

Worship at Nine August 3, 2025 Eighth 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.

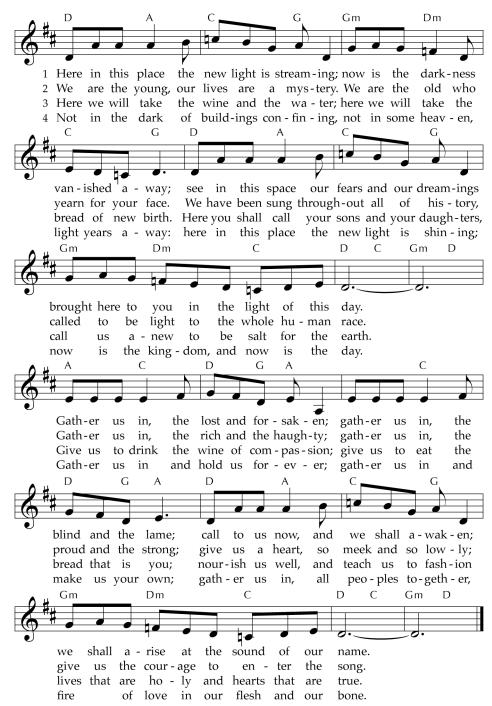
Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

# **GATHERING**

#### Prelude

\*Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Rev. Becky



Opening Prayer Rev. Becky

People: Loving God,

In whose arms we have found our identity,

Hold us this day. Gather us in.

Join our hearts as one in your love

Through Jesus our friend and savior. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME Melissa Kulwicki

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

## LISTENING

#### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 107 Nate Vogt

O give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;

God's steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so.

God has redeemed us from trouble.

Some wandered in the desert,

Dying of hunger and thirst.

They cried out to the LORD;

The LORD heard them and delivered them from distress!

Some sat as prisoners,

In darkness, loneliness, isolation, and gloom.

They cried out to the LORD;

The LORD heard them and delivered them from distress!

Some are sick, with malaria and AIDS,

Burdened by disease that brings stigma and isolation.

They cried out to the LORD;

The LORD heard them and delivered them from distress!

Some are left to raise and tend siblings,

Orphaned by disease and matured by hardship.

They cried out to the LORD;

The LORD heard them and delivered them from distress!

Some are children of the street,

Left alone to violence, to drugs, to gangs.

They cried out to the LORD;

The LORD heard them and delivered them from distress!

Let those who are wise give heed to these things.

God's steadfast love endures forever!

Luke 12:13-21 Rev. Becky

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

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

# Reflection Rev. Becky

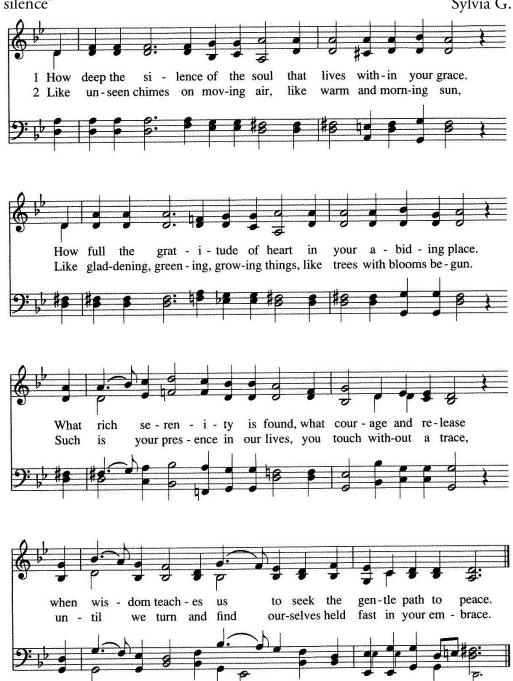
# RESPONDING

## Hymn of Preparation

Tallis' Third Tune, Thomas Tallis, c. 1557

"How deep the silence"

Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1989



Prayers of the People Rev. Becky

Invitation to Silent Prayer

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

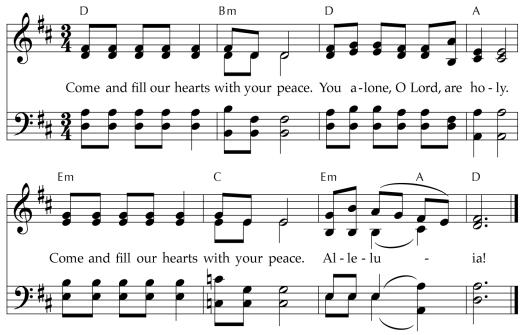
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

### Sung Response

Confitemi Domino, Jacques Berthier, 1982

"Come and fill our hearts"



# THE OFFERTORY

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



Mission Invitation Vicki Lyden

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Laundry Love**, a nationwide initiative for which First Church is the Columbus partner. Once each month, our Laundry Love volunteer team brings the supplies and pays for the washers and dryers at the Wash Land Laundromat on West Broad Street, to wash clothing and bedding for low-income or no-income families and persons. But Laundry Love also brightens the lives of our guests when we happily greet them, talk with them as neighbors, and get to know them. Through Laundry Love, we show them respect as members of our community, we share our love for them, and we acknowledge and celebrate their value as human beings. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Becky

Leader: Let us pray.

People: We dedicate to you, our God

All we possess to causes far greater than our own security.

Before our attachments require "larger barns,"

Help us to reflect on how they might better be used by others

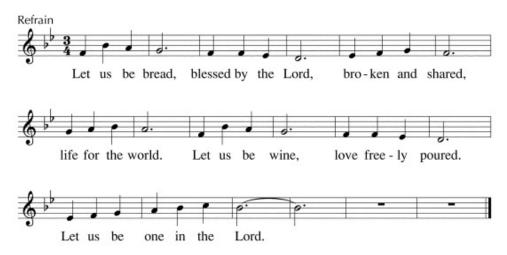
Than stored by us.

Thank you for the abundant opportunity to share. Amen.

Communion Rev. Becky

Communion Hymn "Let us be bread"

I am the bread of life, Thomas J. Porter Thomas J. Porter, 1990



## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Becky

Leader: Blessed are you O generous Creator,

For all that you have given us.

People: May this meal we have shared

Transfor us into your body

Moving through the world with justice,

In the name of our friend and savior Jesus. Amen.

SENDING

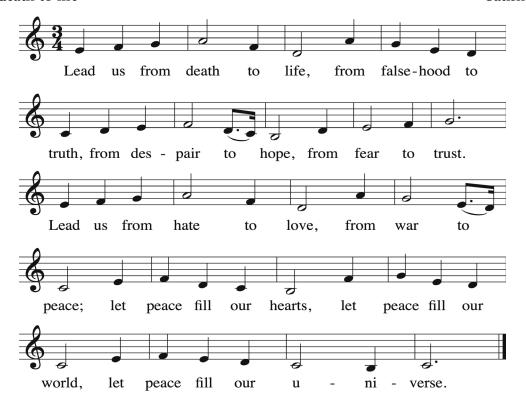
COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.

\*Benediction Rev. Becky



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. Becky David, preacher
Nate Vogt, liturgist
Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader
Ann Eliot, pianist
Geoffrey Dean, livestream ministry



August 3, 2025

# This Week at First Church

Sunday, August 3

9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion

(Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Adult Education

(Classroom C & Zoom) Family Playground Time (Sam Gordon Playground)

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

(Parish Hall)

Monday, August 4

12 Noon Card Care Ministry (Fanning Rm)

6 p.m. First Church Campanelle

Rehearsal (Bell Rm)

6:30 p.m. Transition Team Mtg

(Fanning Rm & Zoom)

7 p.m. House & Grounds Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, August 5

9 a.m. Good Sam Distribution Day

(GS Office)

4 p.m. Church Vitality Mtg (Panara)

7 p.m. Justice & Mercy Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

Personnel Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, August 6

5:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry Class (Fanning Rm)

6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers (SM) Monthly Mtg

(SM Office)

7 p.m. Book Club (Zoom)

Thursday, August 7

11 a.m. Fiber Arts Gathering (Fanning Rm)

12 Noon Lunch Bunch (East Market)

6 p.m. First Church Ringers (Sanctuary)

Friday, August 8

10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

Sunday, August 10

9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion

(Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Kaffee Klatsch (Parish Hall)

Family Playground Time (Sam Gordon Playground)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)

12:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study (Youth Rm)

6 p.m. BREAD Membership Mtg

(Parish Hall)

# Light the Way Youth Bible Study with Maggie Myers Sunday, August 10 — 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

"Light the Way" Youth Bible Study is for youth ages 14-20. It will be led by high school senior and lifelong First Church member, Maggie Myers. Join Maggie for a relaxed, teen friendly discussion of the Bible and personal faith journeys, where connection, not perfection, are the goals. Friends are welcome and pizza will be provided. This will be offered again August 31st.

Please contact Maggie at <u>maggiemyers0816@gmail.com</u> or Leslie Fulford at <u>lfulford@first-church.org</u> to learn more.

# Lunch Bunch Thursday, August 7 12:00 Noon at the East Market

A short drive from the church at 212 Kelton Ave., the East Market offers a dozen vendors to select your lunch time fare. Join the others for First Church for this easy going lunch time gathering!

For more information please contact Pat Patterson at ppatterson@first-church.org. Please register on Realm for this lunch time adventure!



# Justice Ministry Network Meeting Sunday, August 10 6:30 p.m. in Parish Hall

All are invited to our church's Justice Ministry Network meeting Sunday, August 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We will plan our work with the B.R.E.A.D. (Building Responsibility, Equality And Dignity) organization through the fall and into the new year. Coffee, tea and desserts will be served.

Our network is composed of three dozen church members committed to working on local issues of social justice. B.R.E.A.D. is a coalition of 36 Columbus area churches, synagogues, and mosques, each of which has a justice ministry network of individuals. First Church has been a member of B.R.E.A.D. for a quarter-century.

The primary agenda items for the network meeting are planning the annual congregational listening process involving house meetings early in the fall and preparing for B.R.E.A.D.'s annual assembly in November. Any church member or visitor is welcome to attend the network meeting to learn more about our work.

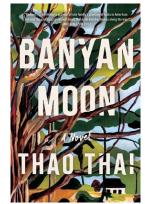
# First Church Book Club Banyan Moon by Thao Thai Wednesday, August 6 7 p.m. on Zoom

Come enjoy lively conversation at the First Church Book Club on Wednesday, August 6.

Banyan Moon by Thao Thai (Columbus author) is a story about three generations of Vietnamese-American mothers and daughters who experience

life as immigrants in the U.S. From the 1960s to present-day, their inherited burdens, sacrifices, secrets, and love stories impact the lives they make.

Please email Kathy Reed at <a href="mailto:kbreed2010@gmail.com">kbreed2010@gmail.com</a> for more information.



# Leveling the Playing Field Thursday, August 14 10:00 a.m.

Youth are invited to volunteer at Leveling the Playing Field (4848 Evanswood Dr. in Columbus), a nonprofit that collects and redistributes sporting equipment to under-resourced communities.

We'll spend a two-hour shift organizing gear, then head to Ranchero Kitchen, a nearby Salvadorian restaurant, for pupusas—a delicious way to support the local community and try something new.

Please bring lunch money if able. Contact Leslie Fulford at <a href="mailto:lfulford@first-church.org">lfulford@first-church.org</a>, to learn more.



# "Mama Bears" Sunday, August 24, 2:30 p.m.



Join us for a screening of the film "Mama Bears" on Sunday, August 24, at 2:30 p.m., followed by a panel discussion.

The film focuses on "mama bears" who are spread across the country but connected through

private Facebook groups. They call themselves "mama bears" because while their love is warm and fuzzy, they fight ferociously to make the world kinder and safer for all LGBTQ+ people. Some grew up as fundamentalist, evangelical Christians, and are willing to lose friends, family, and faith communities to keep their offspring safe — even when it challenges their own belief systems.

"Mama Bears" is an intimate, thought-provoking exploration of the journeys taken by two "mama bears"— whose profound love for their LGBTQ children turned them into advocates for the entire queer community — and a young African American lesbian whose struggle for self-acceptance exemplifies why "mama bears" are so important.

# Calling All Bakers "Do this in memory of Me"

Perhaps there are no two commandments more clear then Jesus' command for us to love one another and his command for us to remember the last supper when we gather as a faith community. But we don't just remember it or re-enact the Last Supper. We are called to relive it, to let it transform us. In order for this to happen, everything we do in worship should be intentional toward that end. We are now using real bread baked by members of our worshipping community.

First, a shout out to Bruce Panek for all of the sourdough he baked for us, and my thanks to Melanie Brown and Wendy Kennedy for working out the details of a new recipe for us.

We are now in need of others to join our communion bread baking team. This is a great ministry not just for seasoned bakers but for families that want to bake communion bread together.



Please consider joining our team and participating in this ministry so vital to our worship together.

If you are interested, please contact Rev. Becky through the church office.

# Thank You First Serves Volunteers



First Church members gathered last Sunday to assemble sack lunches for the children in the St. Stephens summer program. We had enthusiastic sandwich makers and bag decorators, and thank you to the Jones family who delivered the bags to St. Stephens after church.

Please join us August 24 for our next First Serves. This is an excellent opportunity to live out

'Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve.'

# Re-Connecting from Moderator, Sarah Reed

Congregational care is always a significant concern in the life of the church. During this time of transition, we are especially focused on the needs of our 1200+ members. A challenge is understanding what your needs are, especially if we have lost touch with you.

Council recently formed a membership committee to address this challenge. This committee is looking at our membership rolls to reconnect with those we have not seen in a while. Soon, letters are going out to members who, for whatever reason, have not been in worship or active in the life of the church. We want to say, "we miss you," and to know if there is a need that can be addressed by this faith community.

First Congregational Church is here to support our members through continued fellowship and unwavering love. We'd love to hear from you and reconnect, if that is your wish. Please let us know how we may serve you.

# First Serves for August: Hygiene Kits for Gladden Community House August 24 10 a.m. Classroom D

First Serves will be making hygiene kits for the middle and high school teens served by Gladden Community House. Many of their students don't have necessary hygiene products at home. Let's help them start their school year feeling confident and supported! We will assemble the hygiene kits into boy and girl packs to be presented at their Back to School Bash.

To fill the hygiene kits we need any brand of new, full size products. A list of needed items is available in *Connections* and at the Giving Tree in the Education Wing. Donations can be placed under the Giving Tree.

Thank you for supporting these teens!

# Keep in Prayer

**Members** Stella Braide; Jennifer Fry; Steve Wild; Mark Williams; Nancy Livingston; Janice Taft; James Velo; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Mike Weddle; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; and Janice White.

Family and friends Candy Cummings' friend, Robdonda Hardin; Geoffrey Dean's aunt, Vivian Heaney; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; Rose Kandel's sister, Linde Klein; Rev. Becky David's brother-in-law, Scott Bickford; Melissa Kulwicki's friend, Sandy Bushong; 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; Victor John's father, Charles John and mother, Mary Jane John; 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 Cicenas.

Those who mourn Dianne Frazer on the death of her brother, Dwight Frazer.

We pray for the willpower and knowledge to form a safety committee for the church.

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 the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Sao Tome, and Principe. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Disciples of Christ Church of the Congo, Brazzaville.

# Church Leadership

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Becky David, 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

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: 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-elect: Janice Taft Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson

Member-at-Large: Martha Wilson Personnel: Sandra Mathias Personnel-elect: Neal Brower

Youth Member-at-Large: Sebastian Kulwicki

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### 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



