Worship at Nine October 5, 2025

SEVENTEENTH 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

*Welcome Rev. jess

*Gathering Song

Hymn of Promise, Natalie Sleeth, 1986

"In the bulb there is a flower"

Natalie Sleeth, 1986



- 1 In the bulb there is a flow-er; in the seed, an ap-ple tree; 2 There's a song in ev-ery si-lence, seek-ing word and mel-o-dy;
- 3 In our end is our be-gin-ning; in our time, in fin i ty;



in co-coons, a hid-den prom-ise: but-ter-flies will soon be free! there's a dawn in ev-ery dark-ness, bring-ing hope to you and me. in our doubt there is be-liev-ing; in our life, e-ter-ni-ty.



In the cold and snow of win-ter there's a spring that waits to be, From the past will come the fu-ture; what it holds, a mys-ter-y, In our death, a res-ur-rec-tion; at the last, a vic-to-ry,



un - re-vealed un - til its sea - son, some-thing God a - lone can see.

*Invocation Rev. jess

Leader: Creator God, we gather in your protective and generous embrace

To pause and connect with you and with one another.

People: In a season of change, of turning leaves and dwindling daylight,

We remember you as the fixed star of love, justice and forgiveness in the world.

Leader: Be with us as we reflect, as we connect, as we turn inward,

Listening to your still small voice,

People: encourage and affirm us as we turn outward, to be the church in your world.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

*Passing of the Peace Rev. jess

CHILDREN'S TIME Leslie Fulford

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

LISTENING

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Наваккик 1:1-4, 2:1-4

Julia Myers

Leader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Habakkuk, the first chapter.

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,

and you will not listen?

Or cry to you "Violence!"

and you will not save?

Why do you make me see wrong-doing

and look at trouble?

Destruction and violence are before me;

strife and contention arise.

So the law becomes slack

and justice never prevails.

The wicked surround the righteous—

therefore judgment comes forth perverted.

I will stand at my watchpost,

and station myself on the rampart;

I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,

and what he will answer concerning my complaint.

Then the Lord answered me and said:

Write the vision;

make it plain on tablets,

so that a runner may read it.

For there is still a vision for the appointed time;

it speaks of the end, and does not lie.

If it seems to tarry, wait for it;

it will surely come, it will not delay.

Look at the proud!

Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Luke 17:5-10 Rev. jess

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

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

"Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!"

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

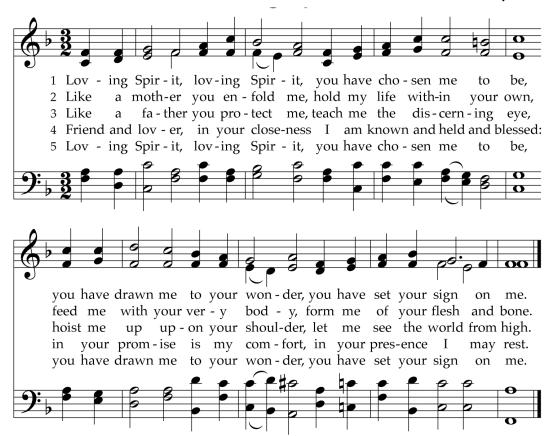
People: Thanks be to God.

Reflection Rev. jess

Responding

Hymn of Preparation "Loving Spirit" vv. 1-3

Omni Die, Corner's Gross Catholisch Gesangbuch, 1631 Shirley Erena Murray, 1986



Pastoral Prayer Rev. jess

Sung Response "Loving Spirit" vv. 4-5

Omni Die, Corner's Gross Catholisch Gesangbuch, 1631 Shirley Erena Murray, 1986

THE OFFERTORY

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



Mission Invitation Jim Lowe

Cash and designated checks go to **Neighbors in Need (NIN)**, a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. One-third of the offering is given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries. In 2025, the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Prayer of Dedication Rev. jess

All: God of Fruitfulness,

we place before you our offering of time, talent, and treasure.

Take our gifts and multiply them, and use them and us

to further the presence of peace, justice, and love in your world. Amen.

Communion Rev. jess

Leader: Our God is here.

People: God's Spirit is with us.

Leader: Open your hearts to the One who is Love

People: We open our hearts to You, O God

Leader: Let us give thanks to God who sets us free

People: It is our joy to give You thanks!

Communion Prayers Rev. jess

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.

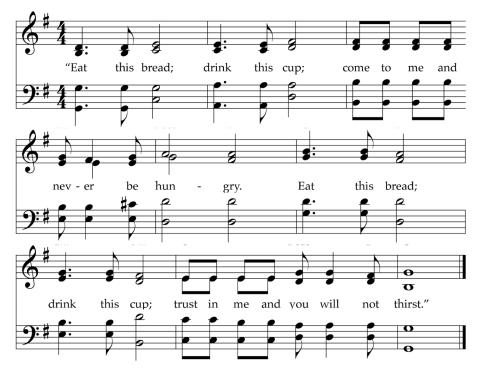
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

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

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Communion Hymn "Eat this bread"

Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984 Robert J. Batastini and the Taizé Community, 1984



Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. jess

All: God of Abundance,

we thank you for refreshing us at Your table and sharing with us the gift of Christ.

Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SENDING

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Cami Curren

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.

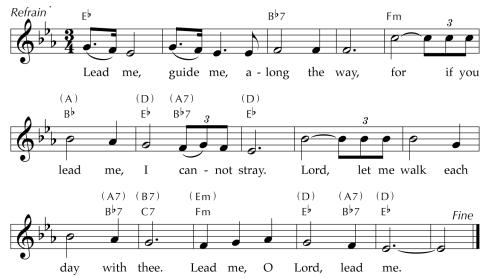
*Benediction

Rev. jess

*Closing Hymn

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

"Lead me, guide 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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"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. jessica young chang, preacher Julia Myers, liturgist Leslie Fulford, worship leader Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader David Hogrefe, pianist Geoffrey Dean, livestream ministry



October 5, 2025

This Week at First Church

Sunday, October 5

9 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

10 a.m. Sunday School (Various Classrooms)

Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)

Parent Conversation (Adult Library)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales

(Parish Hall)

12:30 p.m. Youth Group (Youth Rm)

Monday, October 6

9:30 a.m. Stewardship & Growth Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

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, October 7

9 a.m. Good Sam Distribution Day (Church)7 p.m. Communications & Technology Mtg

(Zoom)

Justice & Mercy Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Personnel Commission Mtg (Zoom)

Full Circle Connections Friday, October 10 10 a.m.

Full Circle Connections continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at 10:00 am in the Parlor on October 10 and 24 this month. All are welcome to attend the discussions. Jan Hamilton and Ron Botts are co-leaders.

Wednesday, October 8

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

Thursday, October 9

6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal

(Choir Rm)

Friday, October 10

10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

Sunday, October 12

9 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Sunday School

(Various Classrooms)

Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)

11 p.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

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

Youth Group (Youth Rm)

12:30 p.m. Cyber Security Awareness

Workshop (Parish Hall)

Adult Education and Young Peoples Sunday School

Adult Bible Study in Classroom C continues on the theme of The Parables of Jesus in an Autocratic World, led by The Revs. Margo Connor and Larry Miller.

Sunday School for young children is at 10:00 a.m., and the Youth Group meets at 12:15 a.m. for middle and high school students. Please contact Leslie Fulford at lfulford@first-church.org to register youth or for more information.

Parent Conversations are in the Adult Library. Join other parents at 10 a.m. and have some coffee!

Legacy Sunday

Thank you to everyone who shared in setting up, bringing food and cleaning up on Legacy Sunday! The weather was perfect to be outside and enjoy each other's company and play the fun games set up on the west lawn.

Thank you to the Trustees and Church Vitality members for their work in organizing the day. We also want to thank our custodians who moved tables and chairs for us. There were other church members who showed up to help and we are thankful for all they did.

Please check Connections for photos of the fun afternoon.

The Pie Contest Winners

Congratulations to pie bakers, Kelly Dodd with the best tasting pie, Sarah Reed for the best pie presentation, and Victor John for the best overall pie.

National Coming Out Day Saturday, October 11

National Coming Out Day is on October 11. It is the anniversary of the 1987 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, a significant event in LGBTQ+ history. Founded in 1988 by Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary, the day was established to celebrate the courage of coming out and to raise awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.

First Congregational Church UCC has been an Open and Affirming Congregation since 2002, and we would like to extend an extravagant welcome and celebrate National Coming Out Day with our LGBTQ+ siblings far and wide by sharing video messages with words of encouragement, joy, and love.

If you would like to participate in this fun and exciting project, **today**, **October 5**, following each service, Melissa Kulwicki, Communications Manager, will be available to video your message. The messages will be compiled and posted on the First Church Facebook and Instagram Pages. If you want to participate, you can also email your video to Melissa at mkulwicki@first-church.org no later than noon on Wednesday, October 8.

Cyber Security Workshop Sunday, October 12 12:15 p.m.

Bring your lunch and join First Church Member and IT Specialist Stefan Duga to learn more about how you can stay safe in this digital world.

Please register on Realm by clicking the QR code.

Lunch Bunch Tuesday, October 14 12 Noon

Pizza makes for a great lunch and who doesn't love Italian so let's get together at Borgata's. Borgata's is a casual eatery serving New York-style pizzas and

home-cooked Italian fare. It's located at 2285 W. Dublin-Granville Road in Worthington.



Please register using the QR code.

A Hymn Festival Sunday, October 19 4 p.m.

The Organ, the Choir, and the Congregation will come together for a Hymn Festival with Richard Webster.

Noted composer, arranger, and choral conductor, Richard Webster formerly of Trinity at Copley Square in Boston, leads us in a hymn festival with the First Church Choir, brass, percussion, organs, and congregational song!

First Serves Sunday, October 26 10 a.m.

First Serves is collecting candy for the Gladden Community House's Halloween Party. Bring your candy to the giving tree!

For more information please talk to Leslie Fulford.

Time Out Dinner Wednesday, October 29 6 p.m.

Award-winning chef Mike Mariola founded The Rail Burger in 2011 as a full-service burger restaurant and bar suitable for any occasion. Over time, Mike's vision for the concept shifted and led to the reimagination of a new brand - The Rail Craft Kitchen. It's a fun place to gather and get to know each other.

The Rail Craft Kitchen is located at 1064 Dublin Road, in Grandview Crossing. Come join in and use the QR Code to register on Realm to reserve your place at the table.



Book Club Wednesday, November 5 7 p.m.

Next month the FCC Book Club will read *The Mighty Red* by Louise Erdrich. This work of fiction is set in North Dakota's Red River Valley and traces the lives of the Tabor townspeople in 2008 and 2009, shortly after the financial crash.

To receive book club emails and the Zoom link please contact Kathy Reed at kbreed2010@gmail.com.

BREAD — Being Gnats

If you have been out this summer, you probably have encountered them, those little pesky creatures. They don't do much harm, but they are very annoying, and can take the fun out of your outdoor plans. You probably heard the story in Sunday school, how one of the plagues visited on Pharaoh to put pressure on him to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, was the plague of the gnats. As the bible tells the story, this was one plague that Pharaoh's magicians could not duplicate. The gnats, seemingly originating from ordinary dust, were in dense swarms all over Egypt, and they were effective in causing Pharaoh to promise to release the Israelites.

As we consider our current political situation, feeling quite powerless to release the ICE prisoners, or to care for the starvation in Gaza or any of the other unjust inflictions that are visited on our own neighbors in Columbus' less privileged neighborhoods, we are invited to become like those old-testament gnats that got Pharaoh's attention, not because of the harm they caused by themselves, but because of his inability to ignore them.

Joining hands with the many congregations that have joined the BREAD organizations to insist on proven effective solutions to our inexcusable inability to provide low income housing, improve the air we breathe, invest in our schools, and all the other stagnant issues that our politicians are deftly avoiding to seriously address, we could make a difference. Individually doing that is impossible.

Please join me, Antoinette Koolesman-Beynen, on Wednesday, October 22 at Westminster-Thurber at 7:00 pm to discuss what is on your hearts and how we can turn into gnats! We will meet in the Art Room in the Thurber Tower, 645 Neil Avenue.

BREAD Rises!

Keep in Prayer

Members Al Waddell; Pat Liebchen; Jane Ward; Gretchen Atkinson; Jean Lebold; Stella Braide; Steve Wild; Nancy Livingston; James Velo; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Jane Weddle; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; and Janice White.

Family and friends Pat Patterson's daughter-in-law, Chelsea Powell; Candy Cummings' friend, Robdonda Hardin; Geoffrey Dean's aunt, Vivian Heaney; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; Melissa Kulwicki's friend, Sandy Bushong; Wendy and Robert Reber's sister-in-law, Judy Reber; Tom Kiesel's friend, Carrie; Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers; Victor John's father, Charles John and mother, Mary Jane John; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; and Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples.

Those who mourn Emily Wilson on the death of her father, Bud Newcomb; the family and friends of Bradford Myers.

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 Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. We also pray for our UCC partners in mission, the Latin American Biblical University in Costa Rica.

Sacred Earth Eco Info

Because it takes plastics so long to decompose, every ...

band aid,

piece of gum,

ziplock bag,

plastic water bottle,

ballpoint pen,

piece of tape,

plastic straw,

styrofoam container or peanuts ...

ever made STILL EXISTS TODAY in some form.

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 Building and Grounds Superintendent: Kevin Salem 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 Training Coordinator:

Wendy Kennedy

Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator:

Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Communications, Media Faith Formation Commission-elect: Mariner Taft

and IT Coordinator: Annette McCormick

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: Neal Brower

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

House & Grounds: Eric Klintworth

House & Grounds-elect: Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

Member-at-Large: Martha Wilson

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

