



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
MARCH 22, 2026
FIFTH 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.

Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.

VOLUNTARY

Adagio from Symphony No. 3, Op. 28

Louis Vierne, 1911

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Leslie Fulford

Leader: Sovereign YHWH, only You know what can be,
of a world desolate and dry, lacking all hope and life.

People: **When we are empty and dried out,
You remind us that You set the wind in motion,
and breathe life into all things.**

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

*Leader: Come and be among us now, Giver of Life.
Blow where You choose.

People: **Stir us into restoration and action,
into the ripeness of Your love and justice.
Put Your Spirit in us, so that we may know we are Yours. Amen.**

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

*INVOCATION

Rev. Becky David

Leader: Gracious God of all compassion and consolation,
Your breath alone brings life to dry bones and weary souls.
Pour out Your Spirit upon us,
that we may face despair and death with the hope of resurrection
and faith through Christ, our Lord.

People: **Help us to dance with the Spirit,
the breath of life, which calls us out of the valley of dry bones
and into Your community of Empowerment
both a present reality and the grounding of our future hope.
We pray in your many names. 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. jessica young chang

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

Georg Reutter, 1757 (previously attr. to Mozart)

"De profundis"

Psalm 130

*De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine;**Domine, exaudi vocem meam.**Fiant aures tuae intendentes in vocem deprecationis meae.**Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine, Domine, quis sustinebit?**Quia apud te propitiatio est; et propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine.**Sustinuit anima mea in verbo ejus:**speravit anima mea in Domino.**A custodia matutina usque ad noctem,**speret Israël in Domino.**Quia apud Dominum misericordia, et copiosa apud eum redemptio.**Et ipse redimet Israël ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.**Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto**Si cut erat in principia et nunc, et**Semper, et saecula saeculorum, Amen.*

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice;

let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss,

O Lord, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you;

therefore you shall be feared.

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him there is plenteous redemption,
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.
Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning is now and
ever shall be. World without end. Amen.

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Mrs. Fulford

Leader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, the thirty-seventh chapter.

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act," says the Lord.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

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



Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?
For there is forgiveness with you;
therefore you shall be feared.

Antiphon.

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him there is plenteous redemption,
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Antiphon.

THE SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 8:6-11

Mrs. Fulford

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

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law— indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

*THE GOSPEL HYMN

"God weeps with us who weep and mourn"

Moshier, Sally Ann Morris, 1995

Thomas H. Troeger, 1996, alt.

1 God weeps with us who weep and mourn; God's
 2 Through tears and sor - row, God, we share a
 3 And yet be - cause, like us, you weep, we

tears flow down with ours, and God's own heart is
 sense of your vast grief: the weight of bear - ing
 trust you will re - ceive and in your ten - der

bruised and worn from all the heav - y hours
 ev - ery prayer for heal - ing and re - lief,
 heart will keep the ones for whom we grieve,

of watch - ing while the soul's bright fire burned
 the bur - den of our ques - tions why, the
 while with your tears our hearts will taste the

low - er day by day, and pulse and breath and
 doubts that they en - gage, and as our friends and
 deep, dear core of things from which both life and

love's de - sire dimmed down to ash and clay.
 loved ones die, our hope - less - ness and rage.
 death are graced by love's re - new - ing springs.

*THE GOSPEL

John 11:17-27, 32-45

Rev. young chang

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

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. young chang

SILENCE

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rev. David

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.

when I call out - swer me O Lord, hear my prayer. O

Lord, hear my prayer Come and listen to me. O

Leader: We cry to you for help, O Lord, for you alone have the power to restore our lives.
 Give bread O God, to those who are hungry and drink to those who thirst.
 Give life to the dying and grace to those who are sick with sin.

Give justice to those who are oppressed and peace to those who live in fear.
Give comfort to those who mourn and hope to those who despair.

All join in singing the refrain.

Leader: Fill your children with courage in the face of injustice and violence.
Fill our hearts with compassion in response to the stranger,
the immigrant, the widow and the orphan.
Fill us with strength to walk in Your way of honesty, integrity, and faithfulness.
Fill us with the wisdom to discern how You would have us bring Your gospel to the world.

All join in singing the refrain.

Leader: Create through us Loving God, your Reign,
Your new community of empowerment and inclusion.
Create in us a clean heart, capable of accepting Your forgiveness and grace.
Create for us a pathway to peace and justice.
Create in Your church a renewed sense of purpose,
And a renewed vision for the world and our place in it.

All join in singing the refrain.

Leader: Heal in us our grief, our despair, our isolation and our need to possess.
Heal in us our anxiety, fear, self-loathing, and shame.
Heal in us our need to know, to understand, to control.
Heal in us our illusion of security and independence.
Heal in us everything that keeps us separated from each other and from you.

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:



MISSION INVITATION

Pavan Peter

Cash and designated contributions today go to **Deep Griha**, which means “house of lights” in many Indian languages. Through the illuminating paths of education, healthcare, and community building, Deep Griha equips individuals in marginalized areas in Puna, India with the skills and confidence to build brighter futures. First Church was instrumental in starting the Deep Griha mission in 1975 when Dr. Neela Onawale and her husband Rev. Bhaskar Onawale visited, seeking support. Deep Griha has constantly expanded and adapted in response to community needs and opportunities, providing access to education for young children, skill-building for youth, healthcare access to all in the urban communities it serves, and a Healthy Aging program for senior citizens. Thank you for your generous, continuing support.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM
"If we believe that Jesus died"

John Goss, 1852
1 Thessalonians 4:14, 18

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

*PRESENTATION HYMN
"Lord, who throughout these forty days"

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

Leader: In gratitude O God, we come into Your presence.
For all that You have done for us,
most especially for bringing us into the light of Jesus Christ,
We offer our thanks and praise.
We long to live as children of light,
Doing what is right and bearing the fruit of the light through Jesus Christ.
May these gifts be our first steps into the pool of Your healing love.

People: Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.

*CLOSING HYMN
"Abide with me"

Eventide, William Henry Monk, 1861
Henry Francis Lyte, 1847

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
3 I need thy pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour;
4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes;

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide!
earth's joys grow dim; its glo - ries pass a - way;
what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's power?
ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
change and de - cay in all a - round I see.
Who, like thy - self, my guide and stay can be?
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
Heaven's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;

help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.
Through cloud and sun - shine, Lord, a - bide with me.
I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me.
in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

*BENEDICTION

Rev. young chang

VOLUNTARY

Elegy

George Thalben-Ball, ca. 1933

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 Stewardship and Growth Commission, led by Steve Sterrett and Kathy Reed.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. young chang— Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Rev. David — 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. jessica young chang, *preacher*

The Rev. Becky David, *worship leader*

Leslie Fulford, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Aarav Peter, *crucifer*

Matthew Bendick and Camille Bendick, *vergers*

Joshua Stafford, *director and organist*

The First Church Choir

Aran Cunningham, *livestream ministry*

Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

March 22, 2026

This Week at First Church

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)

Monday, March 23

- 6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Practice
 (Bell Rm)
- 7 p.m. Assoc. Ministers Advisory Group Mtg
 (Parlor)
- Search Committee Mtg
 (Parish Family Rm)

Tuesday, March 24

- 10 a.m. Lenten Small Group (Susie Loik's home)
- 6 p.m. Lenten Small Group
 (Hank and Martha Wilson's home)
- 7 p.m. Deacons Mtg (Zoom)

Wednesday, March 25

- 7:30 a.m. Wonderfully Made: LGBTQ+ Devotional
 (Zoom)
- 6 p.m. Dinner Out (Rusty Bucket, Bexley)

Thursday, March 26

- 1 p.m. Lenten Small Group (Parish Family Rm)
- 6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Friday, March 27

- 10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)
- Lenten Small Group (Ohio Living
 Westminister-Thurber)
- 11:30 a.m. Faith Mission Food Prep & Serve
 (Kitchen)
- 6 p.m. Deep Griha Dinner
 (First Community Church,
 North Campus)

Sunday, March 29 — Palm Sunday

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
 Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Sunday School Classes
 (Various Classrooms)
- Adult Bible Study (Classroom C)
- First Serves (Classroom D)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
- Lenten Small Group (Parlor)
- 3 p.m. Solidarity Vigil and
 Community Meal
 (Abubakar Asiddiq Islamic Ctr)

Adult Bible Study

Today at 10 a.m. in Classroom C

Rev. Margot Connor and Rev. Larry Miller continue the series on the Psalms. They 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.

Second Annual Gratitude Sunday **Today, March 22**

Our congregation will celebrate the second annual Gratitude Sunday in appreciation of a successful 2026 stewardship campaign. Our 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. 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.

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

First Church Reads: 2026 Lenten Reflection continues with our 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 Sunday (3/29) at 12:30 p.m. in the Adult Library at First Church.

Rev. Jess Young Chang on Wednesdays (3/25, 4/1, 4/8) at 7:30 a.m. on Zoom.

Antoinette Koolemans-Beyen and Becky Taft on Friday (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.

**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.



**Lenten Labyrinth Walk
Parish Hall
March 31 at 6:30 p.m.**

Walking the labyrinth is a ritual form that is thousands of years old and is often seen as a metaphor for our spiritual journey. This walking meditation is an opportunity for you to discover the Divine as you experience the transformative energy within its twists and turns.

You are invited to join Jackie Dean in Parish Hall to learn a brief history of and then to walk the labyrinth as part of your contemplative experience of Holy Week. Finger labyrinths will be available for anyone who may have mobility issues.

**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.

Wandering Stars spans more than 150 years, from the horrors of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado to the pain inflicted at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania to the aftermath of a 2018 mass shooting in Oakland, California. What does it mean to be Native American in the U.S., to survive cultural erasure? How do generations find ways through the long-term effects of massacre, dislocation, and forced assimilation?

In this prequel/sequel to *There There*, Orange's characters explore family, loss, history, addiction, and the importance of ancestors' stories, the strength of tribal ties, the resilience of those who continue ancestral traditions, and the need for home and hope.

Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742 with any questions, to receive book club emails, or for the Zoom link.

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.

Visitation Ministry Training

April 19 at 12:30 p.m.

Congregational Care means taking care of our church community, and it depends on YOU! Please join the team that shows others you care. Visitation Ministry is a wonderful way to share Christ's love and while caring for one another. Join Rev. Jess and members of the Congregational Care Ministries team leaders for the required training and explore 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: A background check on people who visit congregants is required.

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. Learn more about the YSOP mission trip at <https://www.ysop.org/programs>.



Call for Pride Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help plan First Church participation in the Columbus Pride March. This event allows us to extend our welcome to all LGBTQ+. Please contact Wayne Henry at wayne@43homes.com to get involved with this great opportunity to showcase our open and affirming community.

Congratulations to Jack Drake

We celebrate with Jack Drake as he was recently awarded the Walter M. Rudin Most Distinguished Junior Pace Setter Award from The Ohio State University. This award is the highest honor given by the Max M. Fisher College of Business, and is awarded to one third-year student each year for outstanding academic achievement, leadership and service to the community.

Jack was chosen for his service as a Fisher Ambassador where he represents the College by giving tours and informational sessions for future Business Buckeyes and for his impact as President of Fisher's Aviation Management Organization. In that role, he has made it the largest aviation focused student organization, and boosted interest in Fisher's Aviation Management specialization as a whole through outreach programs. Jack has inspired many to consider careers in the aviation industry through events sponsored by Fisher's Office of Career Management.

Here at First Church we can find him participating in the Chancel Choir, as a crucifer, and as co-leader of the Bliss Neighborhood Group. Congratulations Jack!

Sacred Earth Eco Tip

Central Ohio Crime Stoppers is hosting a fund-raising shredding event on Saturday, April 4th, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at 775 Taylor Road in Gahanna. They will only accept paper and have a 5 box limit. A \$15.00 per car donation will help stop central Ohio crime.

Crime Stoppers receives calls with tips and information on unsolved crime or wanted persons. Tips that result in the apprehension of a felony suspect qualifies the caller for a cash reward from the Central Ohio Crime Stoppers Board.

Deep Griha Dinner Friday, March 27

6 p.m. at First Community Church

Join us for the annual Deep Griha celebration dinner in Wing Grace Hall at First Community North Campus, 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.

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.

In addition to an update on what is happening today at Deep Griha, this program will also 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! As such, you are 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 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.



First Serves for March Sunday, March 29, at 10 a.m. in Classroom D

During the month of March, First Serves is collecting items for hygiene care kits for CHOICES, a program of Lutheran Social Services (LSS). Since 1977, CHOICES has served and helped protect Central Ohioans facing domestic violence. We are collecting full size hygiene products that the women receive when entering the shelter. These items include women's shampoo, conditioner, body wash, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrush, and deodorant. Leave your products at the Giving Tree in the Education Wing, outside of the church office, or in the narthex. We will organize and bag up the kits on March 29. Please share your generosity of time, talent, and treasure with the women of CHOICES.

Keep in Prayer

Members Charles Wagner; Jane Weddle; Al Waddell; Jane Ward; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt.

Family and friends Susan Brooks' friends, Marti and Ned Timmons; 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;

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 Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Family Village Farm, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India.

Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

March 22 - Deep Griha March 29 - Good Samaritan Fund April 5 - UCC Ohio Great Hour of Sharing
April 12 - The Largest Table April 19 - Ohio Wildlife Center

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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