 20% goes to our mission trip. Please feel free to share the link with family and friends!



First Serves April Little Bottoms Free Store Sunday, April 27, at 10 a.m. Classroom D

Little Bottoms Free Store serves Franklin County babies and children ages 3 and under (or families at least 7 months pregnant). They provide diapers, wipes, clothes, and baby supplies to over 100 babies a week. Most needed items are wipes, diapers in sizes 3, 4, or 5, and sizes 3T, 4T, and 5T clothing. Spring and summer clothing would be most appreciated now. For our packaging event on April 27, we will need gallon-size Ziploc bags and Sharpies to sort the diapers. We will be counting diapers into the bags and marking the sizes with the Sharpies. Little Bottoms will be collecting the diapers for us. We can use the diaper boxes to store the Ziploc bags for them. Reminder tags with the needed items will be on the Giving Tree. You will also find baskets to place the donated items. Thank you for your generosity!

Time Out Wednesday Wednesday, April 30, 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. TAT Ristorante De Familia

Our church family will dine at TAT, a Ristorante Di Famiglia that for over 90 years has been serving delicious and authentic dishes. You will dine on delicious dishes made from scratch.

Please scan the QR code below to register on Realm!



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. Scan the QR code 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

B.R.E.A.D. Annual Nehemiah Action May 13, 6:40 p.m. The Celeste Center at the Ohio State Fairgrounds

Calling on all people who are wondering how to respond to the recent actions to cut funds from a variety of programs that benefit especially those of us who are least able to cope!

Many of us have expressed our unhappiness with these new policies, but what to do? We can demonstrate, write letters to our congress people or even write editorials, but only B.R.E.A.D. has an action plan to make improvements instead of cutting programs.

Join B.R.E.A.D. on May 13 and let our public officials know that we deeply care about the unhoused, and the City's heat islands and flooding problems. Only B.R.E.A.D. has done the research to effectively address those needs.

Join us and raise our voice to demand better! B.R.E.A.D. rises!

Columbus Pride Parade Helpers Needed

Jim Griffin has taken on the leadership of getting First Church's participation in the Columbus Pride Parade. If you can help with the various tasks for this event please talk to Jim or email him [binkycmh@hotmail.com]. Last year we had 25 marchers. It takes time to get this all organized and Jim will need your support. If you want to make sure First Church is in the Pride Parade, please contact him.

Look for more information in the next few weeks on being involved with the Columbus Pride Parade, Saturday, June 14!

Creation's Stewards Washington Gladden Social Justice Park April 27, 12:30-2:15 p.m.

Celebrate Earth Day with family fun and climate action at the Washington Gladden Social Justice Park on Sunday, April 27. The free event, "Creation's Stewards," will start at 12:30 p.m. with a local food truck and with students from the Columbus College of Art & Design helping children create sidewalk chalk art – a way to get kids involved in environmental creativity.

A program will begin at 1 p.m. with speakers addressing local issues of environmental sustainability and growing the City's tree canopy. The program will conclude by 2:15 p.m. Parking without charge will be available adjacent to the park for those attending the event.

The park is located at the corner of East Broad Street and Cleveland Avenue in downtown Columbus.

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.

Keep in Prayer

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

Family and friends Kathy Reed's friend, Tom Faist; 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; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood; 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 Annette McCormick and her family on the death of her father, Charles McCormick; Victor John's friend, Kevin Dean on the death of Kevin's son, Noah Dean; and on the death of Victor's cousin, Devan Endlich.

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 Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission at The Fiji Council of Churches.

Experience Holy Week and Easter at First Church Maundy Thursday, April 17

Liturgy of the Lord's Supper, 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18

Tenebrae Service, 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 20

Sunrise Service in The Washington Gladden Social Justice Park, 7 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt on the Playground, 10:15 a.m.

Festival Worship and Holy Communion in the Sanctuary, 8:45 & 11 a.m. Music performed by The First Church Choir, two organs, brass, and percussion

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



