



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT NINE
JUNE 22, 2025
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Rev. Joanna

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Joanna

*GATHERING HYMN

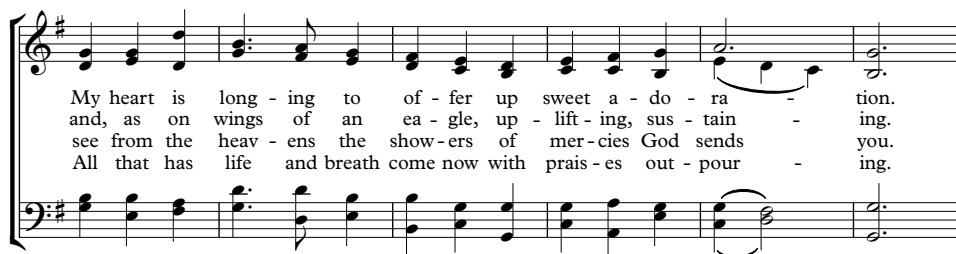
"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Lobe den Herren, Ernewerten Gesangbuch, Part 11, Stralsund, 1665


Joachim Neader, 1650-1680, trans. composite



Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the God of cre - a - tion!
 Praise the Al - might - y, o'er all life so won-drous - ly reign - ing,
 Praise the Al - might - y, who pros-pers your work and de - fends you;
 Praise the Al - might - y! In won-der my spir - it is soar - ing!



My heart is long - ing to of - fer up sweet a - do - ra - tion.
 and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.
 see from the heav - ens the show - ers of mer - cies God sends you.
 All that has life and breath come now with prais - es out - pour - ing.



Mel - o - dy make; dul - ci - mer, harp, now a
 Have you not seen? All that is need - ful has
 Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can
 Let the a - men sound from God's peo - ple a -



wake. Sound forth your praise ev - 'ry na - tion.
 been sent by God's gra - cious or - dain - ing.
 do; in - fi - nite love here be - friends you.
 gain, glad - ly for - ev - er a - dor - ing!

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Sarah

Leader: When we long for Your presence,

People: You are with us, O Source of Comfort.

Leader: When we face dangers and perils,

People: You are with us, O Source of Strength.

Leader: When You call us to do justice,

People: You equip us, O Source of Courage.

**We come before you now, seeking inspiration and direction in our daily lives
 and in our life together.**

Leader: O God of Abundant Grace and Boundless Love,
we thank you for your faithful presence in our lives.
Open our hearts and minds to your inspiration, this day,
to love one another as you have loved us.

**People: Empower us and equip us, O God, to be your hands and feet in a world
that is yearning for healing, hope and unity.
And inspire us, O Source of Love, to share your compassion and care for all people.
In your precious name, we pray, Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Melissa Kulwicki

*During the sermon time, our young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories"
with Melissa Kulwicki and Callie Mitchell.*

LISTENING

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

1 KINGS 19:1-4, 8-15A

Amanda Butler

Leader: A reading from the First Book of Kings, the nineteenth chapter.

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors."

He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Luke, the eighth chapter.

Jesus and his disciples arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me” — for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

RESPONDING

HYMN OF PREPARATION

“Breathe on me, breath of God”

Trentham, Robert Jackson, 1888

Edwin Hatch, 1878

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life a - new,
2 Breathe on me, Breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,
3 Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine,
4 Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,

that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.
un - til with thee I will one will, to do and to en - dure.
un - til this earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.
but live with thee the per - fect life of thine e - ter - ni - ty.

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

Cash and designated gifts go to **Equitas Health**, a nonprofit community healthcare system founded in 1984. They are one of the nation's largest LGBTQ+ and HIV/AIDS-serving organizations, serving tens of thousands of patients in Ohio, Texas, Kentucky, and West Virginia. Equitas Health's mission is to be the gateway to good health for those at risk of or affected by HIV; for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) community; and for those seeking a welcoming healthcare home. Thank you for your generosity.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Sarah

O Gracious God, thank you for giving each one of us gifts, abilities, and resources to contribute to the flourishing of your church. When you call us to a new mission or ministry, help us to respond with faithfulness and joy. As we dedicate our monetary gifts to your service this day, we also recommit ourselves to the work that You call us to do – together – for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

COMMUNION

Rev. Joanna and Rev. Sarah

COMMUNION HYMN

Confitemi Domino, Jacques Berthier, 1982

“Come and fill our hearts”

Chord markings: D, Bm, D, A, Em, C, Em, A, D

Lyrics: Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly. Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu-ia!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Sarah

Eternal and Loving God, we thank you for this simple common meal that brings the spirit and unity of Christ into our hearts and brings us closer to one another through you. Amen.

SENDING

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Joanna

*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.

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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“Come and fill our hearts.” Words and music: Jacques Berthier, Taizé Community; ©1991 Less 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*
Amanda Butler, *liturgist*
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
Ann Eliot, *pianist*
Geoffrey Dean, *livestream ministry*

Enter to Worship **Depart to Serve**

This Week at First Church

Sunday, June 22

- 9 a.m. Worship Service &
Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Family Playground Time
(Sam Gordon Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12 Noon Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
- 2 p.m. Green Lawn Cemetery Tour
(1000 Greenlawn Ave)

Monday, June 23

- 6 p.m. First Church Campanelle
Rehearsal (Bell Rm)

Tuesday, June 24

- 5:15 p.m. Laundry Love
(Wash Land, 1469 W Broad Street)
- 7 p.m. Deacon's Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, June 25

- 2 p.m. Huey Circle of Remembrance
(Parlor)
- 7 p.m. Visitation Ministry Training (Parlor)

Thursday, June 26

- 11 a.m. Fiber Arts Ministry Mtg
(Fanning Rm)

Friday, June 27

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

Saturday, June 28

- 9 a.m. Mission Food Prep (Kitchen)
- 12 Noon Reception Prep (Kitchen)

Sunday, June 29

- 9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy
Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Adult Education (Classroom C)
Family Playground Time
(Sam Gordon Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Celebration of Rev. Samuelson
(Parish Hall)

June 22, 2025
Celebrating

Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Sunday, June 29, 2025

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Rev. Samuelson's service at First Congregational has come to an end. Please attend this reception to thank her for all of her work for us and on behalf of us. There will be a short program of thanks. Scan the QR code below to register.



In the First Church tradition of a "purse" for departing staff, we will receive cash donations as a gift for Rev. Joanna. Donations to this purse will be accepted on or before Monday, June 23. Please make your check payable to First Congregational Church with the memo indicating your gift to Rev. Joanna Samuelson. Checks may be placed in Sunday offering plates or mailed to Annette McCormick, Business Administrator, First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3885. You can also contribute online by clicking the QR Code below; please select "gift for Joanna Samuelson" from the dropdown menu.



How Many People Have Been Helped by Stephen Ministry?

More than one-and-a-half million people have received care from a Stephen Minister in a formal and confidential one-to-one caring relationship and millions more have been touched by Stephen Ministry in informal ways. A new Stephen Ministry Training course starts on August 6. Contact care@first-church.org for more information.



Full Circle Connections Friday, June 27 at 10 a.m. in the Church Parlor

Full Circle Connections will meet next Friday, June 27. The topic is Hope. If you can't make it this time, be sure to mark your calendar for our next gathering. We meet for an hour on the second and fourth Fridays every month. All are welcome and bring a friend! Reach Jan Hamilton on Realm or by email (hamiltonjan30@yahoo.com).



Do You Have Spare Home Furnishings?

The Unsheltered Ministry at First Church continues to help individuals and families who are living without a home, and those who are newly re-housed. You can help this effort by donating clean, gently used furniture, furnishings, housewares, and linens. The items needed change continuously, so sometimes we can't match up what a donor wants to donate with what a recipient needs at a specific time. But we'll make every effort to help facilitate a timely, transition from your home to theirs. Please call Jim or Gail Lowe at 614-397-7512 for more information.

Lunch Bunch Land Grant Brewing Thursday, July 10 12 noon - 1 p.m.

Come have an enjoyable time with others from the church. We are going to an historic factory in Franklinton built in 1920 that is home to Land Grant Brewing.

Land Grant offers an inclusive and welcoming space where anyone can feel welcomed. They work to make meaningful engagement through inspiring people, passions, and projects happening throughout Ohio. Scan the QR code below to register



Fiber Arts Ministry

Fiber Arts Ministry is on the move...that is to a new time! So, relax at home, have an extra cup of coffee, then come and join us at 11 a.m. in the Ralph Fanning Room on the first and third Thursdays of each month.

Our upcoming meeting schedule for June and July has changed slightly due to the Juneteenth and 4th of July holidays. Here's a list of our upcoming meetings so you'll be sure to find us!

Thursday, June 26, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 10, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 24, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Remember 11 a.m.... it'll be a stitch!



Circle of Remembrance for Martha K. Huey

Wednesday, June 25 at 2 p.m.

On Wednesday, June 25 at 2 p.m. First Church will hold a "Circle of Remembrance" for Martha Huey to share memories and celebrate her life. This gathering will take place in the Parlor, located on the main floor near the stairs to the Ninth Street door.

Adult Faith Formation Pride Retrospective with David Hogrefe June 29, 10 a.m. Classroom C

From his early Pride marches during the 1980s AIDS crisis in Atlanta and DC, to where we are today, David Hogrefe has witnessed the evolution of Pride in America. Join David and guests for this Pride month discussion.

Teen Time with Maggie and Leslie Sunday, June 29 12:30 - 1 p.m.

Stop by the teen room off of Parish Hall to play ping pong and learn about summer youth activities, including a new teen Bible study for 14 to 20-year-olds, led by Maggie Myers, which will begin July 13.

Family Playground Time 10 a.m. on the Church Playground

It's summer – let's get outside! Join your First Church friends for outdoor play between services!

Keep in Prayer

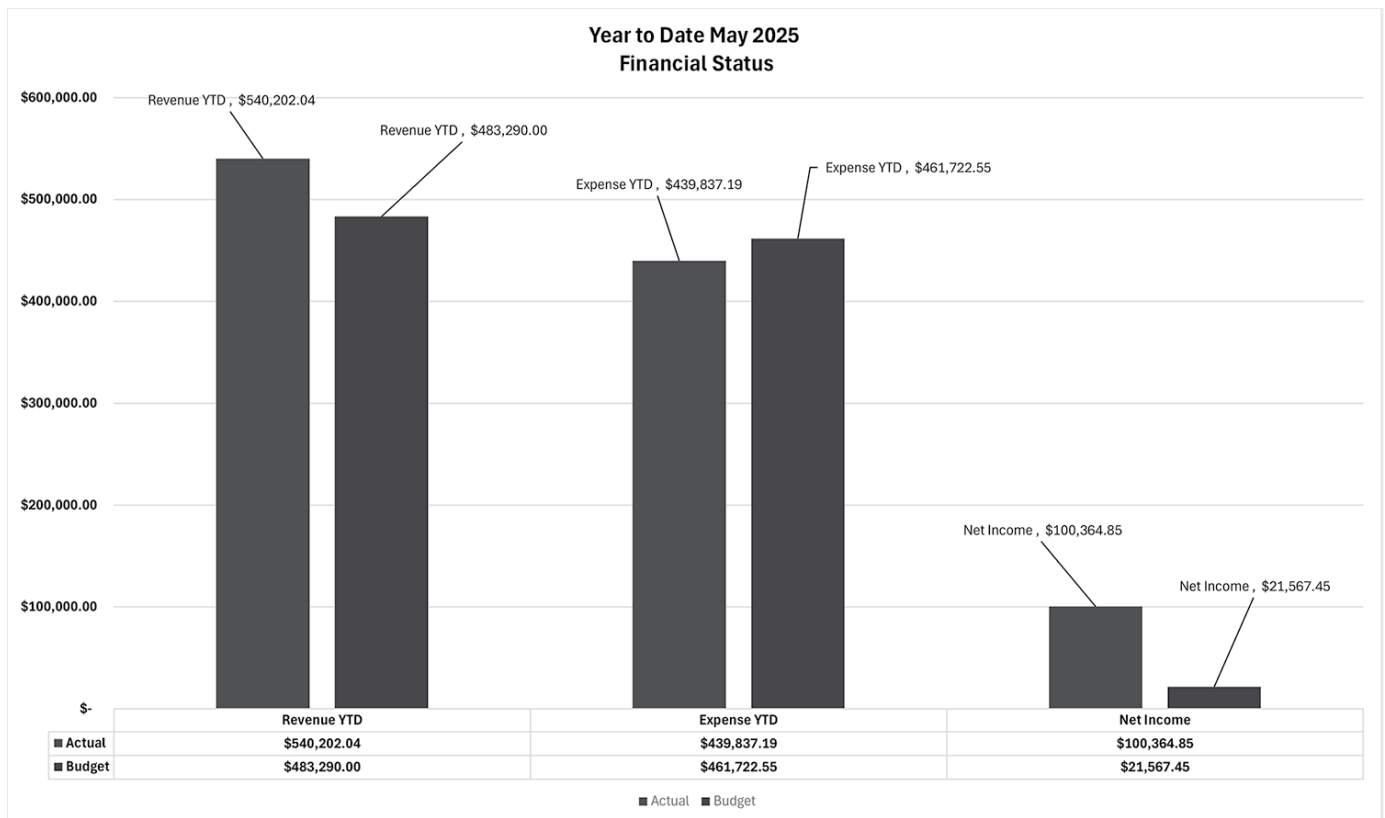
Members John Bachman; Nancy Livingston; Janice Taft; James Velo; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Mike Weddle; Francille Firebaugh; Pauline Fritz; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; and Janice White.

Family and friends Rose Kandel's sister, Linde Klein; Rev. Becky David's brother-in-law, Scott Bickford; Melissa Kulwicki's mother, Judy Blandi and her friend, Sandy Bushong; Stephanie and Bob Childs; the Speakman family; Wendy and Robert Reber's sister-in-law, Judy Reber; Tom Kiesel's friend, Carrie; Robyn and Mike Petras; Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers; Shelly Gies' brother, Mike Simms; Victor John's father, Charles John and mother, Mary Jane John; Amy Wagner's friend, Lee Gatton; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; and Fran and Bruce Panek's friends, Richard and Beverly Cicenias.

Those who mourn Mark Sholl on the death of his mother.

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 Malawi and Zambia. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala (Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala or CONAVIGUA).



While financial status is still very positive there was a significant reduction in this revenue for May. Approximately \$28,000 was received which was about \$10,000 under budget, and as a result decreased Net Income for 2025 by \$40,000. This drop-off is somewhat expected in summer months, but is a little early. Don't forget about First Church while you're on vacation!

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
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: Martha Worth
Deacons: Allen Baker, Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Heather Jones, Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery 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
Church Stewardship and Church Growth-elect: Kathy Reed
Church Vitality: Pat Patterson
Church Vitality-elect: Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen
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: James Lowe
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



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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