### 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.

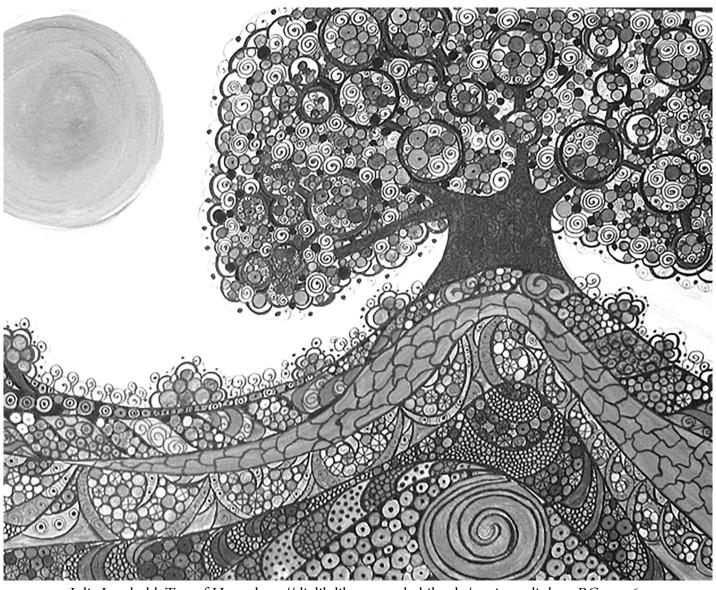
Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

### GATHERING

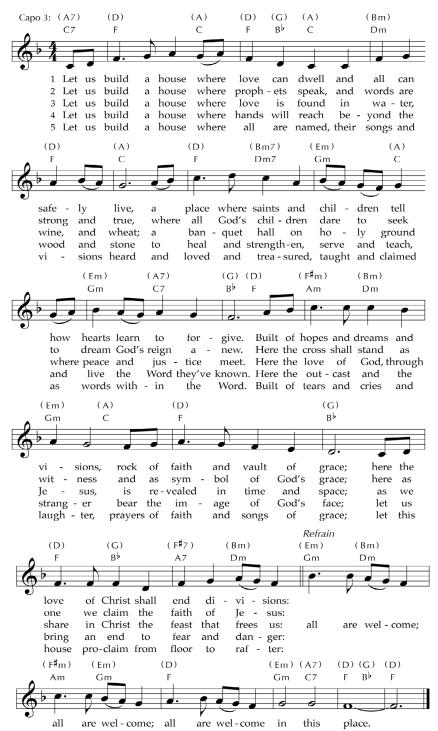
#### Prelude

\*Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Rev. Becky



Julie Leuthold, Tree of Hope. http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59063



Opening Prayer Rev. Becky

Leader: God of compassion and justice,

the worship you choose for us is to loosen the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, to share bread with the hungry, to shelter the homeless poor.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn and your healing shall spring up quickly.

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

not just with our words

but with our hearts and our lives. Glory and honor be to you, O God,

Creator of a new heaven and a new earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME Melissa Kulwicki

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

#### LISTENING

#### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Isaiah 58:9B-14 Barbara Mason

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.

LUKE 13:10-17 Rev. Becky

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

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.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

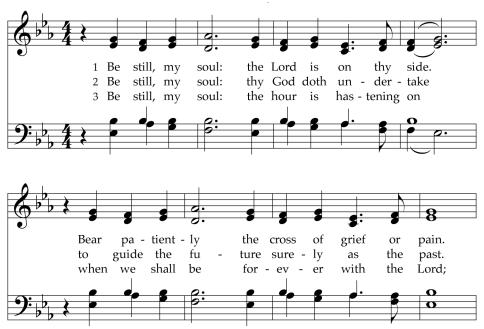
Reflection Rev. Becky

### Responding

Hymn of Preparation "Be still my soul" verses 1-2

Finlandia, Jean Sibelius, 1899

Katharina von Schlegel, 1752; trans. Jane Laurie Borthwick, 1855, alt.





Prayers of the People Invitation to Silent Prayer

Rev. Becky

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.

Katharina von Schlegel, 1752; trans. Jane Laurie Borthwick, 1855, alt.

#### THE OFFERTORY

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



Mission Invitation Cami Curren

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 MUSIC

Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Becky

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.

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

People: Gracious God,

Filled with the good gifts of this sacred bread and wine

We commit ourselves to offering Christ to the world around us.

Embraced by love,

help us to show how love has found us

as we offer that love to your world. 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

\*Closing Hymn

Lead Me, Guide Me, Doris Akers, 1953, arr. Richard Smallwood

"Lead me, guide me"

Doris Akers, 1953



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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"Lead me, guide me." Words and music: Doris M. Akers. © 1953 Doris M. Akers, admin by Chappell & Co/Alfred Publishing Co, Inc. All rights reserved.

Leadership in Today's liturgy
The Rev. Becky David, preacher
Barbara Mason, liturgist
Leslie Fulford, worship leader
Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader
David Hogrefe, pianist
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 lowemail 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 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.

# Light the Way Youth Bible Study 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

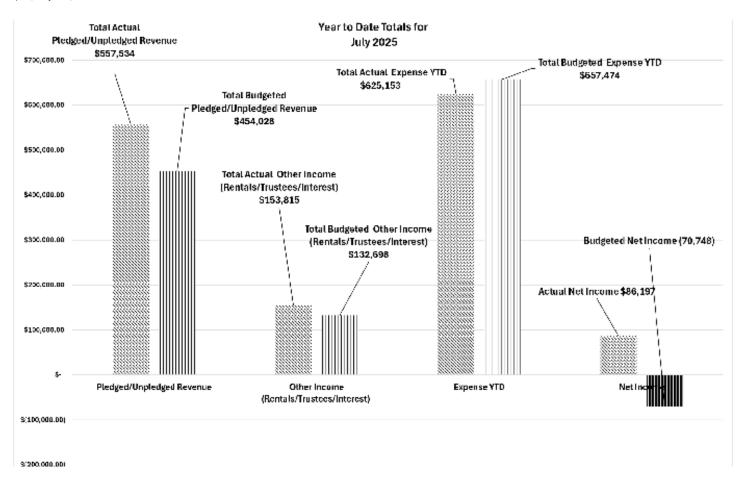
### **July Income**

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 <a href="mailto:kbreed2010@gmail.com">kbreed2010@gmail.com</a> 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 <a href="mailto:kbreed2010@gmail.com">kbreed2010@gmail.com</a> 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



