



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT NINE  
MARCH 15, 2026  
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

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

SOUNDING OF THE BELL

*A period of silence is observed.*

BLESSING

Rev. Becky

“Those Stars That Turn in Us”

*Circle of Grace, Jan Richardson, 2016*

I do not know how  
to keep it all together  
or by what patterns  
this world might  
finally hold.

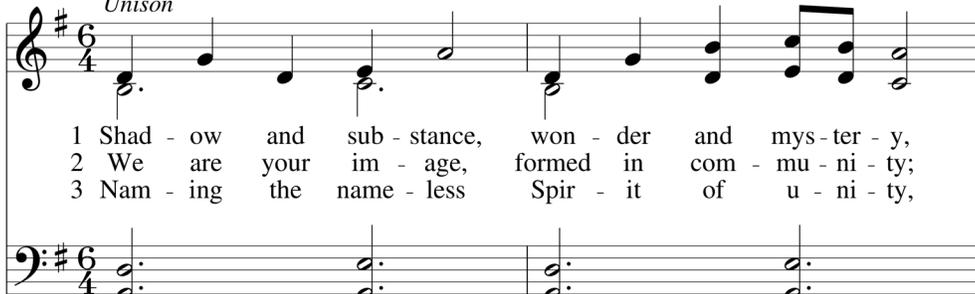
What I know is that  
our hearts are bigger  
than this sky  
that wheels above us  
and what shines  
through all this darkness  
shines through us,  
setting every shattered thing  
into a new constellation

and we can turn  
our faces  
to that light,  
to the grace of  
those stars  
that turn in us.

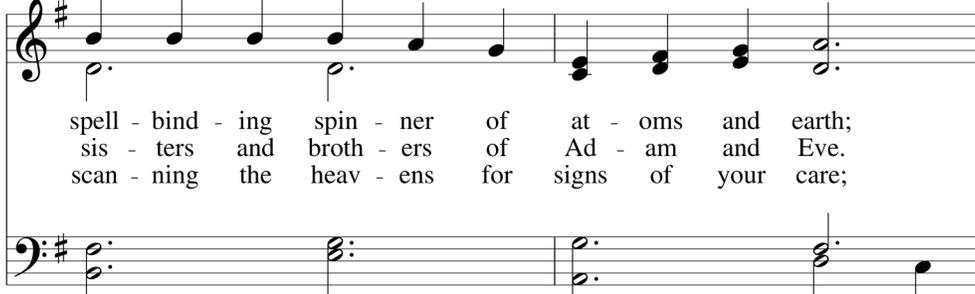
\*GATHERING SONG  
"Shadow and Substance"

Twilight, Dan Damon, 1989

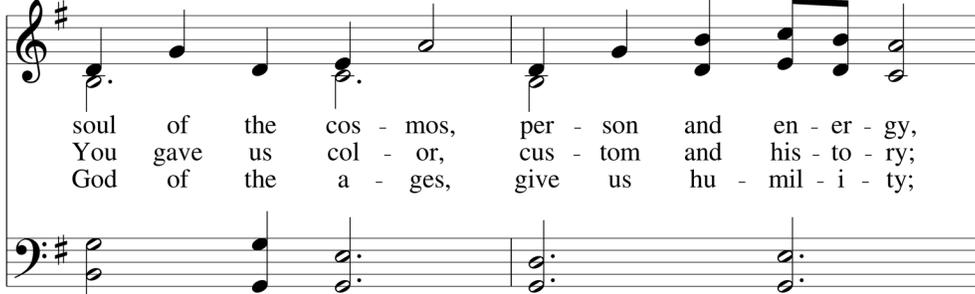
*Unison*



1 Shad - ow and sub - stance, won - der and mys - ter - y,  
2 We are your im - age, formed in com - mu - ni - ty;  
3 Nam - ing the name - less Spir - it of u - ni - ty,



spell - bind - ing spin - ner of at - oms and earth;  
sis - ters and broth - ers of Ad - am and Eve.  
scan - ning the heav - ens for signs of your care;



soul of the cos - mos, per - son and en - er - gy,  
You gave us col - or, cus - tom and his - to - ry;  
God of the a - ges, give us hu - mil - i - ty;



source of our be - ing: we sing of your worth.  
teach us to hon - or what oth - ers re - ceive.  
guide us to mys - ti - cal un - ion in prayer.

\* INVOCATION

Rev. Becky

Leader: Gracious God, who created us in God's own image,  
we are grateful for all that You have done for us,  
for all that You are doing in us,  
and for all that You will do through us.  
Open our eyes to see Your presence among us,  
moving in powerful ways at all times  
and in all places.  
Open our ears to hear familiar words in new ways—  
ways that will change us and challenge us  
to become the people You created us to be.

**People: Grant us the power and the courage  
to come out of the darkness  
and into the light of Jesus Christ,  
that we may serve You by serving others.  
We love You with all our heart, soul, mind,  
and strength. Amen.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Leslie Fulford

*Our young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories."*

LISTENING

LECTIO DIVINA

Rev. Becky

*Lectio Divina is a contemplative scriptural practice created in the fifth century.  
We have printed the scripture in the bulletin, and we encourage you if you do not need to,  
to choose to listen to the scripture as it is read, rather than following along on paper.*

*We will read today's gospel passage through four times: the first movement is to familiarize ourselves with the passage; the second movement is to silently allow the Spirit to reveal to each of us what Spirit has for us in this passage; the third gives us the chance to respond to our neighbors, friends, or loved ones in worship with us for a few moments about what is lifting up within us, and within others. The presiding minister will also offer a brief response. We will close the practice with sacred silence with one another and the Spirit.*

THE SCRIPTURE READING

John 9:1-7

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to John, the ninth chapter.

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## RESPONDING

### \*SONG OF RESPONSE

*Sweet, Sweet Spirit*, Doris Akers, 1962

“There’s a sweet, sweet spirit” vv. 1–2

1. There's a sweet, sweet Spi - rit in this place, and I know that it's the  
2. There are bless - ings you can - not re - ceive 'til you know him in his  
3. If you say he saved you from your sin, now you're weak, you're bound and

pres - ence of the Lord; there are sweet ex - pres - sions on each  
pres - ence and be - lieve; you're the one to pro - fit when you  
can - not en - ter in; you can make it right if you will

face, and I know they feel the pres - ence of the Lord.  
say, "I am going to walk with Je - sus all the way."  
yield, you'll en - joy the Ho - ly Spi - rit that we feel.

Sweet Ho - ly Spi - rit, sweet heav'n - ly Dove, stay right here with us, fil - ling us with your  
love. And for these bless - ings we lift our hearts in praise; with - out a  
doubt we'll know that we have been re - vived when we shall leave this place.

### JOYS AND CONCERNS

#### 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.**

### COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN  
“Adoramus te Christe”

*Adoramus Te Christe*, Marty Haugen, 1984  
Antiphon from Good Friday Liturgy

1. A - do - ra - mus te Chri - ste, 2. a - do - ra - mus te Chri - ste,  
3. a - do - ra - mus te Chri - ste, a - do - ra - mus Chri - ste.

THE OFFERTORY / MISSION MOMENT

*We put our collective offering of our time, talent, and treasure to God here as a response to our experience in worship this morning. As is our practice, each week, we will give to a different mission working to bring justice, equity, and peace to the world. Please give generously in gratitude for our shared worship.*

*Any amount significant to you is significant to us. Thank you.*

*To give online, please scan this QR code:*



MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated gifts go to support **BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity)**. BREAD is the organization through which our congregation works for social justice. BREAD has nearly a 30-year history of improving the quality of life in Central Ohio by researching serious community problems and gathering the power of people in nearly 40 congregations to press public officials to implement proven solutions to those problems. BREAD rises! Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Joshua Stafford

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Becky

\*CLOSING HYMN

“Lead us from death to life”

Marty Haugen, 1985

Satish Kumar, 1981

Lead us from death to life, from false-hood to  
truth, from des - pair to hope, from fear to trust.  
Lead us from hate to love, from war to  
peace; let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our  
world, let peace fill our u - ni - verse.

*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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LEADERSHIP IN TODAY’S LITURGY

The Rev. Becky David, *preacher*

Leslie Fulford, *worship leaders*

Joshua Stafford, *pianist*

Geoffrey Dean, *livestream ministry*

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

**March 15, 2026**

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, March 15**

- 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 p.m. Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)  
Lenten Small Group (Parlor)  
4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

### **Monday, March 16**

- 6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Practice (Bell Rm)  
7 p.m. Transition Team Mtg (Fanning Rm & Zoom)

### **Tuesday, March 17**

- 7 p.m. Council Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

### **Wednesday, March 18**

- 7:30 a.m. Wonderfully Made: LGBTQ+ Devotional (Zoom)  
6 p.m. Faith Formation Mtg (Classroom C & Teams)  
6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg (SM Rm)

### **Thursday, March 19**

- 11 a.m. Fiber Arts Ministry Mtg (Fanning Rm)  
6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal (Bell Rm)  
7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

### **Friday, March 20**

- 10 a.m. Lenten Small Group (Ohio Living Westminister-Thurber)

### **Saturday, March 21**

- 9 a.m. H&G's Spring Cleanup Day (Church grounds)

### **Sunday, March 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)  
12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)  
Confirmation (Classroom C)

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## **Teens and Young Adult Study Today at 10 a.m. in the Youth Rm**

As a life long young First Church member, Caroline Panahon (nee Carly Kutschbach) will present The Wisdom of World Religions. She will lead a discussion on the perspectives and wisdom of various world religions based on her studies and experiences. Middle school through young adult ages are encouraged to attend.

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

Rev. Margot Connor and Rev. Larry Miller will begin a new series on the Psalms. They will follow the lectionary, and introduce classical means of interpreting psalms, psalm categories and types, and then look at the meaning of the individual psalm of the day. Everyone is welcome to join in this study.

## **Lenten Small Group Today at 12:15 a.m. in the Parlor**

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

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## **Choral Evensong Today at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

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.

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## **Spring Cleanup Day Church Grounds March 21 at 9 a.m.**

House and Grounds is organizing a Spring Cleanup. Everyone is encouraged to bring their garden tools and help clean up the church grounds prior to Holy Week.

If you can help please talk to Fran Panek or email her at [franpan2000@yahoo.com](mailto:franpan2000@yahoo.com) to let her know.

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## **Second Annual Gratitude Sunday March 22**

Our congregation will celebrate the second annual Gratitude Sunday on March 22 to express appreciation for a successful stewardship campaign for 2026. The stewardship campaign concluded with pledges totaling \$796,817 for 2026 from 188 households, an increase of more than 7% over the pledges for 2025. We are grateful for the generosity of our church members, and also wish to thank the many church members who volunteer through our commissions, ministries, and service projects.

The Stewardship and Growth Commission will provide special snacks for the 9 a.m. service and will host coffee hour after the 11 a.m. service.

## **Dinner Out At the Bexley Rusty Bucket March 25 at 6 p.m.**

First Church is going to the Rusty Bucket in Bexley on E. Main St. Come join our fellow members for a relaxing dinner out. Have their daily special which will be their Indiana Pork Tenderloin sandwich or pick from their very full menu. The Rusty Bucket is a casual American restaurant and tavern where people come to share laughter, smiles, and great conversation over food that makes everyone happy.

Registration is now open in Realm so reserve your spot at the Rusty Bucket.



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## **Youth Mission Trip Washington, DC June 13-18**

Youth ages 14 through young adult are invited on our urban mission trip to serve, learn how to help others, and be agents of change in our own communities. The program will be led by the Youth Service Opportunity Program (YSOP).

If you are interested in attending as a youth or chaperone please register using the QR Code. We are able to take up to 15 people so please register this week! If you would like to help plan the trip please email Leslie Fulford at [lfulford@first-church.org](mailto:lfulford@first-church.org). Learn more about the YSOP mission trip at <https://www.ysop.org/programs>.



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## **Sacred Earth Eco Tip**

Food production is the biggest cause of tropical deforestation. Cut your food waste by planning ahead. Be realistic about how much food you need and use your leftovers (keep them at the front of your fridge so they're not forgotten). Leftover food may be unavoidable, but you can save it and enjoy it the next day by using eco-friendly reusable food wrap and containers. Source: World Wildlife

## Deep Griha Dinner

Friday, March 27

6 p.m. at First Community Church

Join us for the annual Deep Griha celebration dinner on March 27th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in Wing Grace Hall at First Community North, 3777 Dublin Road.

Deep Griha is an outreach mission to the disadvantaged residents of Puna, India and the surrounding area, started in 1975. It has been supported by the members of First Congregational Church since its beginning and is continuing today with the enthusiastic participation of a number of other UCC Churches in the Central Ohio area. It is supported internationally as well.

This year also marks the 65th year of the Peace Corps. Its continued success story is a testament to how cross-cultural understanding and willingness to reach across the globe can make change.

In March of 1961, President Kennedy launched the Peace Corps with an executive order. That September, Prime Minister Nehru hosted the first three groups of Peace Corps Volunteers in India. These 750 volunteers served in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Mysore with the goal of helping to grow poultry and egg production.

The more specific goals, values, and approaches to the work of both Deep Griha and the Peace Corps are generally in line with one another. Each has the goal of providing assistance and services designed to raise people out of poverty and to provide those marginalized people with a chance for a brighter future.

Ohio has a rich history of Peace Corps service from former Governor Robert Taft who served in Tanzania in the 1960s to Anthony Joseph, the current president of White Castle who was a volunteer in Cameroon in the early 1990s. Since 1961, roughly 7,943 Ohioans have served in the Peace Corps.

In addition to an update on what is happening today at Deep Griha, the program will also help to celebrate the 65 years of the United States Peace Corps.

Ticket cost is \$30/person. Reservations are required and the deadline to register is Wednesday, March 25.



## Solidarity Vigil / Community Meal

Abubakar Asiddiq Islamic Center

3 p.m., Sunday, March 29

As the day-to-day struggle of being Somali-American in our community has recently escalated into violence and hate crimes, local leaders, people of faith and good will, and neighbors must act!

You're invited to a Solidarity Vigil and Community Meal hosted by Abubakar Asiddiq Islamic Center and co-sponsored by Faith in Public Life and Ohio Interfaith Collective.

Black and Brown immigrants are being targeted by cruelty and bigotry both from the current administration and those emboldened by them. We can do something about it! We can come together and proclaim that we belong together, that we are stronger together. That is what we'll do on Sunday March 29 from 3-6 p.m. at Abubakar Asiddiq Islamic Center.

Ramadan in the Muslim tradition and Lent in the Christian tradition both began the same week. In both cases, they are seasons of fasting with a focus on charity, justice, and moral realignment. As we move through these weeks of spiritual practice, let us look ahead to Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week, and the Sunday after Eid. On that day, we'll gather for prayer and proclamation, for community, and for sharing a meal generously provided by the Somali-American community that we are called to love as our neighbors.

Register today using the QR Code to attend this meaningful event!



For more information, please contact Rev. Dan Clark (he/him) at [dclark@faithinpubliclife.org](mailto:dclark@faithinpubliclife.org).

**Book Club**  
**Wednesday, April 1**  
**7 p.m. on Zoom**

Come enjoy lively conversation at the First Church Book Club when they discuss *Wandering Stars* by Tommy Orange. It spans more than 150 years, from the horrors of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado to the aftermath of a 2018 mass shooting in California. Orange's characters explore the importance of ancestors' stories, strength of tribal ties, resilience of those continuing ancestral traditions, and the need for home and hope. Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742 for the Zoom link.

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**A Women's Retreat**  
**April 18 at 9 a.m.**

Save the date for this Women's Retreat to be led by Jackie Dean. It will be held at the Westminster-Thurber Heritage Pointe Party Room. More information and registration will be available soon.

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**Visitation Ministry Training**  
**April 19 at 12:30 p.m.**

Congregational Care means taking care of our church community, and it depends on YOU! Would you like to join the team that shows others you care? Visitation Ministry is a wonderful way to connect with members and friends of First Church, and share Christ's love and care with one another. Join Rev. jess and members of the Congregational Care Ministries team leaders for a fun and required training exploring what Visitation Ministry is and how to join!

**Registration is open on Realm and closes Wednesday, April 1.** Individuals can also stop by the church office and sign up.

Please note: The church is required to perform a background check on all people who visit congregants. To serve as a visiting friend, you will need to pass this background check.

**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. Please attend as you are able.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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! Please email Rev. jess for the Zoom link.

## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Jane Weddle; 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** Dayna McCrary's sister, Rosalind Murray; Dakota Saunders' friend, Trisha; Susie Loik's daughter, Kelly and son, Laeric; Vicki Lyden's daughter, Hilary; LJ Cooks' sister, Gretchen Weller-Cooks' sister-in-law, and Alexi and Saturn Cooks' aunt, La Vonja Dowdell; 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** Dayna McCrary and family on the death of her mother-in-law, Patricia McCrary; Victor John and his sister Amanda Young on the death of their father, Charles John; Amy Wagner and her cousin, Brooke Chute and family, on the death of Brooke's husband, Brian Chute; Kelley Dean's brother and sister-in-law, Jen and Mike Weaver on the death of Jen's mother, Kathy Cassaletta.

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 Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone.

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## Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

March 15 - BREAD

March 22 - The Largest Table

March 29 - Good Samaritan Fund

April 5 - UCC Ohio Great Hour of Sharing

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## Experience Holy Week and Easter at First Church

March 29 | 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. | Palm Sunday

Parish Hall and the Sanctuary

April 2 | 7 p.m. | Maundy Thursday

Liturgy of the Lord's Supper in the Sanctuary

April 3 | 7 p.m. | Good Friday

Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary

April 4 | 7 p.m. | Saturday

Easter Vigil in the Sanctuary

April 5 | Easter Sunday

7 a.m. | Sunrise Service in The Washington Gladden Social Justice Park

10 a.m. | Easter Egg Hunt with Donut Hour in the Playground area and Education Wing

11 a.m. | Festival Worship and Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

# 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:** Dayna McCrary

**Deacons:** Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Camilla Curren, Sandra Geronimo, Jason Harrell, Brian Kemp, Allison Lowery, Barbara Mason, Fran Panek, Gary Seigerst, Thomason Smith, Martha Worth

**Transition Team:** Jacquelyn Dean and Nancy Loy, co-chairpersons, Todd Cunningham, Rev. Becky David, Gregory Halbe, Susie Loik, Allison Lowery, Pavan Peter, Sarah Reed, Joshua Stafford

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Chairperson:** Frank Cook

**Trustees:** Matthew Bendick, David Hogrefe, Victor John, Melody Leidheiser (Secretary), Janet Miller, Sarah Reed, Hugh Schultz, Charlie Weaver

## 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:** Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

**Church Vitality-elect:**

**Communications and Technology Commission:** Mike Kennedy

**Communications and Technology Commission-elect:** Nathaniel Powell

**Faith Formation Commission:** Mariner Taft

**Faith Formation Commission-elect:**

**House & Grounds:** Eric Klintworth

**House & Grounds-elect:** Fran Panek

**Justice & Mercy:** James Lowe

**Justice & Mercy-elect:**

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

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

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

**Personnel:** Neal Brower

**Personnel-elect:** Chris Brooks

**Youth Member-at-Large:**

## 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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