



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

PRELUDE

*GATHERING SONG
"Loving Spirit" vv. 1-3

Omni Die, Corner's Gross Catholisch Gesangbuch, 1631
Shirley Erena Murray, 1986

1 Lov - ing Spir - it, lov - ing Spir - it, you have cho - sen me to be,
2 Like a moth - er you en - fold me, hold my life with - in your own,
3 Like a fa - ther you pro - tect me, teach me the dis - cern - ing eye,
4 Friend and lov - er, in your close - ness I am known and held and blessed:
5 Lov - ing Spir - it, lov - ing Spir - it, you have cho - sen me to be,

you have drawn me to your won - der, you have set your sign on me.
feed me with your ver - y bod - y, form me of your flesh and bone.
hoist me up up - on your shoul - der, let me see the world from high.
in your prom - ise is my com - fort, in your pres - ence I may rest.
you have drawn me to your won - der, you have set your sign on me.

*SHARED PRAYER OF AFFIRMATION (*Iona Community*)

Rev. jess

Leader: Let us turn our hearts together toward our Creator,
With the whole church:

**People: We affirm that we are made in God's image,
Befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit.**

Leader: With people everywhere:

**People: We affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity,
Planted more deeply than all that is wrong.**

Leader: With all creation:

**People: We celebrate the miracle and wonder of life,
The unfolding purposes of God,
For ever at work in ourselves and the world.**

During the sermon time, our young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories."

LISTENING

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 3:13-22

Barbara Mason

Leader: A reading from the First Letter of Peter, the third chapter.

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to John, the fourteenth chapter.
(from *The Inclusive Bible*)

“If you love me
and obey the command I give you,
I will ask the One who sent me
to give you another Paraclete, another Helper
to be with you always—
the Spirit of truth,
whom the world cannot accept
since the world neither sees her nor recognizes her;
but you can recognize the Spirit
because She remains with you
and will be within you.
I won’t leave you orphaned;
I will come back to you.
A little while now and the world will see me no more;
but you’ll see me;
because I live,
and you will live as well.
On that day you’ll know
that I am in God,
and you are in me,
and I am in you.
Those who obey the commandments
are the ones who love me,
and those who love me
will be loved by Abba God.
I, too, will love them
and will reveal myself to them.”

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

People: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Rev. jess

RESPONDING

HYMN OF PREPARATION

Hyfrydol, Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831, alt.

“Love divine, all loves excelling” vv. 1-2

Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
 2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing; all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion;
 find the prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion; en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.

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.**

SUNG RESPONSE

"Love divine, all loves excelling" vv. 3-4

Hyfrydol, Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831, alt.

Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Jim Lowe

Cash and dedicated gifts today support **Church World Service** (CWS), a faith-based organization that is a strong global partner of the United Church of Christ. For over 30 years, CWS has also worked closely with us here at First Church, where they've supported programs like Bethlehem On Broad Street and our Unsheltered Ministry. And when disaster strikes anywhere, CWS emergency programs gear up and step in to ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors receive the support they need for rebuilding their lives. Often this support comes in the form of CWS disaster kits and supplies. These ready-to-use tools help people prepare for catastrophes in advance, and give them the materials needed to clean up in the aftermath of a disaster. For example, last year CWS distributed 71,760 hygiene kits and 17,317 blankets. Stocks of these and other necessities are now unusually low, so CWS needs an injection of funding and the efforts of local volunteers to replenish the supplies and assemble new kits. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. jess

**Leader: Shepherd God,
 Because your goodness has followed us all our days,
 We delight in this opportunity to share that goodness with those in need.**

**People: As we have opened our hands to give,
 We pray you will open our hearts to receive your boundless grace and love.
 Amen.**

COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYERS *(by Mary Luti)*

Leader: Life is hard.
The path is often full of pain.

**People: We need to know we won't be alone.
We need to know there will be a light in the shadows,
a door open, a table set,
someone to offer us a loaf and a cup,
a song and a story to revive our flagging hearts:
a safe refuge till morning.**

Leader: Dear friends, you have come to that place.
Here Christ waits for you and welcomes you without question.
So come, let yourself be cared for and fed by our faithful, tender friend.

When Jesus gathered with His students, the night before His trial, the night before His execution, Jesus took bread and gave thanks for it, and broke it, saying This is my body, broken for you. When you do this, remember me. After supper, Jesus took the cup and blessed it, saying this is the cup of the New Covenant poured out for you, and for all. Whenever you drink from it, remember me. Holy One, we join hearts and hands in this covenant of faith, this sacrament of transformation, and this observance of community and sustenance with all who wish to eat at your table and with your children the world over.

People: We ask you, Holy Spirit, to bless this bread and cup, love made food for our safety and consolation. As we eat and drink together, fill us with hope and make us brave. Keep us, like Christ, beside our doors, holding a light, saying to every shadowed stranger: Here, right here, come in.

Leader: Twine yourself within these crumbs of bread, dive deep within these cups, 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: Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

COMMUNION HYMN
"Come and fill our hearts"

Confitemini Domino, Jacques Berthier, 1982
Jacques Berthier, 1982

D Bm D A

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

Em C Em A D

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

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. jess

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ,
You have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours.

People: **Take us, renew and remake us,
So that we may remake our world in your image. Amen.**

SENDING

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*BENEDICTION

Rev. jess

*CLOSING HYMN

Bernadette Farrell, 1993

“Christ, be our light”

Refrain

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

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

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY’S LITURGY
The Rev. jessica young chang, *preacher*
Barbara Mason, *liturgist*
Leslie Fulford, *worship leader*
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
Joshua Stafford, *pianist*
Geoffrey Dean, *livestream ministry*



Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

May 10, 2026

This Week at First Church

Sunday, May 10

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
 Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Adult Faith Formation
 (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)

Monday, May 11

- 6 p.m. Reproductive Justice Salon Event
 (Parish Hall)
- 7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, May 12

- 5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg
 (Classroom C & Zoom)
- 6:30 p.m. BREAD Nehemiah Action (Celeste Ctr)
- 7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg
 (Classroom C & Zoom)

Wednesday, May 13

- 12 Noon Lunch Bunch (Chef-O-Nette)
- 6 p.m. Community Yoga Wednesdays
 (Parish Hall)

Thursday, May 14

- 2 p.m. Congregational Care Ministry Mtg
 (Parish Family Rm)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Sunday, May 17

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
 Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Adult Faith Formation
 (Classroom C)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m. Sacred Conversation (Parish Hall)
- 4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

Adult Bible Study

Today at 10 a.m. in Classroom C

Rev. Margot Connor and Rev. Larry Miller continue the series on the Psalms. Everyone is welcome to join in this study.

Sacred Earth Thanks You

On April 19th, we had an offering for the Ohio Wildlife Center. You gave over \$1300! We also worked with First Serves for a collection of paper products. Rolls of paper towels, toilet paper, and boxes of tissues were given.

Last week a car full of paper products and a check in the amount of \$1371.55 was delivered to the Ohio Wildlife Center. They were very appreciative and offered us a tour! Stay tuned as we hope to get a tour on the calendar.

Thank you First Church for your generosity!

Schumacher Award Winners

Today during 11 a.m. Service

Today we will welcome and acknowledge the five winners of the 2026 Schumacher Awards. Trustees of First Congregational administer the will of the late Frederick W. Schumacher. Under the terms of his will, "young women between the ages of fifteen and twenty years old who are eminently worthy of commendation for showing Christian devotion to their mother, father, sister, or brother" are to be selected for the Schumacher Award. Mr. Schumacher's will of 1958 established this award as a memorial to his mother, Mary Schumacher. They were both long-time members of The First Congregational Church.

The Schumacher Committee selected our five (5) recipients. Each will be awarded \$5,000 and an engraved medallion. There is no restriction as to the use of the award.

Holding the Sacred: An Evening of Spirit & Reproductive Justice Monday, May 11, at 6:30 p.m. Parish Hall

In a world and a time where birthing and reproducing people are losing rights, access, and safety, the Church has a responsibility to provide the protection, the love, and the justice of Christ. This responsibility motivates Rev. Jessica Young Chang to host Holding the Sacred: An Evening of Spirit & Reproductive Justice. This salon features an evening of storytelling, education, and inspiration about how you can live into your faith and politics in the Reproductive Justice (RJ) landscape here in Central Ohio. You'll learn more about Pastor Jess and their history in this work, and the history and foundation of Reproductive Justice. You'll also learn about organizations in Columbus and Central Ohio who work in RJ, and how we at First Church can take up the call to love, provide for, and accompany our siblings in this space.

Tea, water, and light refreshments will be served. People of all gender expressions are welcome. This event is free but registration is required. Members of First Church can register on Realm using the AR Code.



B.R.E.A.D.'s Nehemiah Action Tuesday, May 12, at 6:15 p.m. in the Celeste Center

This year, B.R.E.A.D. is fighting for progress on three urgent campaigns: 1) Rental Registry – ensuring safe, accountable, and dignified rental housing; 2) Environmental Justice – protecting the health of our neighborhoods and our tree canopy; 3) Livable Wage – making sure pathways are provided to livable wage careers. (Read more information about living wages on page 3.)

Showing up for the Action isn't just symbolic — it is the engine that drives real change in our community. When we show up in large numbers, we make it unmistakably clear that justice is not optional — it is expected.

This Action is at the Celeste Center at 717 E. 17th Avenue on the Ohio State Fair Grounds. Doors open for registration at 6 p.m. and the program begins at 6:40 p.m. Tickets are available in the church office. Please join us! BREAD Rises!

Lunch Bunch Wednesday, May 13, at 12 Noon at Chef-O-Nette in Upper Arlington

Our diner of the month is Chef-O-Nette Restaurant in Tremont Center. This stalwart diner provides traditional homestyle dishes in an old-fashioned interior. Chef-O-Nette opened in 1955. With few ownership changes over the last 70 years, in 2024, the Purdums became the third family to operate the restaurant.



Please register on Realm for a relaxing lunchtime by using the QR Code.

Community Yoga Wednesdays Wednesday, May 13, at 6 p.m. in Parish Hall

Join your own resident yogi Pastor Jess Young Chang for Community Yoga. Everyone is welcome to this gentle class, suitable for all levels of practitioner.

Class is an hour and includes stretching and strengthening postures, learning breathwork, and practicing mindfulness. Previous yoga experience is helpful but not necessary!

Please bring your own mat and props. Cost for the class is donation-based. Class proceeds will benefit a different community-based organization every month. No one is turned away for not being able to pay. Please contact Rev. Jess for more information.

Sacred Conversations Sunday, May 17, at 12:30 p.m. in Parish Hall

Please join us for a Sacred Conversation about what it means to be open and affirming at First Congregational Church. We will meet after the 11 a.m. worship service and a light lunch will be included.

Our Open and Affirming Statement says, "We believe we are all created in God's image and are called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us." What does that mean and what does it look like? Now is the time to ask these questions, and do the self-reflective work required.

Keep in Prayer

Congratulations to Samantha Klintworth and Tobias Decker who were married here on Saturday.

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

Family and friends Melva Fisher's brother, James Garrison; Pat Patterson's sister-in-law, Bonnie Elliott; Amy Wagner's friend, Nancy Wickline; Jennifer Fry's friend, Dennis Moore; Kathy Reed's cousin, Barbara Works; Malini Peter's friend, Usha Rangarajan; 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; 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; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers.

Those who mourn Kris Brant and her brother's family, Libby, John, and Nick Koetz, on the death of Kris' nephew, Josh Koetz; Tom Brownfield on the death of his brother, C. William (Bill) Brownfield.

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 India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission the Diyar Consortium and Dar al-Kalima University in Palestine.

Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

May 10 - Church World Service
May 24 - Laundry Love

May 17 - Good Samaritan Fund
May 31 - Huckleberry House

B.R.E.A.D. – Living Wage

On Cleveland Avenue, between Morse and Dublin-Granville Roads in Columbus, a sign features a young girl, whose very eyes plead her needs. The sign tells us to “End Poverty.” As Jesus has told us in Mathew 26:11, this is an unlikely outcome, however much is required of us.

So, we try. B.R.E.A.D. took up the issue of a living wage last year. It has identified three groups most affected by the livable wage gap: citizens returning to society after a period of incarceration, senior citizens, and adults with children. Minimally, a single adult needs a wage of \$18-20 an hour, but add children, and the wage really needs to be closer to \$41. The non-tipped hourly wage in Columbus, Ohio is \$11. The May Harper's Index reports that in January 2015, the number of Americans working two full-time jobs was 172,000. In January 2026, that number was 476,000.

B.R.E.A.D. is investigating, among other options, a hoped-for expansion of a program run by Columbus City Schools. Career and Technical Education (CTE) via Career Pathways has three academies with programs that train students for jobs with livable wages. The prospective goal is to grow to 29 academies by 2029.

Angela Chapman, superintendent of Columbus City Schools, will speak at B.R.E.A.D.'s Nehemiah Action to explain how these Career Pathways can lead to livable wage employment. Please join us at the Nehemiah Action at the Celeste Center (Ohio State Fair Grounds) on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Doors open at 6 p.m.

As B.R.E.A.D. searches for ways to “solve poverty,” we ask: *O God, to those who have hunger give BREAD and to those who have BREAD give the hunger for justice!* -- Latin American prayer.

By Nicole Moss

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, Kelly Dodd, Sandra Geronimo, Dean Hafey, 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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