



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT NINE
AUGUST 9, 2026
ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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

RINGING OF THE BELL

*GATHERING SONG

"Morning has broken" verse 1

Bunessan, Gaelic melody
Eleanor Farjeon, 1931, alt.

1 Morn-ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing; black-bird has
 2 Sweet the rain's new fall sun - lit from heav - en, like the first
 3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing, born of the

spo - ken like the first bird. Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the
 dew - fall on the first grass. Praise for the sweet-ness of the wet
 one light E - den saw play! Praise with e - la - tion; praise ev - ery

morn - ing! Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
 gar - den, sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
 morn - ing, God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

*INVOCATION

Julia Myers

Leader: Let us pray:
 Holy God, You speak to us in a voice unexpected
 And come to us in ways we do not recognize.
 Never leaving us to our devices or defenses, You are the ever-present One.
 Call us out in faith again and again, until we learn to walk with You
 in steadfast love and faithfulness, and in peace.
 In the name of him who comes to us upon the waters, Jesus the Christ.

People: Amen.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. jess

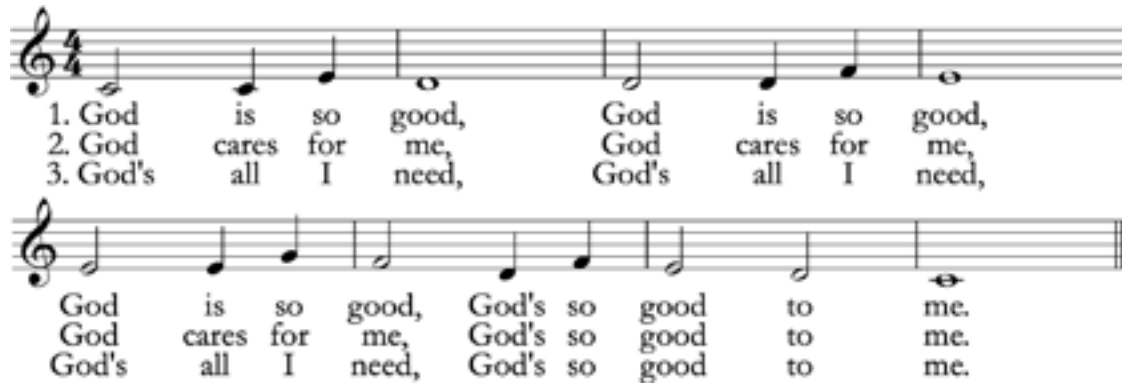
CHILDREN'S TIME

Leslie Fulford

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

CHILDREN'S HYMN
"God is so good"

God is So Good, Traditional African
Paul Makai, tr. Marilyn Foulkes, ca. 1970, rev.



LISTENING

THE FIRST READING

1 Kings 19:9-18

Julia Myers

Leader: A reading from the First Book of Kings, the nineteenth chapter.

There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of YHWH came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for YHWH God Omnipotent. The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death by the sword. I am the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me, too." God said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of YHWH, for YHWH is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountain apart and shattered the rocks by YHWH's power—but YHWH was not in the whirlwind. After the wind there was an earthquake—but YHWH was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire—but YHWH was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He replied, "Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for YHWH God Omnipotent. The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death by the sword. I am the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me, too." YHWH told Elijah, "Go back the way you came, to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael as ruler of Aram. Also anoint Jehu ben-Nimshi as ruler over Israel, and anoint Elisha ben-Shaphat, from Abel Meholah, to succeed you as prophet. Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. Yet I reserve 7,000 in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Ba'al and all whose mouths have not kissed his images."

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The congregation joins in singing the entirety of the Psalm.

Each measure of the chant corresponds to one half-verse of the Psalm, with notes changing at the | symbol.



8. The Lord is full of compassion and | mercy,
slow to anger and of great | kindness.
9. He will not always ac- | cuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
10. He has not dealt with us according to our | sins,
nor rewarded us according to our | wickedness.
11. For as the heavens are high above the | earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who | fear him.
12. As far as the east is from the | west,
so far has he removed our | sins from us.
13. As a father cares for his | children,
so does the Lord care for those who | fear him.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 14:22-33

Rev. Tom

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew, the fourteenth chapter.

Jesus insisted that the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side. Having sent the crowds away, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray, remaining there alone as night fell. Meanwhile the boat, already a thousand yards from shore, was being tossed about in the waves which had been raised by the fierce winds. At about three in the morning, Jesus came walking toward them on the lake. When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were terrified. "It is a ghost!" they said, and in their fear they began to cry out. Jesus hastened to reassure them: "Don't worry, it's me! Don't be afraid!" Peter spoke up and said, "If it is really you, tell me to come to you across the water." "Come!" Jesus said. So Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was, he became frightened. He began to sink, and cried out, "Save me!" Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and caught Peter. "You have so little faith!" Jesus said to him. "Why did you doubt?" Once they had climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat showed great reverence, declaring to Jesus, "You are indeed God's Own!"

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

People: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Rev. Tom

RESPONDING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. jess

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.**

HYMN

Detroit, Supplement to Kentucky Harmony, 1820

"Forgive our sins as we forgive"

Rosamond E. Herklots, 1969, 1983, alt.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is on a single staff. Chords are indicated above the notes: Dm, Gm, Dm, F, Am, Dm in the first line, and Bb, Am, F, Gm, Am, Dm in the second line. The lyrics are as follows:

1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray,
2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
4 Lord, cleanse the depths with-in our souls and bid re-sent-ment cease.

but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say,
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
what triv - ial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!
Then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. jess

"If you have more than enough material possessions and see your neighbors in need yet close your hearts to them, how can the love of God be living in you?"—1 John 3:17

Out of gratitude to God and in keeping with our mission and values, every week our offering goes to support a vanguard humanitarian organization. This week, 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.

You can use the QR code to donate to both this week's mission and to First Church! If you are giving by cash or check and would also like to give something to First Congregational Church, please ask one of our deacons for an envelope and mark it accordingly. Thank you so much for your consideration and generosity. Any amount significant to you is significant to us.

“Put me to the test, says Yahweh Omnipotent, and see if I do not open windows in the sky and pour so much blessing on you that you cannot contain it!” –Malachi 3:10

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Geoffrey Gear, *soloist*

COMMUNION

Leader: We, then, are the body of Christ.

Leader: Our God is here.

People: God’s Spirit is with us.

Leader: Open your hearts to the One who is Love:

People: We open our hearts to You, O God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God who sets us free.

People: It is our joy to give You thanks!

It is our shared joy to thank God for all God is doing in our lives, and for the time to gather around Christ’s table and share the meal of remembrance, community, transformation. As we gather at this table, as we remember Christ, we also remember those who share the bread and the cup through time and space, as they return to the table nourished and comforted by the eternal and never-ending welcome of Christ.

When Jesus gathered with the students, the night before the trial, the night before execution, Jesus took bread, 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 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. Come Holy Spirit, Come. Twine yourself within these crumbs, 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.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Come, for all things are ready.

COMMUNION HYMN

"Eat this bread"

Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984

Robert J. Batastini and the Taizé Community, 1984, alt.



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. jess

Leader: Who is like You, Gracious One?
People: **There is no one like You,
Our feast and our song
Our safety and our story,
Our hope and our peace.
There is no one like You.
Thank You, now and always, Amen.**

SENDING

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Melissa Kulwicki

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

*CLOSING HYMN
“Lead us from death to life”

World Peace Prayer, Marty Haugen, 1984
Satish Kumar, 1981



*BENEDICTION

Rev. Tom

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.

† PERMISSIONS AND COPYRIGHTS

All scripture readings used in today's service are from *The Inclusive Bible*.

The following are printed and/or livestreamed under permission of OneLicense #A-717661. All rights reserved.

"Forgive our sins as we forgive." Words: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1969, 1983. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

"Eat this bread." Words: Robert Batastini and the Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier; ©1984 Less Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved.

"Lead us from death to life." Marty Haugen, 1985. © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved.

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

Rev. Thomas Brownfield, *preacher*
Rev. jess young chang, *worship leader*
Julia Myers, *liturgist*
Leslie Fulford, *worship leader*
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
Joshua Stafford, *pianist*
Geoffrey Gear, *soloist*
Gregory Halbe, *livestream ministry*

Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

August 9, 2026

This Week at First Church

Sunday, August 9

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Family Playground Time (Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour (Parish Hall)
Come To The Table: Care & Share Kitchen
Ministry Mtg (Parlor)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)

Monday, August 10

- 9:30 a.m. Stewardship & Growth Mtg
(Classroom C & Teams)
- 6 p.m. Campanelle Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, August 11

- 5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)
- 6:30 p.m. Sacred Journeys through Reproductive
Justice Mtg (Teams)
- 7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)

Saturday, August 15

- 9 a.m. Council Retreat (Parish Hall)

Sunday, August 16

- 9 a.m. Worship Service and
Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Family Playground Time (Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour & Sales (Parish Hall)

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

Join the First Church playground gang between services having outdoor fun while parents catch up. We'll be outside playing every Sunday this summer, weather permitting.

Come to the Table: Care & Share Kitchen Ministry Meeting Today at 12:15 p.m.

Congregational Care is hosting an informational and brainstorming meeting in the Parlor for the Care & Share Kitchen Ministry. This will be a discussion on past practices and then looking ahead for new ways to grow this important ministry. All former, current, and those newly interested in this ministry are welcomed to attend. We hope to grow this ministry further, and help connect with others through food and fellowship.

Joy is an Act of Resistance Friday, August 14, 2026

The Washington Gladden Social Justice Park and the Human Service Chamber is holding a welcoming, joyful morning for the nonprofit professionals, social workers, educators, advocates, healthcare workers, and community leaders who strengthen Central Ohio every day.

Joy is an Act of Resistance is a free community appreciation event celebrating those who dedicate their lives to serving others. Through breakfast, music, games, creative activities, reflection, and connection, this will be a space for renewal and gratitude—because caring for those who care for our community strengthens the movement for social justice. This event will run from 7 to 11 a.m.

If you can assist with this program please use the QR Code. Should you have questions email coordinator, Barb Poppe at Barbara.poppe.77@gmail.com.



A Stephen Ministry Book Recommendation *The Unexpected Journey* by Emma Heming Willis

"Caring for yourself while caring for someone else is one of the hardest, most heartbreaking challenges you'll ever face. It's easy to lose your sense of self. Through my own experience and insights from leading experts, I want to help care partners feel less alone, better prepared, and empowered to navigate this journey with strength and support."

Life is certainly a journey with many unplanned experiences. We all need support and guidance. I found this book to offer both, and hope you will consider reading it. See our bulletin board in the main hall near the sanctuary. Remember Stephen Ministers are here for you on your journey. To learn more please contact Susie Loik (susieloik1219@gmail.com), Stephen Ministry Leader.

Adult Education Topics

Faith Formation is looking for those who have a passion for a topic and would like to share it. They are also asking for suggestions of topics you'd like to see offered. Biblical content, current events, and social justice concerns are topics we want to schedule for the adult education sessions. Faith Formation wants to know what you are curious about and want to learn more about.

Please contact Leslie Fulford with your suggestions and ideas at lfulford@first-church.org.

Our Celebration Committee Needs You

On Sunday, September 26, 2027, First Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, UCC will celebrate its 175th Anniversary. According to David Hogrefe, this will be our Demisemiseptcentennial!

A Celebration Committee has formed and they are looking for First Church community members to join them in planning this extravagant celebration.

They meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. via Teams. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 26, 2026. If you would like to join in the planning, please be in touch with Christine Farquhar at Farquhar128@sbcglobal.net.

Good Works! Engaging with Our Church and Our Community ... January – June 2026

Our church has been busy during 2026. Our church members continue to respond to God's call and serve one another.

Stewardship and Growth Commission

Stewardship campaign

- Completed the annual stewardship campaign for 2026 in early January with pledges from 187 households totaling \$801,057.
- Continued outreach to 19 households who pledged for 2025 but had not yet responded for 2026.
- Hosted the second annual Gratitude Sunday on March 22 to express appreciation for church members' commitments of "time, talent, and treasure" to our congregation.
- Began planning in April and May for stewardship activities over the summer that will lead into the annual stewardship campaign in October.

Planned giving

- Representatives of the commission met with the Board of Trustees to discuss a framework for planned giving and estate planning for church members.

New members

- Surveyed church members who had joined since April 2024 to solicit advice on the new members classes and their experience as new members.
- Conducted a new member class on April 24 with six persons joining our congregation on May 24.

Neighborhood outreach

- At the commission's recommendation, Church Council approved our congregation joining the Discovery District Civic Association.
- Representatives of the commission have attended the civic association's monthly meetings.

Join Livestream Ministry

The Livestream Ministry is seeking volunteers to join the team that extends our Sunday worship services to online viewers. Online worshipers include members of our faith community participating from home or while traveling, and individuals looking for spiritual connection.

No video production experience is needed, and training is provided. If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Melissa Kulwicki, Communications Manager, at mkulwicki@first-church.org.

Keep in Prayer

Members Kelly Dodd; Fran Panek; Lynn Wallich; Jane Weddle; Victor John; Mary Day Fewless; Ramona Moenter; Jane Ward; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt.

Family and friends Leslie Fulford's sister, Kim Barth, and brother-in-law, Al Fulford; Pat Patterson's friend, Cindy Shealy; Jenny Provenzano's mother, Joyce Beitzel; Melissa Kulwicki's father, Jack Blandi, and her mother-in-law, Beverly Kulwicki; Rev. Becky David; David Wyatt's uncle, Richard Hendrix Wyatt; Rev. Jess Young Chang's friend Rev. Steve Swisher's mother Barbara Swisher; Kathy Reed's cousin, Barbara Works; Malini Peter's friend, Usha Rangarajan; Susan Brooks' friends, Marti and Ned Timmons; 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; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; and Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers.

Those who mourn Wendy Reber and family on the death of her husband, Robert Reber; and Jim Griffin on the death of his friend, Randelle Bowman.

We keep Stephen Ministers in prayer as they care for our church members.

We keep our Search Committee and our Future Pastor in our prayers.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches of Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Equatorial Guinea. We also pray for our UCC partner, the Church of Reconciliation and Peace and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea.

Sacred Earth Eco Tip

Did you know that

It takes chewing gum from 5-1,000 years to decompose because it's made of synthetic products such as polyethylene, PVA, and other polymers. These are the same products used in plastics. You don't have to give up chewing gum to help. Simply remember to cover chewed gum and throw it in a garbage bin.

Better still, select plastic free, biodegradable alternatives such as Simply Gum, Glee Gum, Happy Eco, and Milliways to name a few readily available online. To learn more visit <https://www.globalbioenergy.org/is-gum-biodegradable/>.

Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

August 9 - Good Samaritan

August 16 - Laundry Love

August 23 - Faith in Public Life

August 30 - The Largest Table

Calling All Golfers

Monday, August 31

The 21st Annual David Liebchen Memorial will be played at York Golf Club in Worthington. This is a great opportunity to get out and enjoy a day of golfing while supporting information equity and independence empowerment through VOICEcorps. VOICEcorps' mission is to enrich the lives of people with low-vision, blindness, or other conditions by reading print news and other information 24/7/365.

First Church member and wife of David, Pat Liebchen is still involved with VOICEcorps. Please call VOICEcorps at 614-274-7650 or email dsims@voicecorps.org with any questions or to register to play golf!

Save the Date: August 23rd at both Worship Services
for the Blessing of the Backpacks

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

Senior Deacon: Dayna McCrary

Deacons: Fubara Braide, Stella Braide, Camilla Curren, Kelly Dodd, Sandra Geronimo, Dean Hafez, 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: Nathaniel Powell

Communications and Technology Commission-elect:

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

