Welcome to First Church!

You are welcomed, affirmed, and loved here; our faith informs us that you are a child of a loving God.

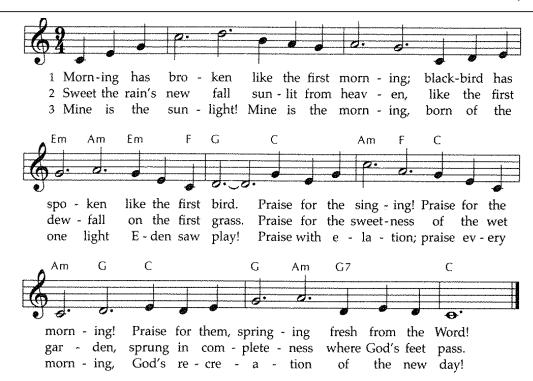
Your characteristics and gifts will enrich our congregation. In this community, you will be celebrated, embraced, and honored, no matter how you identify or how your identity may evolve.

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

GATHERING

- *Welcome
- *Gathering Song
- "Morning has broken"

Rev. Becky *Bunessan*, Gaelic melody Eleanor Farjeon, 1931, alt.



*Invocation written by The Rev. Catherine Rolling

Leader: Holy One, you have promised to be with us,

And long ago sent your Spirit to abide among us and guide us to a future of goodness and hope.

We come seeking your truth, your justice, your kindness.

People: O God, you are with us this morning.

Let us feel your presence and welcome you into our lives.

Come and fill these desires of our hearts, In the name of Jesus, our Beloved. Amen. Rev. Becky

*Passing of the Peace Rev. Becky
Children's Time Maggie Myers

During the sermon time, our young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories."

LISTENING

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Haggai 1:15b-2:9

Julia Myers

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

In the second year of King Darius, in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage,

O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

The Eyes of Jesus by John O'Donohue

Julia Myers

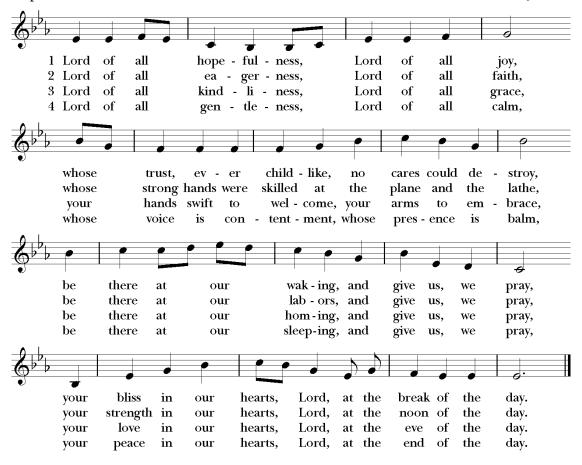
I imagine the eyes of Jesus Were harvest brown, The light of their gazing Suffused with the seasons: The shadow of winter, The mind of spring, The blues of summer, And amber of harvest. A gaze that is perfect sister To the kindness that dwells In his beautiful hands. The eyes of Jesus gaze on us, Stirring in the heart's clay The confidence of seasons That never lose their way to harvest. This gaze knows the signature Of our heartbeat, the first glimmer From the dawn that dreamed our minds, The crevices where thoughts grow Long before the longing in the bone Sends them toward the mind's eye, The artistry of the emptiness That knows to slow the hunger Of outside things until they weave Into the twilight side of the heart, A gaze full of all that is still future Looking out for us to glimpse The jeweled light in winter stone, Quickening the eyes that look at us To see through to where words Are blind to say what we would love, Forever falling softly on our faces, His gaze plies the soul with light, Laying down a luminous layer Beneath our brief and brittle days Until the appointed dawn comes Assured and harvest deft To unravel the last black knot And we are back home in the house That we have never left.

Reflection Rev. Becky

Responding

Hymn of Preparation "Lord of all hopefulness" vv. 1–2

Slane, Irish Folk Melody Jan Struther, 1931



PASTORAL PRAYER

SUNG RESPONSE

"Lord of all hopefulness" vv. 3-4

Rev. Becky

Slane, Irish Folk Melody Jan Struther, 1931

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 today go to **Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF)**. The SSVF program, a project of Lutheran Social Services, works to address these needs for veterans in 10 central Ohio counties, helping vets and their families with housing assistance, job services, counseling, advocacy for VA benefits, and temporary financial support. Last year more than 500 Veterans and their families were served through SSVF, and the demand for help continues to rise. Please give generously to truly honor our veterans.

Offertory Music
Prayer of Dedication

Stafford
Rev. Becky

Leader: Let us pray.

We bring, O God, the first fruits of our labors,

the best of all we have,

a portion of the bounty you entrust to use.

People: Accept our gifts, gracious God,

as a symbol of our renewed commitment

to follow in the ways of Jesus,

bending us always towards justice. Amen.

Communion Rev. Becky

Communion Prayers Rev. Becky

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.

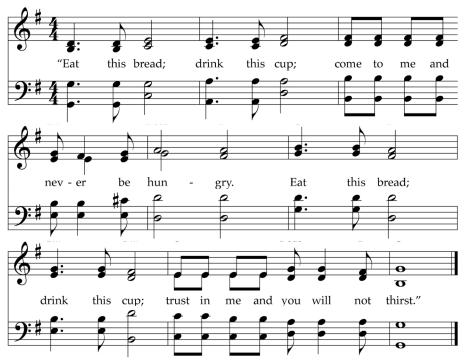
SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Communion Hymn

"Eat this bread"

Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984

Robert J. Batastini and the Taizé Community, 1984



Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: God of our longing,

Thank you for this meal shared in the company of friends.

All: Having rested and been fed,

May we go from this place

Committed to feeding any person

Who hungers for love,

Offering the same blessings we have received. Amen.

SENDING

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Rev. Becky

Let us depart with a heart to serve. Leader:

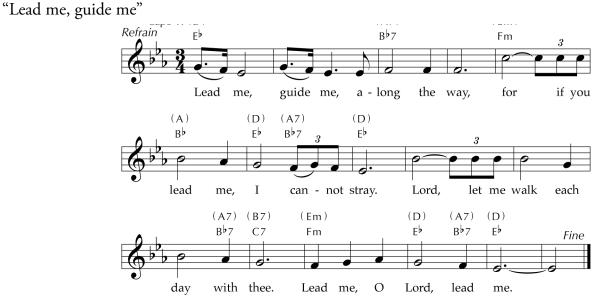
Thanks be to God. People:

*Benediction Rev. Becky

*Closing Hymn

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

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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"Lord of all hopefulness" Words: Jan Struther, 1931. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. "Eat this bread." Words: Robert Batastini and the Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier; ©1984 Less Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

"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
Julia Myers, liturgist
Leslie Fulford, worship leader
Melissa Kulwicki, worship leader
Joshua Stafford, pianist
Geoffrey Dean, livestream ministry



November 9, 2025

This Week at First Church

Sunday, November 9

9 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)

Sunday School Classes (Various Classrooms)

Youth Bible Study (Youth Rm)

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

12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)

Monday, November 10

2 p.m. Healing Circle (Chapel)

6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

7 p.m. Trustees Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, November 11

5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg.

(Classroom C & Zoom)

Wednesday, November 12

6 p.m. Security Committee Mtg

(Classroom C & Zoom)

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

Thursday, November 13

12 Noon Lunch Bunch (CMOA Schokko Cafe)

6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal

(Bell Rm)

6:30 p.m. New Members Class (Classroom C)

7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal

(Choir Rm)

Friday, November 14

11 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

Saturday, November 15

9 a.m. House & Grounds Clean Up Day

(Church grounds)

11 a.m. BOBS Planning Mtg (Zoom)

Sunday, November 16

9 a.m. Worship Service &

Holy Communion (Parish Hall)

10 a.m. Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)

Sunday School Classes (Various Classrooms)

Youth Bible Study (Youth Rm)

11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

Adult & Youth Bible Study Today, November 9 10 a.m.

The Adult Bible Study will continue our study of the parables of Jesus: the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. Roman Catholic doctrine says that "God has a partiality for the poor." Is this fair? What about God choosing who gets born into a rich family and who into a poor? Is God unreasonable?

Adult Bible Study is led by The Rev. Margo Connor and Rev. Larry Miller. This class is held in Classroom C.

The Youth Bible Study is for youth ages 14-20 and held in the Youth Room. High school senior and lifelong First Church member, Maggie Myers will lead. This is a relaxed, teen friendly discussion of the Bible and personal faith journeys, where connection, not perfection, are the goals. Friends are welcome.

Confirmation Class Today, November 9 12:30 p.m.

Following our service at 11 a.m., our 2025-2026 Confirmation Class begins in Classroom C.

Healing Circle Monday, November 10 2 p.m.

Circle Practice emerges from spiritual, cultural, and religious practices all over the world. In this practice, participants engage in safe, open communication and presence, and practice deep, confidential listening, and story sharing from the tenderness and vulnerability of our hearts. Please join the Healing Circle for deep listening, open sharing, and acknowledging the pain that is blocking our way to experiencing the healing and transformation of Christ.

Join us in the circle. Childcare will be available.

Church Vitality Lunch Invite Thursday, November 13 12 Noon

Church Vitality member, Vicki Lyden, will be saving a table for you at the Schokko Café in the Columbus Museum of Art at noon on November 13. Come and enjoy good food and good company. You do not need to register, just come. You can even park in the church lot. Call the church office (614-228-1741) with questions.

With the holiday months approaching and lots of activities going on, this will be our last mealtime together till after the first of the year. We thank all who have attended our Time Out Dinners and Lunch Bunches this past year.

We hope you can attend on the 13th, and we look forward to new events in 2026. If you would like to help plan our church-wide events, please email Pat Patterson (ppatterson@first-church.org).

New Member Class Thursday, November 13 7 p.m.

This is the second of two classes offered for those who are interested in joining our congregation. This class offers an opportunity to meet our ministers and lay leaders, learn about our church's history, and see how you might serve and grow spiritually through our activities and programs. The class will help you become better acquainted with our large congregation.

If you are a visitor to First Congregational Church, we encourage you to take the next step to consider joining our faith community. Please note, classes are not required to join our church.

Full Circle Connections Friday, November 14 10 a.m.

Full Circle Connections is a chance to discuss what's happening in our world, in our neighborhoods, and in our individual lives as people of faith. Come and join us for our next lively conversation in the Church Parlor. Everyone is welcome! Ron Botts and Jan Hamilton are the convenors.

House & Grounds Cleanup Day Saturday, November 15 9 a.m.

House & Grounds Commission will have a Fall Clean Up for the outside of the Church. We will rake leaves, dead head flowers, pull weeds, put away hoses, clear the drains along the Education wing, and most likely 4 or 5 other things that we deem appropriate (like removing the stump at the Ninth Street entrance).

We'll have coffee and tea, and donut holes to get started; and if enough folks are interested, we can order pizzas for lunch. If you are interested and available, please respond to Fran Panek at franpanek@gmail.com. Many hands will make light work!

Choral Evensong Sunday, November 16 4 p.m.

Held in the late afternoon, this service offers attendees a serene and contemplative experience, where scripture, music, and prayer intertwine. Through psalms, hymns, canticles, and scripture readings, Choral Evensong invites you to connect with the divine in a profoundly meditative way, immersing yourself in a spiritual journey that is as timeless as it is beautiful—a true testament to the enduring legacy of the English liturgical tradition.

A Service of Healing Sunday, November 23 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church is hosting A Service of Healing. Like our Legacy Sunday in September, this Sunday will feature a single service, to allow for intergenerational and intercultural connection that is so necessary for our congregation. We will come together, as one people, as God's people, to acknowledge our pain, and then as the Good Shepherd instructs us, to lay our burdens down at the altar of Christ. This service is not to be missed. We are having a single service because we are a single community, and because healing happens in community. We will breathe together, be together, feel together, and recover together, all in the nourishing, protective, and generous presence of our God.

Ohio Capital Winds Sunday, November 23 4 p.m.

As part of the Concert Series, Ohio Capital Winds (OCW) will perform a classic repertoire from masters such as Holst, Sousa, Grainger, and Ohio's own Henry Fillmore. OCW is a champion of wind ensemble music. This program will also feature a work for wind symphony and organ!

This freewill concert will be held in the Sanctuary, and is open to the public.

First Serves November Food Drive for Gladden Community House Food Pantry Sunday, November 23 at 11 a.m.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, we are collecting non-perishable boxed and canned food items and other household and toiletry items for donation to the Gladden Community House. With the freeze on SNAP benefits the need for items is even greater this year. Visit the Giving Tree in the Education Wing Breezeway to pick a "can" with a QR Code to get the most requested items.

Bring your food donations before November 23, and place them in the baskets under the Giving Tree. Following the 10 a.m. service on November 23, we will work together in Classroom D to box everything for delivery.

If you have spare boxes or storage bins that we could use to deliver the donations, please label them and place them under the tree. Also, if you are available to help deliver the food on Monday, November 24 or Tuesday, November 25, to Gladden House, please let us know.

If you need additional information, please contact Donna and Denise Vogt at dvogt@first-church.org. Thank you for your generous spirits and giving hearts!

Handbell Festival in New Albany Sunday, November 23 7 p.m.

First Church Campanelle will join other handbell choirs at the Handbell Festival Ringing Joyfully! It will be held at the Rose Run Presbyterian Church at 5220 Johnstown Roadd in New Albany.

Your attendance will help support our Campanelle handbell ringers. In lieu of an admission fee, cash donations will be accepted that will provide Christmas gifts for the foster teens in Franklin County Children's Service. For more information please contact Jennifer Fry at griffingretel@gmail.com.

Hanging of the Greens Monday, November 24 6 p.m.

Come help deck the halls of First Church for the Advent and Christmas seasons! We will gather at 6 p.m. for a quick dinner and then divide into teams for the various decorating tasks. If you are available to come earlier in the day, your help is welcome!

Our advance team has streamlined the process, thoughtfully organizing the tasks into teams to tackle the project more effectively. With new decorations, including freshly tied bows and new wreaths and garland, the process should go quite smoothly.

Many hands make light work so please register on Realm. There are jobs for everyone – of every age and ability!

An Extravagant Welcome

by Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

An extravagant welcome! That was our Church policy ten years ago when I decided to join. It is still what drives us today, though now there are so many new ways we enact that policy.

It begins when we open the doors for the 9 a.m. informal worship service where you are welcomed with hot coffee and pastries, often home baked. As soon as you are seated, we pass the peace and welcome each other, then join in worship and holy communion. At noon, when the 11 a.m. service is concluded, we welcome you again with coffee, tea and an extravagant spread of goodies, inviting you to be seated around the round tables in Parish Hall and be engaged in lively conversation.

This extravagant welcome is provided by our Neighborhood Care Circles, organized in 2024 by zip code, ensuring that many hands make light work as each circle only serves twice a year. Currently, we have a total of 24 NCCs, posted in the big kitchen adjacent to Parish Hall. If you are new and wish to be included, please add your name to the circle of your choice, or email me at antoinettekbr79@gmail.com, and you will be contacted by one of its leaders. We look forward to welcoming you extravagantly in this mission that expresses our feelings so well!

Keep in Prayer

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

Family and friends Wendy and Robert Reber's life-long friend, David Roberts and family; Melissa Kulwicki's father, Jack Blandi; Candy Cummings' friend, Robdonda Hardin; Geoffrey Dean's aunt, Vivian Heaney; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; 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 the family and friends of Janice White.

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 Oceania including American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia (Maohi Nui), Kanaky, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. We also pray for our UCC partners in mission at the Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue (EISD) in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Eco-Tip from Sacred Earth

Give your Pumpkins a Green Afterlife!

Pumpkins and gourds can be recycled by composting. Clean them of any paint, wax, or decorations and cut them into small pieces, then put them in your garden. Nature will do the rest!

Local communities offer collection sites for pumpkins so check with your local communities, or go to SWACO. com for more detailed 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 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: Cami Curren

and IT Coordinator: Annette McCormick

Senior Deacon: Martha Worth

Deacons: Allen Baker, Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Heather Jones, House & Grounds-elect: Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Fran Panek, Gary Seigerst, Thomason Smith

Transition Team: Jacquelyn Dean and Nancy Loy, co-chairpersons, Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin Todd Cunningham, Rev. Becky David, Scott Graham, Gregory Halbe, Susie Loik, Allison Lowery, Pavan Peter, Sarah Reed, Joshua Member-at-Large: Martha Wilson 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: Nathaniel

Powell

Faith Formation Commission-elect: Mariner Taft

House & Grounds: Eric Klintworth

Justice & Mercy: James Lowe Justice & Mercy-elect: Janice Taft

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson

Personnel: Neal Brower 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

