



## WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

You are welcomed, affirmed, and loved here; our faith informs us that you are a child of a loving God. Your characteristics and gifts will enrich our congregation. In this community, you will be celebrated, embraced, and honored, no matter how you identify or how your identity may evolve. Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

*Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.*

### VOLUNTARY

*Were You There*

arr. Anna Laura Page, 2003

### ENTER TO WORSHIP

*Submitted by Gill Le Veve*

Jonathan Miller

Leader: As darkness gives way to light and winter sleep to fresh beginnings,

**People: We come today to be reminded of God's love for us.**

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

\*Leader: Like the green shoots of renewed life, stirring beneath the soil,

**People: We welcome an awakening of God's word in our lives.**

Leader: Our earth is wrapped in winter,  
In this time of reflection and repentance,

**People: We affirm our identity, we claim our security, as children of God.**

SILENT PROCESSION (*Begins with ringing of the bell three times*)

### \*INVOCATION

*Excerpted from a longer prayer by Rev. Scott McKenna*

Rev. jessica young chang

Leader: Let us pray.

In this sacred space, in these moments of stillness,  
our thoughts and silence are like incense.

Holy God,

Whose glory touches and transfigures the mind and the material,  
Whose intimate, gentle Spirit embraces our vulnerability  
and fills our empty spaces with hope,  
may we know the deep calm that only You can give.

**People: Through the mystery of absence and presence,  
come, fill us with Your emptiness,  
Your eternal silence. Amen.**

Lord, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

\*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Becky David

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

*\* When you return to your seat, please find the blue Welcome notebook at the end of the pew, sign it and pass it on to your neighbor so we may greet one another by name.*

ANTHEM

Elizabeth Poston, 1967

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

Joshua Smith, 1784

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:  
 the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.  
 His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell  
 the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.  
 For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:  
 I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.  
 I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile:  
 under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.  
 This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;  
 which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Leader: A reading from the Book of Genesis, the second chapter.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## THE PSALTER

## Psalm 32

*The Choir introduces the Antiphon, after which the People join in singing the Antiphon, repeating as indicated after the Choir chants the verses.*

Hap - py are they whose trans - gres - sions are for -

giv - en and whose sin is put a - way.

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,  
and whose sin is put away!  
Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there is no guile!  
While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,  
because of my groaning all day long.  
For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.  
Then I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and did not conceal my guilt.  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."  
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

*Antiphon.*

Leader: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans, the fifth chapter.

As sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned-- sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

\*THE GOSPEL HYMN

*Aus der Tiefe rufe ich*, attr. Martin Herbst, 1676

“Forty days and forty nights”

George Hunt Smytten, 1856, alt.

1 For - ty days and for - ty nights you were fast - ing in the wild;  
 2 Shall not we your sor - row share and from world - ly joys ab - stain,  
 3 Then if Sa - tan on us press, flesh or spir - it to as - sail,  
 4 So shall we have peace di - vine: ho - lier glad - ness ours shall be;  
 5 Keep, O keep us, Sav - ior dear, ev - er con - stant by your side,

for - ty days and for - ty nights temp - ted, and yet un - de - filed.  
 fast - ing with un - ceas - ing prayer, strong with you to suf - fer pain?  
 vic - tor in the wil - der - ness, grant that we not faint nor fail!  
 round us, too, shall an - gels shine, such as served you faith - ful - ly.  
 that with you we may ap - pear at the e - ter - nal Eas - ter - tide.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, the fourth chapter.

Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,'  
and 'On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,  
and serve only him.'

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer:  
 when I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O  
 Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me. O

Leader: Listening God,  
 Hear our prayers as we come before you.  
 Hear the ones who are crying out for justice,  
 who suffer under the hands of violence, tyranny and greed.  
 Hear the ones who are weeping with grief long into the night.  
 Hear the ones who are sobbing in their loneliness.

*All join in singing the refrain.*

Leader: Loving God,  
 Love us so deeply we see all of creation as part of us,  
 that we are deeply connected to every living thing.  
 Love us into action, seeking Your justice, spreading Your compassion,  
 sharing Your mercy.  
 Love us into loving ourselves, our very bodies,  
 that we may see all other bodies as sacred.  
 Love us into truly knowing Your peace  
 and into the courage to spread that peace to this hurting world.

*All join in singing the refrain.*

Leader: Leading God,  
 Lead us through the dark valleys, through our fear, through our loneliness.  
 Lead us through troublesome times toward your community of empowerment.  
 Lead us from darkness to light, from death to life, from fear to courage,  
 from independence to relationship in community

*All join in singing the refrain.*

Leader: Teach us to listen to Your voice,  
 That we may hear the cry of the needy and respond.  
 Teach us to love that  
 We may offer care that brings others to You for healing.  
 Teach us to lead,  
 With Your vision so that we not lead others blindly through life.  
 Through Your son who taught us to pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
 Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
 for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Bruce Panek

Cash and designated gifts go to **Faith Mission**. Each month, a team of First Congregational Church volunteers prepares a meal and serves it at Faith Mission. Your donations ensure that the team has the resources to provide a nourishing meal to those whom Faith Mission serves. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Felix Mendelssohn, 1846

"For he shall give his angels"

Psalm 91:11-12

For he shall give his angels charge over thee; that they shall protect thee in all ways thou goest; that their hands shall uphold and guide thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone

\*PRESENTATION HYMN

*St. Flavian, Day's Psalter, 1562*

"Lord, who throughout these forty days"

Claudia F. I. Hernaman, 1873, alt.

3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion-  
 4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be

tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.  
 past, an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. young chang

Leader: We give you thanks and praise, O God,  
For the free and abundant gift of grace you have given us in Jesus Christ.

People: **Let the simple gifts of our lives  
Be a sign of our unending gratitude  
For your undying love, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF PETER MURRAY

Melissa Kulwicki

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

*Shades Mountain*, K. Lee Scott 1976

"There in God's garden" vv. 1-4

Pécselyi Király Imre, c. 1641; trans. Erik Routley, 1974

1 There in God's gar - den stands the tree of Wis - dom,  
2 Its name is Je - sus, name that says, "Our Sav - ior!"  
3 Thorns not its own are tan - gled in its fo - liage;  
4 See how its branch - es reach to us in wel - come;

whose leaves hold forth the heal - ing of the na - tions:  
There on its branch - es see the scars of suf - fering;  
our greed has starved it; our de - spite has choked it.  
hear what the Voice says, "Come to me, ye wea - ry!

tree of all knowl - edge, tree of all com -  
see there the ten - drils of our hu - man  
Yet, look! it lives! its grief has not de -  
Give me your sick - ness; give me all your



\*BENEDICTION

Rev. David

VOLUNTARY

*Vision*, Op. 156, No. 5

Josef Gabriel Rheinberger, 1888

*Please be seated for the postlude.*

*Thank you for attending worship this morning. We hope that you have found peace and grace here and invite you to return often. If you would like more information or have any questions about First Church, please ask one of our pastors or anyone wearing a name tag. We would be delighted to assist you.*

† PLEASE JOIN US IN PARISH HALL FOR COFFEE HOUR, hosted by the Merry Neighborhood Care Circle, led by Thomason Smith.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. David— Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Rev. young chang — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Ms. Kulwicki — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

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LEADERSHIP IN TODAY’S LITURGY

The Rev. Becky David, *preacher*

The Rev. jessica young chang, *worship leader*

Jonathan Miller, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Neal Brower, *crucifer*

Matthew Bendick and Camille Bendick, *vergers*

The First Church Choir

Joshua Stafford, *director and organist*

The First Church Campanelle

Jennifer Fry, *director*

Peter Murray, *livestream ministry*

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

**February 22, 2026**

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, February 22**

- 9 a.m.      Worship Service and  
              Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m.      Sunday School Classes  
              (Various Classrooms)  
              Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m.      Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 11:30 a.m.   Dog Food Pantry Youth Service  
              Project & Confirmation Class  
              Field Trip (Classroom C to  
              Broad Street Presbyterian)
- 12:15 p.m.   Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)  
              Lenten Healing Circle (Chapel)
- 12:30 p.m.   Lenten Small Group  
              (Andrew Welsh-Huggins in  
              Adult Library)
- 4 p.m.       Organ + Chamber Orchestra  
              Concert (Sanctuary)

### **Monday, February 23**

- 6 p.m.       First Church Campanelle Practice  
              (Bell Rm)

### **Tuesday, February 24**

- 10 a.m.      Lenten Small Group (Susie Loik's home)
- 5 p.m.       Laundry Love (Wash Land)
- 7 p.m.       Deacons Mtg (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, February 25**

- 7:30 a.m.   Wonderfully Made: LGBTQ+ Devotional  
              (Zoom)

### **Thursday, February 26**

- 12 Noon     Lunch Bunch (Delaney's Diner)
- 1 p.m.       Lenten Small Group (Jackie Dean in  
              Parish Family Rm)
- 6 p.m.       First Church Ringers Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7:15 p.m.   First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

### **Friday, February 27**

- 10 a.m.      Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

### **Saturday, February 28**

- 8:45 a.m.   Faith Mission Food Prep & Serve  
              (Kitchen)
- 9 a.m.       Council Leadership Retreat  
              (Parish Hall)

### **Sunday, March 1**

- 9 a.m.       Worship Service and  
              Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m.      Sunday School Classes  
              (Various Classrooms)  
              Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m.      Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 a.m.   Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m.   Lenten Small Group  
              (Andrew Welsh-Huggins in  
              Adult Library)

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## **Adult Bible Study Today, at 10 a.m. in the Classroom C**

Join The Rev. Dr. Nancy Livingston as she leads the series  
"For Such a Time as This - Journey through the Book of  
Esther." This study will end on March 8.

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## **Lenten Events Today following the 11 a.m. Service**

A Lenten Healing Circle will be offered by our ministers  
in the Chapel. We will practice listening and sharing in  
keeping with our faith tradition.

Andrew Welsh-Huggins will lead a Lenten Small Group  
in the Adult Library on the book *How to Know a Person*.

## Youth Service Project and Lunch Today at 12 p.m.

The Confirmation Class will join other downtown church teens for games, lunch, and packing pet supplies for the Broad Street Presbyterian Pantry. This is open to middle and high school students. Please notify Leslie Fulford if you plan to attend. The Confirmation Class will meet in Classroom C at 11:30 a.m. then go to Broad Street Presbyterian together.

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## Organ + Chamber Orchestra Today at 4 p.m.

Back by popular demand, this program of music for organ and chamber orchestra, includes works by Handel, Rheinberger, and others. Joshua Stafford will be on the organ, and Ronald Jenkins will conduct in the Sanctuary.

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## Lunch Bunch Thursday, February 26 12 p.m. at Delaney's Diner

Join Church Vitality for lunch at Delaney's in Westerville. Owners Jeff and Lisa Miller wrote "Our goal is to operate a neighborhood spot with a favorite menu item for everyone in the group!"

Delaney's is at 5916 Westerville Rd. in the Glengary Shopping Center. Please register for this Lunch Bunch in Realm by using the QR Code.



## Healing Circles during Lent in the Gladden Chapel March 5 at 6 p.m.

In a time of struggle and grief, when we are handed hard news or asked to accept the unacceptable, it can be helpful to gather and listen deeply to one another, to share our tender hearts and our aching parts.

Join your pastors for a Healing Circle during Lent. For questions, please reach out to Pastor Jess or Pastor Becky.

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## First Church Book Club Wednesday, March 4 7 p.m. on Zoom

Come enjoy lively conversation with the First Church Book Club when we discuss *Kindred*, a 1979 science fiction masterpiece by Octavia E. Butler.

Mysterious and moving, *Kindred* is a haunting, harrowing story about a modern black woman transported back in time to a slave plantation in the antebellum South.

Octavia E. Butler is an award-winning science fiction writer, and the first Black woman to achieve national prominence in science fiction. To receive book club emails or receive the Zoom link, please email Kathy Reed at [kbreed2010@gmail.com](mailto:kbreed2010@gmail.com).

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## Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

February 22 - Faith Mission

March 1 - CHOICES

March 8 - Gladden Food Pantry

March 15 - BREAD

March 22 - The Largest Table

March 29 - Good Samaritan Fund

April 5 - UCC Ohio Great Hour of Sharing

## **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.

Groups will meet four times. Please email Pastor jess at [jyoungchang@first-church.org](mailto:jyoungchang@first-church.org) to sign up for any of the groups below:

Martha & Hank Wilson on Tuesdays (3/10, 3/24, 3/31) at 6:30 p.m. in their home.

Susie Loik on Tuesdays (2/24, 3/10, 3/24, 4/7) at 10 a.m. in her home.

Antoinette Koolemans-Beyen and Becky Taft on Fridays (3/6, 3/13, 3/20, 3/27) at 10 a.m. at Westminster Thurber in the Goodale Landing 8th floor Community Room.

Jackie Dean on Thursdays (2/26, 3/12, 3/26, 4/9) at 1 p.m. in the Parish Family Room at First Church.

Andrew Welsh-Huggins on Sundays (2/22, 3/1, 3/15, 3/29) at 12:30 p.m. in the Adult Library at First Church.

Rev. jess young chang on Wednesdays (2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25, 4/1, 4/8) at 7:30 a.m. on Zoom. Please email Rev. jess for the zoom link.

## **Deep Griha Mission Update** Malini Gnanatheeban, Pavan Peter, and Antoinette Koolemans-Beyen

In 2025 Ashlesha Onawale, Director of Deep Griha, visited First Congregational Church to kick off the 50 year celebration of the Deep Griha mission in Pune, India. With the help of Fran and Bruce Panek and many others, we welcomed Ashlesha back to First Church with a great luncheon. Ashlesha's parents, Dr. Neela and Rev. Baskhar Onawale were the founders of this mission that was sponsored by First Church in 1975. Since then, their mission has grown and is supported by a number of other Central Ohio UCC congregations (First Community, Westerville UCC, and Dublin Community Church) as well as many other supporters worldwide.

In the 50 years of its existence, Deep Griha has been attacking poverty and illiteracy. It has grown from a one-room clinic to serving three urban communities and two rural centers. It is providing education for children, skill-building for youth, and healthcare access, while its Vriddha Mitra initiative helps senior citizens regain their self-sufficiency.

This year, the annual fundraiser/dinner, organized by First Community Church, will take place in March, and anybody interested in the Deep Griha mission is welcome to attend. Our focus will be on sponsoring a young student in the City of Child, and participating in a trip to Pune, planned for 2027. Further information will be made available.

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## **Wonderfully Made: A Lenten Devotion for the First Church LGBTQIA Community** **Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m. on Zoom**

Join your fellow queer and trans\* besties this Lent for a season of contemplation, reflection, and introspection. This weekly devotional affinity group is open to all who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, trans, intersex, ace, genderfluid, gender non-conforming, or a little of each!

We'll gather briefly to pause, listen, pray, and rejoice in ourselves and our beloved community. We'll be using *Queers the Word: A 40-day Devotional for LGBTQ+ Christians* as our guide through the season. You don't need to buy the book or anything else to join. Come in your jammies or your best workwear, come from your couch or your desk, come once or come every week, just come! Please email Rev. jess for the Zoom link.

## Keep in Prayer

*Kingston, son of Bridget Tharp and Tony Baker, reminds us that as we pray, we remember the lessons of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**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** Vicki Lyden's daughter, Hilary; Gretta Hibbs; LJ Cooks' sister, Gretchen Weller-Cooks' sister-in-law, and Alexi and Saturn Cooks' aunt, La Vonja Dowdell; Victor John's father, Charles John and sister, Amanda Young; Leslie and David Fulford's sister-in-law, Donna Fulford; Alexis Wayne; Janice Taft's cousin, Teri Williams; Shelly Gies' father, Robert Simms and brother, Mike Simms; 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.

**Those who mourn** Joe Provenzano and family on the death of his mother, Mary Jo Senter.

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 Austria, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission the United Church of Christ in Mozambique.

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## Sacred Earth

**As we enter into Lent, please join us in a prayer for our Earth.**

God of the clean air, God of the clean waters,  
God of every living creature,  
open our eyes, minds and hearts to see that we are all connected,  
all part of the same network of life: what hurts and pollutes one  
hurts and pollutes the other.

Help us to listen to you  
and to repent from our destructive ways,  
so that your wonderful, diverse planet  
can breathe again and live,  
and we and our children with it.  
Amen.

Urzula Glienecke from *Living Faithfully in the Time of Creation*,  
The Iona Community

## 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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