



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

*Ratisbon*, German folk melody

“Christ, whose glory fills the skies”

Charles Wesley, 1740

1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies; Christ, the true, the on - ly light;  
 2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn un - ac - com - pa-nied by thee;  
 3 Vis - it then this soul of mine; pierce the gloom of sin and grief;

Sun of Righ-teous-ness, a - rise; tri-umph o'er the shades of night;  
 joy - less is the day's re - turn till thy mer - cy's beams I see;  
 fill me, ra - dian - cy di - vine; scat - ter all my un - be - lief;

Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart ap - pear.  
 till they in - ward light im - part, cheer my eyes and warm my heart.  
 more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

\*OPENING PRAYER

Rev. jess

Leader: We lift our hearts to you,  
Creator God of heaven and earth.  
In this season of winter, as the sunlight is weak,  
and our earth tilts away,  
do not lessen Your light from us.  
Let us turn toward You,  
guided into the cave of our hearts  
to worship, connect, and reflect.

**People: Instill in us this Sunday the fiery heat of the sun,  
That ablaze with devotion for You,  
we may worship you,  
and filled with Your Spirit,  
we may enflesh Your love and kindness in all we do,  
and with all we meet.  
We offer our prayer to the Son of Man,  
the Light of the world, Amen.**

\*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."*

LISTENING

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Hebrews 2:14-18

Katarina Yamaguchi and Henry

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

Since God's children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

\*THE GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

Rev. jess

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

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

Rev. jess

## RESPONDING

### HYMN OF PREPARATION

“Lord, bid your servant go in peace” v.1

*Land of Rest*, American folk melody  
Song of Simeon, para. James Quinn, SJ, 1969

1 Lord, bid your ser - vant go in peace; your  
2 This is the Sav - ior of the world, the

word is now ful - filled. These eyes have seen sal -  
Gen - tiles' prom - ised light, God's glo - ry dwell - ing

va - tion's dawn, this child so long fore - told.  
in our midst, the joy of Is - ra - el.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. jess

### SUNG RESPONSE

“Lord, bid your servant go in peace” v.2

*Land of Rest*, American folk melody  
Song of Simeon, para. James Quinn, SJ, 1969

## 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 gifts go to **Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS)**, an independent non-profit agency serving refugees, asylees, and immigrants in our area. They are a refugee resettlement agency, and an affiliate of Church World Services. Their mission is to help refugees and immigrants reach safety, stability, and self-sufficiency, while successfully integrating into our community. CRIS provides the most extensive services to immigrant populations, including services from legal professionals and trained interpreters. Although part of the CRIS refugee and resettlement program exists through a cooperative agreement with the State Department, other federal programs that support the work CRIS does are being eliminated, and funds for others are being drastically cut. This causes a loss of critical support for already vulnerable neighbors, and has created uncertainty over basic needs like food, housing, and childcare. Ohio elected officials have interpreted new federal laws to require refugees, asylees, and others to obtain their green cards and reside in the U.S. for five years to be eligible for food assistance. The process to receive a green card takes approximately two years. CRIS is working diligently to identify the most vulnerable families and provide them with short-term assistance and long-term solutions. Thank you for your generosity.

## OFFERTORY MUSIC

Joshua Stafford

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. jess

**All: God of the open hand, we thank you for your continued blessing of us, our hearts, and our lives. Take this, our offering of time, talent, and treasure, and use it, and use us, to manifest Your Kin-dom, on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Amen.**

## COMMUNION

Rev. jess

## COMMUNION PRAYERS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. jess

Leader: There are too many places in our world where the price of admission is more than we can afford, where we are asked to leave pieces of ourselves at the door, where we are told there's no room for one more.

**People: At this Communion table there's always room, room to spare. Yes, we will squeeze you in right over there. Take a seat, pull up a stool or your wheelchair, settle in a pew or on a cushion square.**

Leader: This is a table that, whether we are many or few, would not be the same if it didn't include you.

**People: We give thanks to you, O God, For drawing us close,**

**For feeding our bodies,  
For nurturing our spirits,  
For loving us exactly as we are.**

Leader: We carry within us memories of rejection and loneliness,  
shame and self-loathing, guilt and fear.

People: **And so we give thanks that at your table,  
we embody a different message:  
We are beloved.  
We are enough.  
We are worthy.**

Leader: We remember that on the night...  
And so we lift our voices and  
pray the prayer Christ taught us, saying,

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  
"Come and fill our hearts"

*Confitemini Domino*, Jacques Berthier, 1982  
Jacques Berthier, 1982

D Bm D A

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly.

Em C Em A D

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu-ia!

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. jess

All: **Thanks be to God whose name is Love.  
Thanks be to God who hungers  
to know us and be known by us.  
As we leave this table,  
may we carry with us a taste  
of the inherent worth and dignity of every person,  
offering the same to all we meet. 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. jess

\*CLOSING HYMN

Bernadette Farrell, 1993

“Christ, be our light”

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the  
dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your  
church gath - ered to - day.

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff is labeled 'Refrain' and has a key signature of one sharp. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Chords above: G, C, G, Em, Bm, Em. The second staff has notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Chords above: Am7, D, G, Dsus, D, Em, Em7. The third staff has notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Chords above: C, Am7, D, G, Am7, G.

*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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“Come and fill our hearts.” Words and music: Jacques Berthier, Taizé Community; ©1991 Less Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

“Christ be our light.” Words and music by Bernadette Farrell. ©1993 OCP. All rights reserved.

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY  
The Rev. jessica young chang, *preacher*  
Katarina Yamaguchi and Henry, *liturgists*  
Leslie Fulford, *worship leader*  
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*  
Joshua Stafford, *pianist*  
Geoffrey Dean, *livestream ministry*

*Enter to Worship*  
**Depart to Serve**

**February 1, 2026**

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, February 1**

- 9 a.m.      Worship Service &  
              Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m.      Sunday School  
              (Various Classrooms)  
              Faith in Action for Justice  
              (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m.      Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m.   Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m.   Faith in Action for Justice  
              (Parish Hall)

### **Monday, February 2**

- 9:30 a.m.    Stewardship & Growth Mtg (Zoom)
- 12 Noon      Card Care Ministry Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 6 p.m.       First Church Campanelle Practice  
              (Bell Rm)
- 6:30 p.m.    Transition Team Mtg  
              (Fanning Rm & Zoom)
- 7 p.m.       House & Grounds Mtg  
              (Classroom C & Zoom)

### **Tuesday, February 3**

- 7 p.m.       Communications & Technology Mtg  
              (Zoom)  
              Justice & Mercy Mtg (Zoom)  
              Personnel Mtg (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, February 4**

- 12:15 p.m.   Music at Midday (Sanctuary)
- 6:30 p.m.    Faith in Action for Justice (Classroom C)  
              Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg  
              (SM Office)
- 7 p.m.       Book Club (Zoom)

### **Thursday, February 5**

- 6 p.m.       First Church Ringers Rehearsal (Bell Rm)  
              Church Vitality Mtg (Zoom)
- 7:15 p.m.    First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

### **Friday, February 6**

- 9 a.m.       Good Samaritan Distribution Day  
              (Church)

### **Saturday, February 7**

- 10:30 a.m.   Sacred Earth Mtg (Adult Library)

### **Sunday, February 8**

- 10 a.m.      Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 11 a.m.      First Serves (Education Wing)
- 11:15 a.m.   Annual Meeting (Sanctuary)
- 12:30 p.m.   Chili Cookoff & Coffee Hour  
              (Parish Hall)  
              Confirmation Class (Classroom C)

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## **Justice & Mercy Missions**

Upcoming missions will be:

- February 8 - Good Samaritan Fund  
February 15 - Laundry Love

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## **Annual Meeting & Chili Cook-off Moved to Sunday, February 8**

On February 8, First Congregational Church will hold its Annual Meeting following a 10 a.m. worship service. At the meeting, members receive a copy of the church's annual report, and approve last year's minutes, our annual budget, and the nomination of new commissioners. After the meeting there will be a Chili Cook-off in Parish Hall.

**Faith in Action for Justice**  
**What You Need to Know about ICE**  
**Today at 10 a.m. & 12: 30 p.m.**  
**Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.**

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is not only in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Minnesota, ICE is here in Central Ohio, Cleveland and elsewhere in Ohio. Everywhere ICE agents appear, citizens as well as documented and undocumented immigrants are being abused, and their First, Fourth, and Fifth Amendment rights are being denied. But what can we do?

We can be aware and support organizations such as ACLU and Indivisible of Central Ohio, and join a neighborhood support group. If there isn't one, we can start one.

Tom Brownfield is offering "Faith in Action for Justice: What you need to know about ICE," as informative sessions on taking action. Please join Tom for this discussion today at 10 a.m. in Classroom C , and at 12:30 p.m. in Parish Hall. Sessions on Wednesdays, February 4 and 11 will be held at 6:30 in Classroom C.

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**First Church Book Club**  
**Wednesday, February 4**  
**7 p.m. on Zoom**

Join the First Church Book Club when they discuss *John & Paul: A Love Story in Songs* by Ian Leslie.

What are your favorite Beatles songs? We each have them. The Beatles shook the world to its core in the 1960s and new generations continue to fall in love with their songs and their story.

John Lennon and Paul McCartney knew each other for 23 years. Their friendship changed the world. This intimate book shares insights into their music and the nature of creativity, collaboration, and human intimacy.

To receive book club emails or the Zoom link please email Kathy Reed at [kbreed2010@gmail.com](mailto:kbreed2010@gmail.com).

**First Serves**  
**Moved to Sunday, February 8**

January has moved into February for the First Serves mission, a diaper drive for CelebrateOne. Please continue to bring donated items to the Giving Tree. Items to be donated need to be unopened and unused packs of diapers in any child size, and unopened packs of diaper wipes. We will also collect money to purchase diapers and wipes. Please join us after the annual meeting to help load up diapers and wipes for delivery!

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**Time Out Dinner**  
**Tuesday, February 10**  
**6 p.m. at Starliner Diner**

Church Vitality invites you to our first Dinner Out at Starliner Diner in Hilliard at 4121 Main Street. With its eclectic menu and kitschy decor, Starliner offers customers an alternative to the cookie cutter, big chain restaurants by providing them with a unique and fun dining experience.

Step out on a Tuesday night and join us at the Starliner! Please register on Realm so we can reserve a table and be together.

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**Snow Tubing at Snow Trails**  
**Monday, February 16**  
**4 to 6 p.m. Home by 8 p.m.**

Youth of all ages are invited to go tubing at Snow Trails with First Church teens. Tickets are \$38 per person for 2 hours. Please register and pay in Realm so we can buy the tickets as a group. You can buy your own tickets directly but please let Leslie know if you do. Snow Trails does not give refunds or allow walk-up purchases. Chaperones do not need a ticket, just tubers. Families with younger children are welcome to join with adult supervision.

If you could use financial assistance, we can help. Please contact Leslie at [lfulford@first-church.org](mailto:lfulford@first-church.org). We will meet in the church parking lot at 2:15 p.m. to ride together.

## Livestream Ministry Seeks Volunteers

The Livestream Ministry is seeking volunteers to join the team that extends our Sunday worship services to online viewers. Online viewers are members of our faith community participating from home or while traveling. We also have viewers that are seeking a spiritual resting place or simply enjoy First Church's preaching and music.

No video production experience is needed. The team provides training, and the permanently-installed equipment is straightforward to use. We are looking for volunteers to serve a one-Sunday-service-a-month commitment. The commitment each Sunday is 30 minutes before the start of worship through the end of the service. Recording and streaming services or other events in the sanctuary and Parish Hall is also a possibility.

Extend your worship by being a part of our congregation's Extravagant Welcome to online worshipers. Please email Mike Kennedy at [mkenedy@first-church.org](mailto:mkenedy@first-church.org) if you are interested and want to learn more.

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## First Church Reads: 2026 Lenten Reflection *How to Know a Person*

First Church Reads: 2026 Lenten Reflection features a church-wide read and small-group conversations centering on *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others and Being Deeply Seen* by New York Times columnist David Brooks.

Community groups will meet four times between February 23 and April 8. We are currently looking for people to host. Hosts will receive support and training from Susie Loik and Jackie Dean. Our goal is to offer groups at different times of day and days of the week, including in our church!

If you are interested in hosting, please email Pastor Jess at [jyoungchang@first-church.org](mailto:jyoungchang@first-church.org) with your available dates, time, and location. For facilitation guidance, contact Susie Loik at [sloik@first-church.org](mailto:sloik@first-church.org) or Jackie Dean at [jelainestith@hotmail.com](mailto:jelainestith@hotmail.com). More information, including where and how to get the book, will be made available.

## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Jane Weddle; Gerry Worth; Al Waddell; Jane Ward; James Velo; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt.

**Family and friends** Victor John's father, Charles John and sister, Amanda Young; Leslie and David Fulford's sister-in-law, Donna Fulford; Nicole Speakman and family; Alexis Wayne; Annette McCormick's friend, Dannie Crace; Janice Taft's cousin, Teri Williams; Shelly Gies' father, Robert Simms and brother, Mike Simms; Susie Loik's friends, Julia and Jim Perry; Kevin Salem's uncle, Harold Allen; Wendy and Robert Reber's life-long friend, David Roberts and family; Geoffrey Dean's aunt, Vivian Heaney; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; Tom Kiesel's friend, Carrie; Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers; and Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples.

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 Cyprus, Greece, and Türkiye. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission the Evangelical Disciples of Christ Church in Argentina.

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## Sacred Earth Eco-Tips

Did you know that 14% of what goes to the landfill every day is food waste— adding up to a **Million Pounds** each day?

That takes up a lot of space in the landfill and reduces its useful life. This also affects family budgets and for a family of 4 it could add up to as much as \$2,000 per year.

Consider doing your part to prevent food waste by donating food before the best by date or by composting. Together we can make a difference!

## 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  
**Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction:** Jacquelyn Dean  
**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Training Coordinator:** Wendy Kennedy  
**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator:** Susie Loik  
**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Communications, Media and IT Coordinator:** Annette McCormick  
**Senior Deacon:** Martha Worth  
**Deacons:** Allen Baker, Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Heather Jones, Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Fran Panek, Gary Seigerst, Thomason Smith  
**Transition Team:** Jacquelyn Dean and Nancy Loy, co-chairpersons, Todd Cunningham, Rev. Becky David, Scott Graham, Gregory Halbe, Susie Loik, Allison Lowery, Pavan Peter, Sarah Reed, 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

**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:** Cami Curren

**Faith Formation Commission-elect:** Mariner Taft

**House & Grounds:** Eric Klintworth

**House & Grounds-elect:**

**Justice & Mercy:** James Lowe

**Justice & Mercy-elect:** Janice Taft

**Music, Arts & Heritage:** Jim Griffin

**Music, Arts & Heritage-elect:** Cheryl Hoskinson

**Member-at-Large:** Martha Wilson

**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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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