

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.

Prelude

"On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss"

arr. David R. Holsinger,1989 trans. WIlliam G. Harbinson

Rev. jessica young chang

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Leader: God of the prophets, call to us today.

People: Call us into Your ways of love, justice, and righteousness.

Please stand as you are able. (* indicates congregation standing)

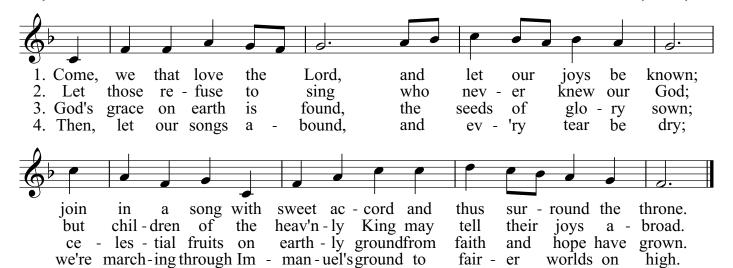
*Leader: God of the poets, remind us again how much You love us. **People:** Sing to us Your ways of love, justice, and righteousness.

Leader: God of the disciples, teach us how to follow You.

People: Teach us Your ways of love, justice, and righteousness.

Leader: Come, let us worship.

*Processional Hymn St. Thomas, "The Universal Psalmist," 1763; adapt. AaronWilliams, 1770 "Come, we that love the Lord" Isaac Watts, 1707, alt.



*Invocation Rev. young chang

Leader: God be with you. **People:** And also with you.

Leader: God of compassion and justice,

the worship you choose for us is to loose the bonds of injustice,

to let the oppressed go free, to share bread with the hungry, to shelter the homeless poor.

People: So in praise and wonder, we come to worship you

not just with our words

but with our hearts and our lives. through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Rev. Becky David

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 at the end of the pew, sign it and pass it on to your neighbor so we many greet one another by name.

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 58:9b-14

Andrew Welsh-Huggins

Leader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, the fifty eighth chapter.

If you remove the yoke from among you,

the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

if you offer your food to the hungry

and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness

and your gloom be like the noonday.

The Lord will guide you continually,

and satisfy your needs in parched places,

and make your bones strong;

and you shall be like a watered garden,

like a spring of water,

whose waters never fail.

Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;

you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;

you shall be called the repairer of the breach,

the restorer of streets to live in.

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,

from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;

if you call the sabbath a delight

and the holy day of the Lord honorable;

if you honor it, not going your own ways,

serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;

then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALTER Jubilate Deo

Psalm 100

Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594)

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra, servite Domino in lætitia.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness.

THE SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Hebrews 12:18-29

Mr. Welsh-Huggins

Leader: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Hebrews, the twelfth chapter.

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.") But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

Unser Herrcher, Joachim Neander, 1680







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

Now Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Rev. David

Commissioning of Stephen Ministry Leader

Revs. David and young chang

Annette McCormick

Leader:

Dear friend, you have been equipped to serve as a Stephen Ministry Leader at First Congregational Church. Listen now to these words from Scripture: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Colossians 3:23-24).

Leader:

You have been comforted by God with the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection for us all. We ask you now to join in serving our Lord and those in our congregation and community who need to be comforted.

As Jesus has responded to your needs, we ask you to be responsive to the needs of others. As Jesus took the burdens of the world on his shoulders and has been a friend to you in troubled times, we ask you to care for those who are burdened and troubled.

As Jesus has broken down the barriers that separated you from God, we ask you to heal divisions wherever you find them and trust in God to make people whole. As the Spirit of Christ has given you gifts for service, we ask you to use your skills, talents, and prayers to help those people you serve.

As Jesus has shown his care to you, we ask you to help this congregation grow as a caring community through your own caring ministry.

Leader: Are you prepared to meet those requests that we ask of you?

If so, respond, "Yes, with the help of God."

Answer: Yes, with the help of God.

Leader: Are you prepared to nurture the skills you have learned and use them

in service to others—to support, en- courage, build up, and comfort people in their needs?

Answer: Yes, with the help of God.

Leader: Members of First Congregational Church, open your hearts to this ministry

and pray for Annette, that she may be effective servants of Christ.

Are you prepared to meet this request? If so, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

People: Yes, with the help of God.

Leader: Will you accept her ministry when you need help

and allow her to work with you as you face struggles in your life,

that you might receive support and help from your Christian brothers and sisters?

People: Yes, with the help of God.

Leader: Because you have promised faithfully to serve the Lord Jesus and his people

as a Stephen Minister, I commend you to the care and guidance

of the Holy Spirit as you in turn care for others.

Pray for the people whose lives you are privileged to share.

Be free to share your own needs with others

so that you might receive the same kind of care and love you offer others.

Act boldly and without fear, for Christ is with you. And "may the God of peace sanctify you wholly;

and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless

at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Leader: Let us pray.

O God, we ask you to take Annette into your care.

May she serve you with the power of the Holy Spirit;

may she be quick to serve, patient in listening,

willing to share herself with people. Give to us thankful hearts for her,

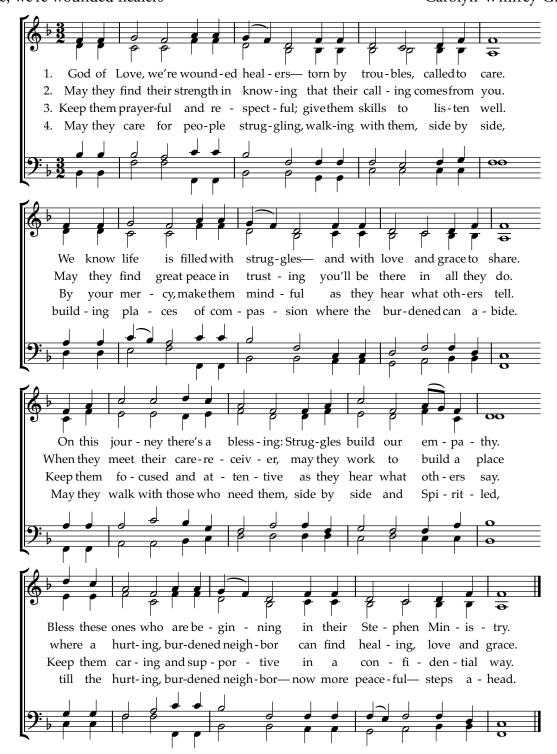
and show her in times of stress and satisfaction

a special measure of your mercy and joy.

Keep her strong in the faith you have given her for the sake of Jesus,

who cares for all of us in every way forever. Amen.

Leader: Go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.



This hymn was written to celebrate the commissioning of the Stephen Ministers of First Congregational Church, UCC, Columbus, OH.

Prayers of the People Rev. David

Invitation to Silence

Prayers of Intercession

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 the Depart to Serve leaflet:



Mission Invitation Gail Lowe

Cash and designated gifts will support the ongoing distribution and promotion of the "Mama Bears" documentary film that we are screening at First Church today. This award-winning film follows conservative Christian moms who became fierce advocates for their LGBTQ+ kids. The film affirms that all children, and especially LGBTQ+ youth, need love and acceptance from their parents and the other important adults in their lives. "Mama Bears" is sparking the conversations we need—about family, identity, and acceptance. Your generosity will help the film reach local screenings in over 100 communities and will help build the Mama Bears movement even further. Thank you for giving.

OFFERTORY

Psalm 1 Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

*Doxology Old 100th

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all creatures here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore.

Prayer of Dedication Rev. David

Leader: Loving God,

We celebrate the abundance in our lives, and that we can share it with the world.

People: In jubilance and grace,

we offer ourselves and all that we are and have

to be your justice and peace

in the midst of all that is unholy, unthinkable, and undeniable.

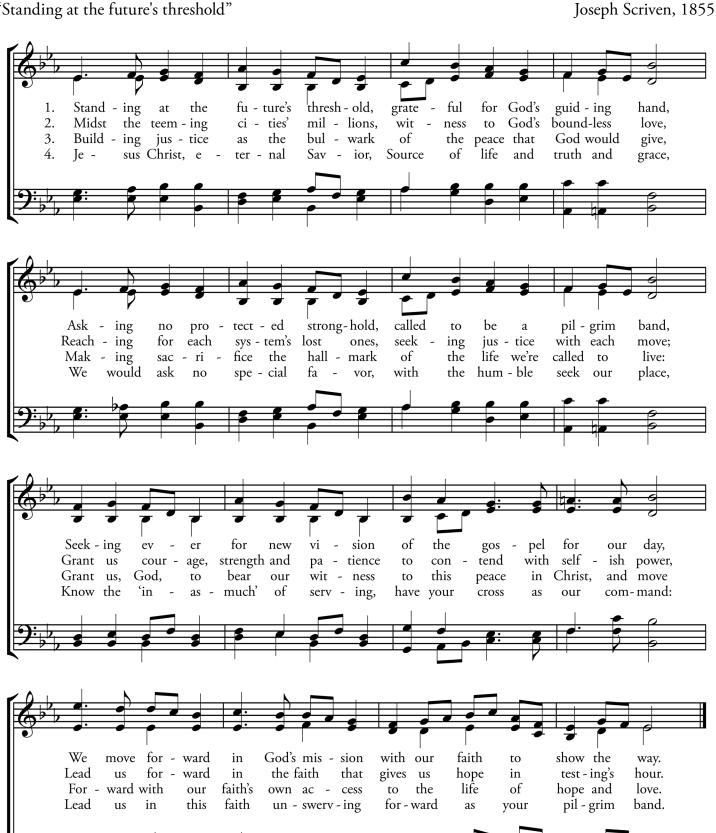
In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.



*Benediction Postlude Fugue in D Major, BWV 532

SENEDICTION Rev. David

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

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 one of our pastors or anyone wearing a name tag. We would be delighted to assist you.

- † The Flowers this morning are given by the Flower Fund to the glory of God and to welcome Rev. jess young chang as our Interim Associate Minister.
- † Coffee Hour this morning is hosted by the Justice and Mercy Commission.
- † Greeting at the Exits

Rev. David — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Ms. Kulwicki — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Rev. young chang — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

Leadership in Today's Liturgy
The Rev. Becky David, preacher
Rev. jessica young chang, worship leader
Andrew Welsh-Huggins, liturgist
Leslie Fulford, worship leader
Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader
Henry Wade, crucifer
Jason Harrell and Sebastian Kulwicki, vergers
James Bobb, organist

Jonathan Bradshaw, Aniesha Booth, Aran Cunningham, and Todd Cunningham, *trombone quartet*Peter Murray, *livestream ministry*



August 24, 2025

This Week at First Church

Sunday, August 24

9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy

Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. First Serves (Classroom D)

Adult Education (Classroom C)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)

2:30 p.m. Mama Bears Screening (Sanctuary)

Tuesday, August 26

5:15 p.m. Laundry Love (Wash Land)

6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry Class (Fanning Rm)

7 p.m. Deacons Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, August 27

6 p.m. Time Out Dinner

(Plank's Bier Garten, 888 S. High St.)

6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry Class (Fanning Rm)

Thursday, August 28

6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

Sunday, August 31

9 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Family Playground Time

(Sam Gordon Playground)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

12:15 p.m. Welcome Reception (Parish Hall)

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

First Serves for August Today, 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.

Adult Education Today, August 24 10 a.m.

First Church member, David O'Connor will present Part 3 of his series, the Salem Witch Trials. Join David for this interesting discussion in Classroom C.

Adult Education Bible Study Sunday, September 14 10 a.m.

Our Adult Bible Study season begins Sunday, September 7 in Classroom C. The Revs. Margo Connor and Larry Miller will lead this season on the theme of The Parables of Jesus in an Autocratic World.

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

The screening of the film "Mama Bears" will be held today in the Sanctuary followed by a panel discussion.

Admission is free, but tickets are required. A free-will offering will be collected to support the continued distribution and promotion of the "Mama Bears" film and movement, and Columbus area programs serving LGBTQ+ youth.

"Mama Bears" presents first-person accounts of some of the struggles faced by LBGTQ+ youth and their families. This award-winning film follows conservative Christian moms who became fierce advocates for their LGBTQ+ kids. "Mama Bears" is sparking the conversations we need about family, identity, and acceptance.

More information is available from Jim Lowe at lowerail 1124@gmail.com.

A Blessing from Sacred Earth

The blessings of sun
The blessings of moon
The blessings of east and of west
to guide us on the way
to lighten our eyes
to strengthen our will and our loving.
The blessings of earth
The blessings of air
The blessings of fire and of water
to fill us with heaven
to free us with mercy
to stir us with flames of compassion.

John Philip Newell, Spiritual Writer and Teacher

Time Out Dinner Wednesday, August 27 6 p.m.

Plank's Bier Garten is a go-to spot for fans of good food and a great atmosphere. Join others from First Church at this fun time and have some dinner!

Please register in Realm so everyone will have a seat at the table!



Welcome Reception Sunday, August 31 12:15 p.m.

Mark your calendar and join the Transition Team in welcoming our new Interim Associate Minister, Rev. jessica young chang. The reception will be in Parish Hall following the 11 a.m. service.

Sunday, August 31 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

The final "Light the Way" Youth Bible Study for this summer will be held August 31 and is for youth ages 14-20.

Maggie Myers, high school senior and lifelong First Church member, leads this study. It is a relaxed, teen friendly discussion of the Bible and personal faith journeys, where connection, not perfection, are the goals. Friends are welcome!

July 2025 Notes and Graph

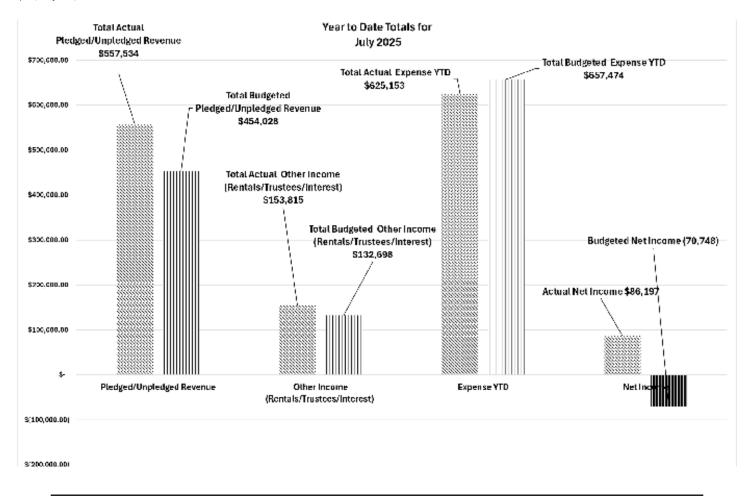
July Income

Year-to-date pledged/unpledged revenue through July is \$103,506 ahead of budgeted year-to-date. We are ahead of our goal for pledges year-to-day with a balance of \$557,534 actual receipts vs. a budget of \$454,028.

Year-to-date other revenue through July is \$21,117 ahead of budgeted year-to-date. We are ahead of our goal for total other income year-to-day with a balance of \$153,815 actual receipts vs. a budget of \$132,698. Overall, our actual revenues received through July are \$711,349, compared to a budget of \$586,726. We are carrying a surplus to budget by \$124,623 year-to-date.

July Expenses

Year-to-date our actual expenses are \$625,153 compared to a budget of \$657,474. This is a \$32,322 savings from budget expenses year-to-date. Net income is \$86,197 vs. budget (\$70,748), a positive variance of \$156,945.



Share Your Garden's Bounty

Fresh fruits and veggies are always in high demand at the Broad Street Presbyterian Church Food Pantry at 760 E. Broad St. You can drop off any extra veggies, herbs, and fruit from your garden at the Pantry weekday mornings or at the church office weekday afternoons. There's nothing better than sharing your homegrown produce!

Keep in Prayer

Members Jane Ward; Gretchen Atkinson; Jean Lebold; Annette McCormick; Stella Braide; Jennifer Fry; Steve Wild; 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 Amy Wagner's friends, Megan Dosch and Greg Mollusky, and Andrew Deedrick; 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; 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 Janice Cook on the death of her husband, Ron Cook.

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 Liberia and Sierra Leone. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Arunima Hospice under the Diocese of Calcutta (Kolkata), India.

Save the Date First Church Engagement Fair Sunday, September 7

FCC Engagement Fair = Helping our members find engagement, service, and friendship opportunities that speak to their hearts here at First Church!

Come learn about all our mission projects, activities, and ways to become engaged and serve here at First Church at our annual Engagement Fair! Join us in Parish Hall right after each worship service for an opportunity to connect with other members as you learn about our activities. Come chat with fellow members, put names to faces, and explore wonderful opportunities for service, engagement, and friendship!

Commission and committee members are asked to come Saturday, September 6 between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. or Sunday morning between 8 and 8:40 a.m. to set up your displays and/or handouts. Please contact coordinator, Kathy Reed at kbreed2010@gmail.com for more information about this informative program.

Book Club Wednesday, September 10 — 7 p.m.

Come enjoy lively conversation and get to know other church members at the First Church Book Club on Zoom. The book, *James*, is a brilliant, action-packed reimagining of Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Told from the enslaved Jim's point of view, it's both harrowing and ferociously funny. Percival Everett was awarded both the 2025 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the 2024 National Book Award for Fiction for *James*. Contact Kathy Reed at kbreed2010@gmail.com for more information.

Church Leadership

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Becky David, M.Div.

Interim Associate Minister: Rev. jessica young chang, 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, Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Heather Jones, Justice & Mercy: James Lowe Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Justice & Mercy-elect: Janice Taft

Fran Panek, Gary Seigerst, Thomason Smith

Transition Team: Jacquelyn Dean and Nancy Loy, co-chairpersons, Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson Todd Cunningham, Rev. Becky David, Scott Graham, Gregory

Halbe, Susie Loik, Allison Lowery Palmer, Pavan Peter, Sarah Reed, Personnel: Sandra Mathias

Joshua Stafford

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: 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: Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

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

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



