



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT SEVEN
APRIL 5, 2026
EASTER SUNDAY

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.

*EASTER GREETING

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: He has risen!
People: He has risen, indeed! Hallelujah!
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People: He has risen, indeed! Hallelujah!

*LIGHTING OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Rev. jessica young chang

Leader: May the light of Christ, rising in glory this day and every day, illumine our hearts and minds.
The light of Christ.
People: Thanks be to God!

*OPENING HYMN
"Jesus Christ is risen today"

Easter Hymn
Lyra Davidica, 1708

1 Je - sus Christ is risen to - day,
2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
3 But the pains which he en - dured,
4 Sing we to our God a - bove,

our tri - um-phant ho - ly day,
un - to Christ, our heaven-ly King, Al - le - lu - ia!
our sal - va - tion have pro - cured.
praise e - ter - nal as God's love.

who did once up - on the cross,
who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!
Now a - bove the sky he's King,
Praise our God, ye heaven-ly host,

suf - fer to re - deem our loss.
sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!
where the an - gels ev - er sing.
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. 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.

*LITANY OF EASTER JOY

Rev. young chang

Leader: Before the trumpet sounds,
before the tender voice calls out,
Risen... Risen!, we remember the promise of the angel at the tomb:

People: He is not here; he is risen.

Leader: When we want to celebrate the miracle of Christ,
but fear has a hold of us too tight to breathe, we remember,

People: He is not here; he is risen.

Leader: When we are consumed by our own sins and
we look for Christ in the morass of guilt and shame, we are encouraged,

People: He is not here; he is risen.

Leader: When we are distracted by our anger with others,
with the pain in our own broken hearts, we look up at the call,

People: He is not here; he is risen.

Leader: He is risen? Can it be?
Is there really only a pile of muslin and discarded herb,
but that room of death is cold and empty?

People: He is not here? He is risen?

Leader: *He is risen*, said the messenger. Christ did what he said he would do.
The more we say it, the more real it becomes:

People: He is not here; he is risen.

Leader: *He is risen!*, shared the first apostle, Mary, a woman,
whom Jesus healed, whom Christ made apostle to the apostles,

People: He is not here! He is risen!

Leader: Wherever we are today—in the anxiety of the miracle,
in the skepticism of the empty tomb, or in the joy and triumph of a new message to share—
let us remember, let us proclaim,

People: He is not here; he is risen. He is risen! HE IS RISEN!

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Ms. Kulwicki

Leader: A reading from Psalm 118.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say,
“His steadfast love endures forever.”

The Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:
“The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;
the right hand of the Lord is exalted;

the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.”
I shall not die, but I shall live
and recount the deeds of the Lord.
The Lord has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord’s doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

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

People Thanks be to God.

SOLO

Sebastian Kulwicki

“I come to the garden alone”

The Congregation is invited to join in singing the refrain.

1 I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses. *Refrain.*

2 He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing. *Refrain.*

3 I'd stay in the garden with Him
Tho' the night around me be falling;
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling. *Refrain.*

Refrain

And he walks with me, and he talks with me,
and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we
share, as we tar - ry there, none oth - er has ev - er known.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, and a final whole note G5. The lyrics 'And he walks with me, and he talks with me,' are written below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, and a final whole note G5. The lyrics 'and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we' are written below the second staff. The third staff continues the melody with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, and a final whole note G5. The lyrics 'share, as we tar - ry there, none oth - er has ev - er known.' are written below the third staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-eighth chapter.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. young chang

A period of silence follows.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. young chang

Leader: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

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

Leader: We praise you, God, for this table set in love for all who seek you.

We praise you for this company, heaven and earth assembled for the feast.

Praise You for the mercy we find here, your mothering arms embracing all.

Now, O God, with grateful joy, we remember Jesus,

who sided with the poor, made the sick well, welcomed sinners, and ate with outcasts.

People: We remember, we refuse to forget.

Leader: Jesus would not hate. Jesus told the truth at the cost of his life.

People: We remember, we refuse to forget.

Leader: Betrayed and deserted by Their friends,

Jesus was killed a common criminal, shamed and despised.

People: We remember, we refuse to forget.

Leader: Death could not hold Him. God raised Them in power from the grave.

People: We remember, we refuse to forget.

Leader: Jesus returned to use without vengeance, only mercy in his hands.

They are with us now, to the end of the age.

People: We remember, we refuse to forget.

Leader: And we remember that on the last night of his life,

Jesus fed us with signs of love: a loaf, divided and shared;

a cup, poured and passed from hand to hand;

a meal to eat in resistance, grace and courage for the struggle that goes on.

People: **“Whenever you do this,” Jesus said, “remember me.”**

Leader: Come Holy Spirit, Come. Twine yourself within these crumbs of bread,
dive deep within this cup, so that for us as we receive these elements,
we receive nothing less than your love and presence;
when we go from this place, changed by this sacrament,
we embody nothing less than your love in the world.

People: **As we share this meal, help us rejoice that Christ is risen, is present with us here.
Give us love for one another,
and make us servants of peace
until your new age of justice comes
and every creature beholds it.**

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. young chang

Leader: Let us pray,

We praise you O God, and give you thanks that you have given us such joy, such grace, and such hope, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. Let our lives be proof of that good news. Let all our words and actions, our love and service bear witness to your resurrection power.

People: **Amen.**

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Ms. Kulwicki

Cash and designated checks go to **One Great Hour of Sharing**, which joins our hearts with God's by providing decisive aid when disaster strikes, and by helping refugees rebuild their lives. Gifts strengthen struggling communities with basics like education, health care, tools, seeds and wells. Thank you for your generosity.

BENEDICTION

Rev. young chang

*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.

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY
The Rev. jessica young chang, *preacher*
Melissa Kulwicki, *liturgist*
Sebastian Kulwicki, *soloist*

The Congregation, Council, and Staff wish you a Blessed Easter!

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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