



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

Duke Street, Attr. John Hatton, c. 1793

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun” vv. 1-3

Isaac Watts, 1719, alt

1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun does its suc -
2 To him shall end - less prayer be made, and prais - es
3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - ery tongue dwell on his
4 Bless - ings a - bound wher - e'er he reigns: the pris - oners
5 Let ev - ery crea - ture rise and bring hon - ors pe -

ces - sive jour - neys run; his king - dom stretch from
throng to crown his head; his name, like sweet per -
love with sweet - est song, and in - fant voic - es
leap to loose their chains; the wea - ry find e -
cu - liar to our King; an - gels de - scend with

shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.
fume, shall rise with ev - ery morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
shall pro - claim their ear - ly bless - ings on his name.
ter - nal rest, and all who suf - fer want are blest.
songs a - gain, and earth re - peat the loud A - men!

*SHARED PRAYER OF AFFIRMATION (*Iona Community*)

Rev. Becky

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.**

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S TIME

Leslie Fulford

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

LISTENING

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

Barbara Mason

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

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

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 seventeenth chapter.

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

RESPONDING

HYMN OF PREPARATION

“Crown him with many crowns” vv. 1-2

Diademata, George Job Elvey, 1868

Matthew Bridges, 1851

1 Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne;
 2 Crown him the Lord of love; be - hold his hands and side,
 3 Crown him the Lord of peace, whose power a scep - ter sways
 4 Crown him the Lord of years, the po - ten - tate of time;

hark, how the heaven-ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own!
 rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied:
 from pole to pole, that wars may cease, ab - sorbed in prayer and praise.
 cre - a - tor of the roll - ing spheres, in - ef - fa - bly sub - lime.

A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
 no an - gel in the sky can ful - ly bear that sight,
 His reign shall know no end; and round his pierc - ed feet
 All hail, Re - deem - er, hail! For thou hast died for me;

and hail him as thy match - less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.
 but down - ward bends his burn - ing eye at mys - ter - ies so bright.
 fair flowers of par - a - dise ex - tend their fra - grance ev - er sweet.
 thy praise shall nev - er, nev - er fail through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

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

"Crown him with many crowns" vv. 3-4

Diademata, George Job Elvey, 1868
Matthew Bridges, 1851

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Leslie Fulford

Cash and designated gifts go to support First Church's **Good Samaritan Fund**. Each month "Good Sam" provides financial help to people in need who come to our church seeking assistance. Every effort is made to meet the unique, emergency needs of these neighbors. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Becky

**All: With grateful hearts O God,
We give back to you in small measure
what you have so generously shared with us.
May these gifts, which come from our bounty and to others' need,
Be multiplied to the glory of your name. Amen.**

COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYERS

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

COMMUNION HYMN
 "Come and fill our hearts"

Confitemini Domino, Jacques Berthier, 1982
 Jacques Berthier, 1982

Musical score for the hymn "Come and fill our hearts" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system has chords D, Bm, D, and A. The second system has chords Em, C, Em, A, and D. The lyrics are: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly. Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu-ia!"

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*adapted from the Iona Community*)

Rev. Becky

All: We thank you O God,
 For Christ's food in our souls,
 Christ's life in our hands,
 Christ's love in our hearts,
 Christ's peace on our path. 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. Becky

*CLOSING HYMN

Bernadette Farrell, 1993

"Christ, be our light"

Musical score for the hymn "Christ, be our light" in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of three lines of music, each with a treble staff. The first line is labeled "Refrain" and has chords G, C, G, Em, Bm, Em. The second line has chords Am7, D, G, Dsus, D, Em, Em7. The third line has chords C, Am7, D, G, Am7, G. The lyrics are: "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.

† RECOGNITION OF TEACHERS

We offer our thanks and gratitude to the following faith formation volunteers who led children's, youth, and adult education classes this school year:

Todd Cunningham

Melissa Kulwicki

Amanda Butler

Nan Kreimer

Stacie Sholl

Mark Sholl

Maggie Myers

Rev. Dr. Nancy Livingston

Rev. Margot Connor

Rev. Larry Miller

Caroline Panahon

Joshua Stafford

Tom Brownfield

Rev. Jessica Young Chang

Jackie Dean

Tom Worley

Alejandro Rodriguez

Taimur Chaudry

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“Come and fill our hearts.” Words and music: Jacques Berthier, Taizé Community; ©1991 Less Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

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

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

The Rev. Becky David, *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 17, 2026

This Week at First Church

Sunday, May 17

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
 Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Adult Faith Formation
 (Classroom C)
 Family Playground Time (Playground)
 Youth Mission Trip Family Mtg
 (Classroom D)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m. Graduate Celebration & Sacred Conversation
 (Parish Hall)
- 4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

Tuesday, May 19

- 5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg
 (Classroom C & Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Church Council Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Wednesday, May 20

- 10 a.m. The Largest Table (Kitchen)
- 6 p.m. Faith Formation Mtg (Classroom C & Teams)
- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg (SM Office)

Thursday, May 21

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

Friday, May 22

- 10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)
- 11:30 a.m. Faith Mission Food Prep & Serve (Kitchen)

Sunday, May 24

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
 Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Adult Faith Formation (Classroom C)
 Family Playground Time (Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (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.

Family Playground Time! Today at 10 a.m. on the Sam Gordon Playground

Summertime means playground time! Join the First Church playground gang between services for outdoor play and parent catch up. We'll be outside playing this summer through the fall, weather permitting.

Join the Conversation

Join me, Rev. Becky and the Transition Team, today for our second Sacred Conversation about what it means to be open and affirming at First Congregational Church. Each meeting of this series of four stands alone to uniquely focus on one aspect of the church's Open and Affirming Statement. Today we will consider how we, as individuals and as a congregation, welcome and affirm those who may express their sexual or gender identity different from our own. It is not necessary to attend the full sequence, but we hope you will join each one to enrich your understanding of our O&A statement, as well as your relationships in the church.

All conversations will be in Parish Hall following the 11 a.m. worship service. A light lunch will be offered. The next gatherings are June 7 and June 14.

Sarah Reed, Moderator

Choral Evensong

Today at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Choral Evensong is rooted in the rich liturgical tradition of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and has been aptly described by W.H. Auden as “the finest piece of liturgical writing in the English language.” Held in the late afternoon, this service offers attendees a serene and contemplative experience, where scripture, music, and prayer intertwine. Choral Evensong invites you to connect with the divine and immerse yourself in a spiritual journey that is timeless and beautiful.

Community Yoga Wednesdays

May 20 Session Cancelled

Your own resident yogi Pastor Jess Young Chang offers Community Yoga, and everyone is welcome to this gentle class, suitable for all levels of practitioner. The next session will be Wednesday, May 27 at 6 p.m. in Parish Hall.

Dinner Out

Wednesday, May 27, at 6 p.m.

at TAT Restaurant

Our church famiglia will dine at TAT, a Ristorante Di Famiglia that for over 90 years has been serving delicious and authentic dishes. You will dine on dishes made from scratch... *delizioso!* We've been there before, and we're going back. It will be bene!

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



Full Circle Connections

Friday, May 22, at 10 a.m.

in the Parlor

Full Circle Connections will meet as usual and Jan Hamilton will be there to facilitate. We will be suspending the meetings for the summer months. The discussion will focus on the contributions from all who come regarding how to move forward with this gathering in the fall. All are welcome, including anyone who hasn't come in the past but has an interest.

Sleep Out With Us On May 29!

First Church is co-sponsoring the annual Sleep Out Columbus event to benefit Huckleberry House, and we're hosting the event at our church! Since 1970, Huckleberry House has been a safe place and source of support for young people who've left home and are facing homelessness, or simply need a safe place to rest their heads. Huck House has evolved to meet the changing needs of young people, with hope, shelter, stability, emotional support, and caring guidance. Sleep Out provides Huck House with critical fundraising to deliver these needed services, and also provides important visibility for the needs Huck House addresses.

Join the First Church Sleep Out team on Friday, May 29-30, whether you plan to spend the night on the church grounds with us, attend the Friday evening program only, help with fundraising, or just help spread the word. For more info or for help registering, contact Gail or Jim Lowe at 614-397-7512 or lowemail1124@gmail.com.

Special Congregational Meeting

Sunday, May 31, at 12:15 p.m.

in the Sanctuary

A Congregational meeting will be held regarding the grant preservation project. The meeting will review the results of a recent building assessment report completed by architectural firm of Schooley Caldwell. The report was funded jointly by the National Fund for Sacred Places and the Church. The report highlights the need to make immediate repairs to the Rose Window, the front steps, and several areas of mortar and stone work around the church.

Through a bidding process overseen by Schooley Caldwell, a contractor has been chosen to begin working this summer and complete the construction project before the end of this year. The Congregational meeting will provide details of how the grant project can be funded by a variety of sources to complement an intended modest fund-raising campaign with the membership. Please attend and learn how you can help support this important preservation project of the church.

Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

May 17 - Good Samaritan Fund

May 24 - Laundry Love May 31 - Huckleberry House

Keep in Prayer

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

Family and friends Amy Wagner's great nephew, Brody Wilson; Melva Fisher's brother, James Garrison; Pat Patterson's sister-in-law, Bonnie Elliott; Amy Wagner's friend, Nancy Rowe 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 Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. We also pray for our UCC partners in mission the All Africa Conference of Churches and the Project for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa in Kenya.

Enjoy Summer Reading with the First Church Book Club

If you're looking for your next good read, the First Church Book Club will be discussing a variety of books this summer and all are welcome! Join this fun opportunity for lively conversation and get to know other church members better. We gather on Zoom on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. Questions? Want to receive book club emails? Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742.

June 3, 2026

The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway

Published in 1926, *The Sun Also Rises* is our centennial read. Based on Hemingway's experiences in Paris and Spain during/following WWI, it's a story of the "Lost Generation," young, disillusioned American and British expats grappling with the aftermath of WWI.

July 1, 2026

My Friends by Fredrik Backman. This fiction is a #1 NY Times Bestseller.

August 5, 2026

Mona's Eyes by Thomas Schlessler. Fiction – a NY Times Bestseller; Barnes & Noble 2025 Book of the Year.

September 2, 2026

Paper Girl: A Memoir of Home and Family in a Fractured America by Beth Macy (reflecting on her hometown of Urbana, Ohio). *Memoir* was named a Best Book of 2025 by The New Yorker; one of Barack Obama's Favorite Books of 2025.

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

444 E Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 | 614-228-1741

www.firstchurcharts.org | home@first-church.org

