



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
OCTOBER 11, 2026
TWENTIETH 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.

Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.

VOLUNTARY

“Psalm Nine”

Carl Wiltse, 1987

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Mrs. Ellen Boriin

Leader: You have been called to the banquet.

People: This is the feast.

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

*Leader: You have been summoned to the wedding.

People: This is the feast of life and light.

Leader: From the streets and the byways, God has invited us.

People: We have come to the banquet that has no end.

Alleluia! Amen!

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

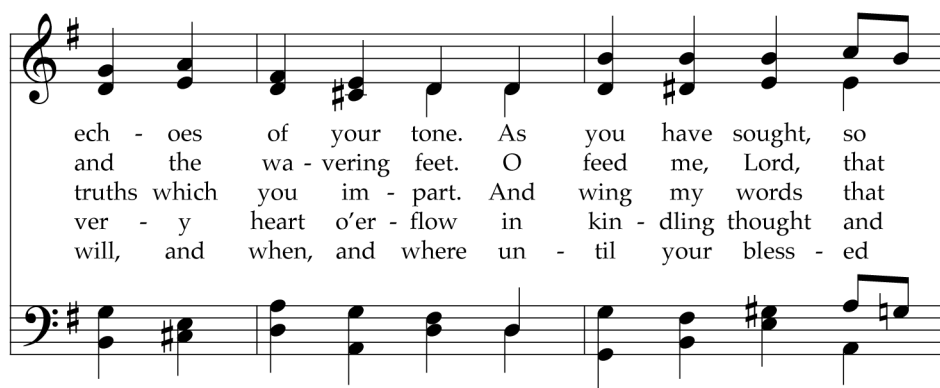
"Lord, speak to me that I may speak"

Canonbury, Robert Schumann, 1839

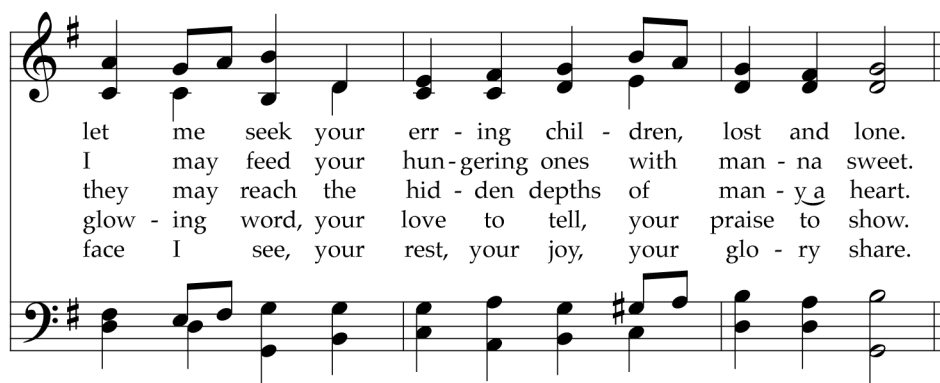
Frances Ridley Havergal, 1872, alt.



1 Lord, speak to me that I may speak in liv - ing
 2 O lead me, Lord, that I may lead the wan - dering
 3 O teach me, Lord, that I may teach the pre - cious
 4 O fill me with your full - ness, Lord, un - til my
 5 O use me, Lord, use e - ven me, just as you



ech - oes of your tone. As you have sought, so
 and the wa - vering feet. O feed me, Lord, that
 truths which you im - part. And wing my words that
 ver - y heart o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and
 will, and when, and where un - til your bless - ed



let me seek your err - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
 I may feed your hun - gery ones with man - na sweet.
 they may reach the hid - den depths of man - na heart.
 glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.
 face I see, your rest, your joy, your glo - ry share.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Becky David

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 many greet one another by name.*

INVOCATION

Rev. jessica young chang

Leader: Holy God, You set before us every day a bounty of good things.
 Bring us to Your feasting table, hungry for Your Word.

**People: Make us eager to rebuild the cities You have made,
 and ready to receive strangers,
 so that we celebrate at all times and in all places
 the peace which is life in You. Amen.**

ANTHEM

Edward C. Bairstow, 1925

“I sat down under his shadow”

Song of Songs 2:3-4

I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner over me was love.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 25:1-9

Mrs. Boriin

Leader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, the twenty-fifth chapter.

YHWH, You are my God— I exalt You! I praise Your Name!

For You do marvelous things, planned long ago with steadfast faithfulness.

You turned cities into dump heaps, fortified cities into rubble; strongholds of foreigners are no more, never to be rebuilt. It is for this reason that the powerful honor You, and cities of ruthless people fear You. Yet You are a refuge to poor people, refuge to the needy in their distress, shelter in the storm, shade from the heat— for the breath of the ruthless is like an ice storm or a scorching drought. You subdue the roar of the enemy, and the mantra of tyrants is stilled.

On this mountain, YHWH Omnipotent will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, food rich and succulent, and fine, aged wines. On this mountain God will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, the shroud covering all nations, destroying all death forever. God will wipe away the tears from every cheek, and will take away the shame of God's people on earth, wherever they live. YHWH has spoken.

On that Day it will be said, “This is our God, this is the One for whose liberation we waited, YHWH is the One in whom we had hoped! We rejoice exultantly in our deliverance.

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.



The Lord is my shepherd;
 I shall not be in want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures
 and leads me beside still waters.
 He revives my soul
 and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 I shall fear no evil;
 for you are with me;
 your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;
 you have anointed my head with oil,
 and my cup is running over.
 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Antiphon

THE EPISTLE SCRIPTURE READING

Phillipians 4:1-9

Mrs. Boriin

Leader: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Phillipians, the fourth chapter.

For these reasons, my sisters and brothers—you whom I so love and long for, you who are my joy and my crown—continue, my dear ones, to stand firm in Christ Jesus. I implore Euodia and Syntyche to come to an agreement with each other in Christ. And I ask you, Syzygus, to be a true comrade and help these coworkers. These two women struggled at my side in defending the Good News, along with Clement and the others who worked with me. Their names are written in the Book of Life. Rejoice in the Savior always! I say it again: Rejoice! Let everyone see your forbearing spirit. Our Savior is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds; instead, present your needs to God through prayer and petition, giving thanks for all circumstances. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, my sisters and brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, decent, admirable, virtuous or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

The Choir introduces the Alleluia, which is then repeated by the Congregation.

Following the verse, all repeat the Alleluia.



Verse: May God enlighten the eyes of our hearts,
so that we may know what is the hope that belongs to our call.

*THE GOSPEL

Matthew 22:1-14

Rev. David

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

Then Jesus spoke to them again in parables. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like this: there was a ruler who prepared a feast for the wedding of the family's heir; but when the ruler sent out workers to summon the invited guests, they wouldn't come. The ruler sent other workers, telling them to say to the guests, 'I have prepared this feast for you. My oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding.' But they took no notice; one went off to his farm, another to her business, and the rest seized the workers, attacked them brutally and killed them. The ruler was furious and dispatched troops who destroyed those murderers and burned their town. "Then the ruler said to the workers, 'The wedding feast is ready, but the guests I invited don't deserve the honor. Go out to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find.' The workers went out into the streets and collected everyone they met, good and bad alike, until the hall was filled with guests. "The ruler, however, came in to see the company at table, and noticed one guest who was not dressed for a wedding. 'My friend,' said the ruler, 'why are you here without a wedding garment?' But the guest was silent. Then the ruler said to the attendants, 'Bind this guest hand and foot, and throw the individual out into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "Many are called, but few are chosen."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. David

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rev. young chang

Leader: ... Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying,
Hear us, o God,

People: Your mercy is great.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Let us join our voices together in the prayer of Jesus.

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

"Where cross the crowded ways of life"

Gardiner, Gardiner's Sacred Melodies, 1815

Frank Mason North, 1903, alt.



1 Where cross the crowd - ed ways of life, where sound the
 2 In haunts of wretch - ed - ness and need, on sha - dowed
 3 The cup of wa - ter given for thee still holds the
 4 O Mas - ter, from the moun - tain side, make haste to
 5 till all the world shall learn thy love, and fol - low

1 cries of race and clan, a - bove the noise of
 2 thresh - olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the
 3 fresh - ness of thy grace; yet long these mul - ti -
 4 heal these hearts of pain; a - mong these rest - less
 5 where thy feet have trod; till glo - rious from thy

1 self - ish strife, we hear thy voice, O Son of Man.
 2 lures of greed, we catch the vi - sion of thy tears.
 3 tudes to see the true com - pas - sion of thy face.
 4 throngs a - bide, O tread the ci - ty's streets a - gain;
 5 heaven a - bove, shall come the ci - ty of our God.

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. young chang

"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 **Neighbors in Need (NIN)**, a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. One-third of the offering is given to the

Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries. In 2025, the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. 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 use one of the giving envelopes available in the pew racks, and mark it accordingly. Thank you so much for your consideration and generosity. Any amount significant to you is significant to us.

"Put the entire tithe into the storehouse so there be food in my house! 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 ANTHEM

John Rutter, 1978

"The Lord is my shepherd" from *Requiem*

Psalms 23

The Lord is my shepherd:
therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture:
and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
He shall convert my soul:
and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me:
thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

*PRESENTATION HYMN

East Acklam, Francis Jackson, 1957

"For the fruit of all creation"

Fred Pratt Green, 1970

The musical notation is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are: For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God. For the gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God. For the plow-ing, sow - ing, reap-ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep-ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe-keep - ing, thanks be to God.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Jim Lowe, Justice and Mercy Commissioner

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

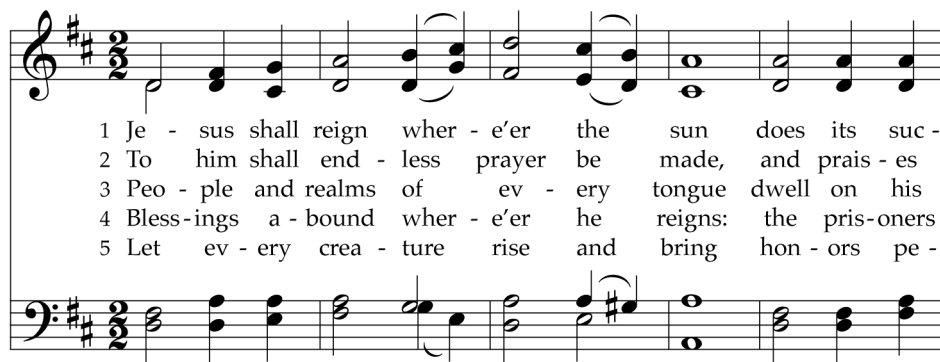
People: **Thanks be to God.**

*CLOSING HYMN

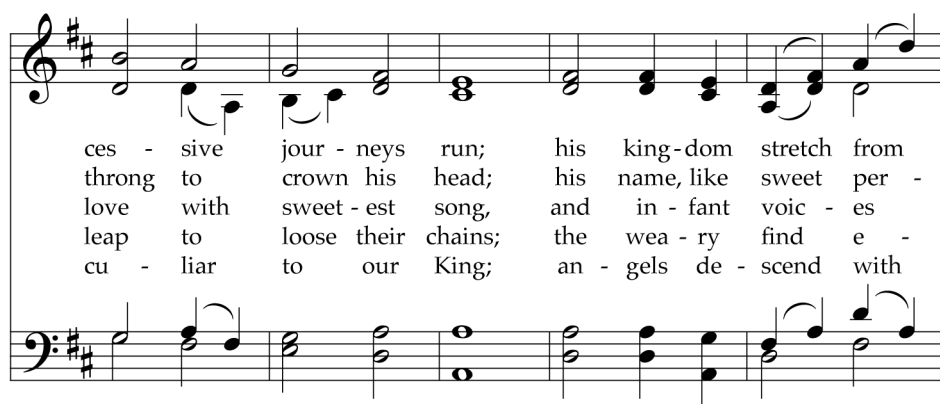
Duke Street, Attr. John Hatton, c. 1793

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun"

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!

BENEDICTION

Rev. David

VOLUNTARY

Toccata in Seven

John Rutter, 1975

Please be seated for the voluntary.

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.

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God and in celebration of our grandchildren Alice, Talia and Frank IV by Frank and Sue Cook. Thanks be to God.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. young chang — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Rev. David— East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Mrs. Fulford — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

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

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"For the fruit of all creation." Words: Fred Pratt Green; ©1970 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

The Rev. Becky David, *preacher*

The Rev. jessica young chang, *worship leader*

Ellen Boriin, *liturgist*

Leslie Fulford, *worship leader*

Aarav Peter, *crucifer*

Jason Harrell and Sebastian Kulwicki, *vergers*

Jennifer Fry, *director*

The First Church Ringers

Joshua Stafford, *organist and director*

The First Church Choir

Pat Patterson, *livestream ministry*



Enter to Worship Depart to Serve

October 11, 2026

This Week at First Church

Sunday, October 11

- 9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion
 (Parish Hall)
 Godly Play (Library)
- 10 a.m. Care & Share Kitchen Mtg (SM Office)
 Family Playground Time
 (Sam Gordon Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. UCC 101 (Parish Hall)
- 4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

Monday, October 12

- 6 p.m. First Church Campanelle Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7 p.m. Trustees Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, October 13

- 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 & Teams)

Thursday, October 15

- 11 a.m. Fiber Arts Ministry (Fanning Rm)
- 6 p.m. First Church Ringers Rehearsal (Bell Rm)

Saturday, October 17

- 9 a.m. Fall Clean Up Day (Church Grounds)

Sunday, October 18

- 9 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion
 (Parish Hall)
 Godly Play (Library)
- 10 a.m. First Serves (Classroom D)
 Family Playground Time
 (Sam Gordon Playground)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. UCC 101 (Parish Hall)

Keep in Prayer

Members Lee Wetmore; Melva Fisher; Margaret Cipriani; Sandy Mathias; Matt Stevens and Jim Velo; Jane Weddle; Victor John; Ramona Moenter; Jane Ward; Grace Glaros and family; Beverly Halbe; Francille Firebaugh; Nancy Burba; John Carter; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt.

Family and friends Dakotah Saunders' friend, Olena Glotova; Annette McCormick's sister, Kathy McCormick; Jim and Gail Lowe's daughter, Kim Lowe; Amanda Butler's father, Tom Lynch; Kevin Salem's uncle, Harold Allen and niece, Clare Salem; Vicki Lyden's sister, Connie Dolder; 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 mother-in-law, Beverly Kulwicki; David Wyatt's uncle, Richard Hendrix Wyatt; Malini Peter's friend, Usha Rangarajan; Susan Brooks' friends, Marti and Ned Timmons; Susie Loik's daughter, Kelly and son, Laeric; Janice Taft's cousin, Teri Williams; Shelly Gies' father, Robert Simms and brother, Mike Simms; Jason Harrell's mother, Sherry Harrell; and Matt Myers' sister, Erin Myers

Those who mourn Dameon Jones on the death of his aunt, Belinda Tracey; and David Wyatt on the death of his mother, Sybil Foley-Kalail.

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 Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama. We also pray for our UCC partner, the Institute of Intercultural Studies and Research in Mexico.

Godly Play Today at 9 a.m.

The Godly Play Sunday school class will be in the Library during the 9 a.m. worship hour. Godly Play is a creative, imaginative approach to children's faith formation led by Miss Melissa and Mr. Todd. During the 9 a.m. worship, children can get a snack, then go to the Library, then return to Parish Hall for communion. Come join in the fun!

Family Playground Time! Today at 10:00 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, weather permitting.

UCC 101 — What does it mean to be the United Church of Christ? Today, at 12:15 p.m. in Parish Hall

First Church is a member congregation of the United Church of Christ (UCC); therefore, all First Church members are members of the UCC. What is the United Church of Christ, anyway?

Come join the Rev. Dr. Nancy Livingston and Rev. Dr. Marti Baumer, both of whom have many years of involvement in the UCC at all levels, as they explain the ways of the UCC.

A simple lunch will be served so please register on Realm using the QR Code for the upcoming class.



Choral Evensong Today at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Choral Evensong, rooted in the rich liturgical tradition of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, has been aptly described by W.H. Auden as "the finest piece of liturgical writing in the English language." This venerable Anglican service has a storied history that spans centuries, dating back to the early days of the Church of England. Originally crafted during the English Reformation, the Book of Common Prayer became a cornerstone of Anglican worship, and Choral Evensong stands as one of its most cherished expressions. Held in the early evening, this service offers attendees a serene and contemplative experience, where scripture, music, and prayer intertwine. Through psalms, hymns, canticles, and scripture readings, Choral Evensong invites you to connect with the divine in a profoundly meditative way, immersing yourself in a spiritual journey that is as timeless as it is beautiful—a true testament to the enduring legacy of the English liturgical tradition.

First Serves Sunday, October 18 at 10 a.m. in Classroom D

First Serves continues to collect donated candy at the Giving Tree in the Education Wing. Your donation will give the children of the Gladden Community a great party.

Please join us on Sunday, October 18, for fall games, treats, and fun for all ages as we gather the candy for the Gladden Community House Halloween Party. Come have a spooktacular time with our church friends. Costumes are welcome!

Dinner Out Wednesday, October 21, at 6 p.m. at High Bank Distillery in Grandview

High Bank Distillery is an elevated, yet casual, distillery pub with seasonally inspired takes on modern American cocktails and cuisine. It's known for great food, cold drinks, and fun times in. They pair their creative cocktails with some traditional pub food for a perfect night out.

Join in with others from First Church for a dinner out by registering on Realm.



Legacy Sunday Pie Contest Winners!!

Congratulations to the winners of the 2026 Legacy Sunday Pie Contest! Greg Halbe (hot from the oven gooseberry pie) and Melody Leidheiser (scrumptious four berry pie) wowed us all with their delicious homemade submissions. Greg and Melody were awarded bright yellow chrysanthemums for their awesome submissions. Not only were these pies tasty, they were beautiful and savored by all.

Justice & Mercy Missions

Upcoming missions will be:

Oct. 11 - UCC Neighbors in Need

Oct. 18 - Sacred Earth for the First Church Library

Oct. 25 - Pathway Clubhouse

First Church Engagement Fair Sunday, October 25 in Parish Hall following 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship

Come celebrate our meaningful projects and activities on Sunday, October 25 in Parish Hall, following the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services. Tasty food will be served!

Learn about our mission projects and explore opportunities for service that speak to your heart! See the many ways we work in the community and within our church family. From small discussion groups to "done in a day" projects to serving on a committee or commission, you'll find opportunities for connection and service at the Engagement Fair.

Our First Church FREE Store will offer First Church items, including books, t-shirts, water bottles, and more. Come celebrate our mission activities, community, and friendships!

Preserving the Past, Stepping into the Future

Pledges and gifts to the Preserving the Past, Stepping into the Future fundraising campaign total \$323,486. It was always our hope to exceed the \$200,000 campaign goal to allow for additional repairs to be made to our historic 1931 church building. With your help, we have done that with great enthusiasm.

Just as the generations before us built and maintained this wonderful worship space and community center, we too are making investments now to ensure its future for generations to come.

Although the official fundraising campaign ended on September 30, we anticipate that preservation project pledge cards will continue to be received in the next few weeks as individuals make their final decisions of how they can support this significant preservation project.

The grant construction committee will be recommending for Council's approval a short list of related construction projects that can be completed with the extra funds raised.

More information about the progress being made to preserve our historic building can be found at the grant project website: www.first-church.org/preservation.

Justice & Mercy Stewardship

Many members were drawn to First Church because our congregation strives to put into practice the words from the parable that Jesus depicted in Mathew 25:40. He told his disciples that “as you have done for the least of these, you have done for me.” One way we fulfill this promise is through the ministries that the Justice & Mercy Commission (J&M) recommends for congregation support in weekly special offerings. However, our offerings are only part of how we live out our faith. Our 12 different ministries under the J&M umbrella assure that each of us has a “hands-on” opportunity to serve in our own way. These include: Bethlehem On Broad Street (BOBS); BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality, and Dignity); Faith Mission; First Serves; Good Samaritan; Human Rights Committee; Largest Table; Laundry Love; Rapid Response Team; Sacred Earth; Sacred Journeys, Reproductive Justice; and the Unsheltered Ministry. Most of these are successfully fulfilling their missions, and aren’t planning program changes in 2027. But there are opportunities in five areas that offer new ways to “do for the least of these.” We aspire to help more by:

- Restoring stability for more households through the Good Samaritan program payments for utility bills and basic human needs. We’ll also continue distributing grocery gift cards, and explore more ways to provide emergency help.
- Increasing financial and volunteer help in our Laundry Love program, to preserve the health and dignity of more neighbors, with a second laundry site in 2027, and a third in 2028. This will triple our service, to nearly 80 households, in underserved neighborhoods in Linden, the Southside, and the Near East. We’ll also offer refreshments and increase availability of coloring books, comic books, and arts and crafts for children.
- Strengthening our longtime connection to the Deep Griha Society and Deep Griha Society, USA, committing finances to sponsor 5 children in their Pune, India, school, and recruiting 5 new member sponsors. This provides food, medical care, education, counseling, and other needs.
- Funding support for educational materials, supplies, event programming, and other services for the new Sacred Journeys Reproductive Justice Ministry.
- Supporting our Human Rights Committee’s sponsorship and organizing of educational and advocacy events and programs that promote and protect human rights in First Church and the community. This will solidify our commitments to ongoing activities like the annual Pride March, and to new projects like the Mama Bears film screening.

Jim Lowe, Commissioner

Stewardship Campaign for 2027 Promotes Faith and Love in Action

Our church will begin its annual stewardship campaign this Sunday under the banner of "First Congregational Church at 175: Faith and Love in Action." Church members will receive stewardship letters in the mail next week.

The stewardship campaign seeks pledges of financial support for 2027 to meet the congregation's annual operating budget. The Stewardship and Growth Commission has set a goal of raising \$850,000 from 200 households. The campaign will formally conclude with an offering of pledges on Sunday, October 25.

Throughout September and October, representatives of the church's commissions are offering brief Stewardship Moments during the worship services and written reports in "Connections" and "Depart to Serve." They are explaining their commission's goals and aspirations for 2027, as well as accomplishments in 2026.

Thoughts on Gratitude

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

- Winston Churchill

2027 Aspirational Budget

Accounts	2026 Actual YTD As of 9/15/2026	2026 Annual Budget	2027 Aspirational Budget
Revenues			
Total Pledge Giving-Current and Prior	\$ 630,039.70	\$ 795,694.56	\$ 850,000.00
Total Unpledged and Other	\$ 56,663.94	\$ 64,700.00	\$ 65,000.00
Total PLEDGES AND GIFTS	\$ 686,703.64	\$ 860,394.56	\$ 915,000.00
Total USE OF BUILDING & FACILITIES	\$ 74,254.80	\$ 92,382.00	\$ 98,208.00
Total OTHER REGULAR INCOME	\$ 33,536.23	\$ 45,500.00	\$ 38,450.00
Total TRUSTEES SUPPORT	\$ 58,193.76	\$ 104,000.00	\$ 114,000.00
Total ASSIGNED FUNDING	\$ 11,316.29	\$ -	\$ 11,174.00
Total Revenues	\$ 864,004.72	\$ 1,102,276.56	\$ 1,176,832.00
Expenses			
STAFF SALARY & BENEFITS			
Total MINISTERS	\$ 180,845.11	\$ 255,720.62	\$ 297,055.11
Total STAFF - Comm. & IT	\$ 51,786.58	\$ 72,361.58	\$ 75,331.44
Total STAFF - Office	\$ 141,043.67	\$ 193,487.74	\$ 201,785.52
Total STAFF - House & Grounds	\$ 85,320.04	\$ 116,970.41	\$ 123,653.00
Total STAFF - Music	\$ 109,107.36	\$ 155,903.34	\$ 170,562.75
Total STAFF -Faith Formation	\$ 33,311.91	\$ 49,142.94	\$ 122,072.75
Total STAFF SALARY & BENEFITS	\$ 601,414.67	\$ 843,586.63	\$ 990,460.57
OFFICE			
Total Office Supplies	\$ 6,652.06	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 10,200.00
Total Office Fees	\$ 6,874.55	\$ 11,400.00	\$ 11,600.00
Total Other Costs	\$ 94.54	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
Total Office Expenses	\$ 13,621.15	\$ 24,100.00	\$ 24,800.00
Total IT Contracts & Services	\$ 25,931.77	\$ 38,200.00	\$ 35,873.32
Total OFFICE	\$ 39,552.92	\$ 62,300.00	\$ 60,673.32
Total ADMINISTRATION	\$ 640,967.59	\$ 905,886.63	\$ 1,051,133.89
HOUSE & GROUNDS			
Total Utilities	\$ 52,201.65	\$ 70,100.00	\$ 81,850.00
Total Parts & Supplies	\$ 10,153.47	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 8,750.00
Total Outside Vendors	\$ 1,800.75	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 17,700.00
Total Maintenance & Repairs	\$ 11,954.22	\$ 22,900.00	\$ 26,450.00
Total Building Supplies	\$ 5,152.51	\$ 6,100.00	\$ 7,650.00
Total Building Chemicals	\$ 1,302.22	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,875.00
Total Operating Supplies	\$ 6,454.73	\$ 8,700.00	\$ 10,525.00
Total Contracted Services	\$ 18,839.01	\$ 28,800.00	\$ 29,400.00
Total Durable Goods	\$ 2,359.12	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,700.00

Accounts	2026 Actual YTD As of 9/15/2026	2026 Annual Budget	2027 Aspirational Budget
Total HOUSE & GROUNDS	\$ 91,808.73	\$ 132,500.00	\$ 150,925.00
MUSIC, ARTS, & HERITAGE			
Total MUSIC	\$ 4,843.72	\$ 12,250.00	\$ 9,250.00
Total ARTS & HERITAGE	\$ 492.84	\$ 300.00	\$ 800.00
Total MUSIC, ARTS, & HERITAGE	\$ 5,336.56	\$ 12,550.00	\$ 10,050.00
JUSTICE & MERCY			
Total JUSTICE & MERCY	\$ 23,780.84	\$ 48,461.67	\$ 59,450.00
FAITH FORMATION			
Total Resources	\$ 1,552.06	\$ 4,600.00	\$ 3,200.00
Total Programs	\$ 1,270.63	\$ 2,350.00	\$ 2,850.00
Total FAITH FORMATION	\$ 2,822.69	\$ 6,950.00	\$ 6,050.00
CHURCH VITALITY			
Total CHURCH VITALITY	\$ 1,793.13	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 4,125.00
CHURCH GROWTH			
Total CHURCH GROWTH	\$ 1,019.36	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 4,200.00
DEACONS			
Total DEACONS	\$ 3,005.23	\$ 5,100.00	\$ 7,811.00
Trustees Funded			
Total Trustees-Property Insurance	\$ 38,950.75	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Total Trustees-Emergency Repairs	\$ 23,460.07	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Major Projects Funded			
Total Major Projects Funded	\$ 12,523.39	\$ -	\$ 11,174.00
Total Expenses	\$ 845,468.34	\$ 1,197,148.30	\$ 1,394,918.89
Net Difference			\$ (218,086.89)

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, Denise Vogt, 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

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