



WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 171 years, our Covenant has been: 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.*

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *presider*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *worship leader*

Jacquelyn Dean, Jonathan Miller, and Dr. Gregory Halbe, *confirmation presenters*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Joshua Stafford, *organist and director*

The First Church Choir & Choristers

Malcolm Gillies, *crucifer*

Pat Patterson, *livestream ministry*

Enter to Worship – Depart to Serve. Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.

'We have waited in silence on your loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple.' (Psalm 48:9)

PRELUDE

Pentecost

Everett Titcomb, 1950

INTROIT

"Savior, like a shepherd lead us"

Calvin Hampton, 1983

Dorothy Thrupp, 1836

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
much we need thy tender care;
in thy pleasant pastures feed us,
for our use thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Thou hast bought us, thine we are.

Early let us seek thy favor,
early let us learn thy will;
do thou, Lord, our only Savior,
with thy love our bosoms fill:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Thou hast loved us, love us still.

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Naomi Holt

Leader: The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

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

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit!

People: For God has done wondrous things for us.

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit! Fill us with the power of the rushing wind
that we many faithfully serve you in all that we do.

People: For Christ has called each of us and blessed us!

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit! Be with us today.

People: Help us to boldly proclaim Christ Risen. Amen.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN
"Hail thee, festival day"

Salva Festa Dies, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906
Venantius Honorius Fortunatus, c. 540-600, tr. English Hymnal, 1906

Refrain

Hail thee, fes - ti - val day! blest day that art hal - lowed for ev - er,
To verses, then Fine

day when the Ho - ly Ghost shone in the world with God's grace.

1. Lo, in the like - ness of fire, on those who a - wait the ap - pear - ing,
3. Hark! for in myr - i - ad tongues Christ's own, the cho - sen a - pos - tles,
Repeat refrain

thus whom the Lord fore - told sud - den - ly, swift - ly de - scends:
preach to the ends of the earth Christ and his won - der - ful works:

2. Com - ing from God a - bove with seven - fold mys - ti - cal of - fering,
4. Praise to the Spi - rit of Life, all praise to the fount of our be - ing,
Repeat refrain

pour - ing on hu - man souls in - fi - nite rich - es of God:
light that now light - ens all, life that in all now a - bides:

*INVOCATION

Donna Vogt

Leader: God be with you.

People. And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: O God, who on this day taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

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 you may greet them by name.*

ORDER OF CONFIRMATION: AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

INVITATION

Rev. Ahrens

*CONFIRMATION HYMN
"We come to you"

Mentor, Keith Mentor
Rev. Tim Ahrens

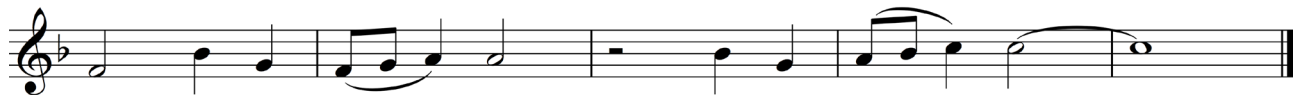
As we sing stanzas 1 and 2, parents and mentors join the confirmands on the Chancel steps.



1. We come to you by wa - ter and by word, _____ Filled with your Spi - rit,
2. O God who made the earth and sky and sea, _____ Sculp - ted in love, di -



seek - ing Christ as Lord, Con - firm in us di - vine and ten - der
verse hu - man - i - ty. Set stars in or - bit through e - ter - ni -



love. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. _____
ty.

CONFIRMANDS

Fisher Blaine Ferguson
Miguel Andrew Gonzalez
Naomi Frush Holt
Aarav Peter
Donna Lauren Vogt

PARENTS

Kathleen and Ben Hopkins
Andrea and Miguel Gonzalez
Rachael and Lanier Frush Holt
Malini Gnanatheeban and Pavan Peter
Denise and Nate Vogt

MENTORS

Matt Myers
Alejandro Rodriguez
Dayna McCrary
Todd Cunningham
Fran Panek

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE CANDIDATES

Jonathan Miller and Confirmands

PRAYER OF THE CONGREGATION

Jacquelyn Dean

Leader: Let us pray in silence for these candidates for confirmation.

(silence)

All: Almighty God, who in baptism received these your servants into the church, forgave their sins, and promised them eternal life, increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Grant love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition, self-control in all things. Thereby strengthen them for their ministry in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

ACT OF CONFIRMATION

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYER OF CONFIRMATION

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: We rejoice, O merciful God, with these people in the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in the Spirit's power to awaken us to new truth and to inspire us to venture into fullness of life. We give you thanks that they have been moved to affirm their baptism. Help them to live not for themselves but for Christ and those whom Christ loves. Keep them steady and abounding in hope, never giving up, pressing toward the goal of life with you in Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

*WELCOME

Gregory Halbe

Leader: Let us, the members of First Congregational Church, UCC, Columbus, Ohio stand and express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the Church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

*GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

Dr. Halbe

*PRAYER OF BLESSING

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: Almighty and ever living God, may your hand ever be over your servants confirmed today. May your Holy Spirit ever be with them. So lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word that they may serve you in this life and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

* CONFIRMATION HYMN (stanzas 3-5)

Mentor, Keith Mentor

"We come to you"

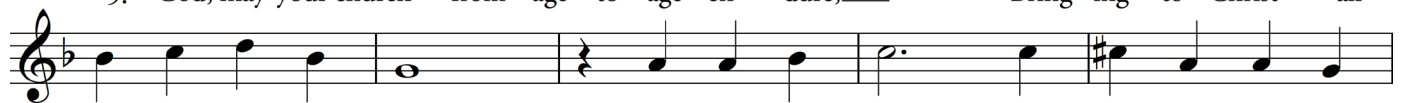
Rev. Tim Ahrens

As the hymn is sung, confirmands are given a cross, baptismal cards, and a certificate of church membership.

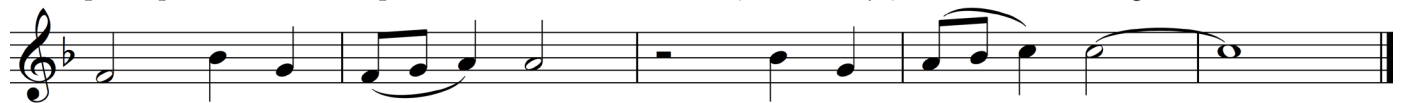
Please be seated at the conclusion of the hymn.



3. O Ho - ly Spi - rit, fall like heav-en's dew, Be born with - in our
4. Je - sus, who heals us, saves and gives us life, Friend who sus - tains us
5. God, may your church from age to age en - dure, Bring - ing to Christ all



hearts on fire for you, Set us a - blaze to share Good News a -
in the midst of strife, O ris - en Lord, em - pow - er us for
peo - ple, rich and poor, and may our joy - ful song be ev - er



new. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
life.
sure.

*During the sermon time, the young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories" with
Melissa Kulwicki and Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen.*

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 2:1-21

Jonathan Miller, Alejandro Rodriguez,
Megan Smith, Pavan Peter

Leader: A reading from the book of Acts, the second chapter.

When the day of Pentecost had come, the disciples were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

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

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Philip Stopford, 2013

“O thou who camest from above”

Charles Wesley, 1762

O thou who camest from above
the pure celestial fire to impart,
kindle the flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart.

Jesus, confirm my hearts desire
to work and speak and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire,
and still stir up thy gift in me.

There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
in humble prayer and fervent praise.

Still let me prove thy perfect will,
my acts of faith and love repeat;
till death thy endless mercies seal,
and make the sacrifice complete.

THE GOSPEL

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Aarav Peter

Leader: A reading from the Gospel of John, the fifteenth chapter.

Jesus said to his disciples, “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Aarav Peter

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Fisher Ferguson

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

All: Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Donna Vogt

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Bearing Hope**, a nonprofit organization focused on supporting children diagnosed with cancer at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Oncology Unit, Floor 12, Columbus, Ohio. Alea Ramsey, who was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in 2018, founded Bearing Hope to provide support and advocacy to fighters and families with Childhood Cancer. Bearing Hope donates twenty seasonal Hope Bags every other month to Childhood Cancer patients at Nationwide. Bearing Hope Bags include themed comfort items such as: seasonal treats, games, blankets, fidgets, letters, and always something to snuggle with to bring comfort. The focus is to "Bear Hope" to the fighters and families, because no one fights cancer alone. Alea was a ten time cancer survivor who loved poetry, writing, snowboarding and of course, Bearing Hope. She passed away in January 2024 but her wish for Bearing Hope to continue and for her not to be forgotten will be her legacy allowing her to shine and be remembered. Thank you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

Philip Stopford, 2016

The Chorister Prayer

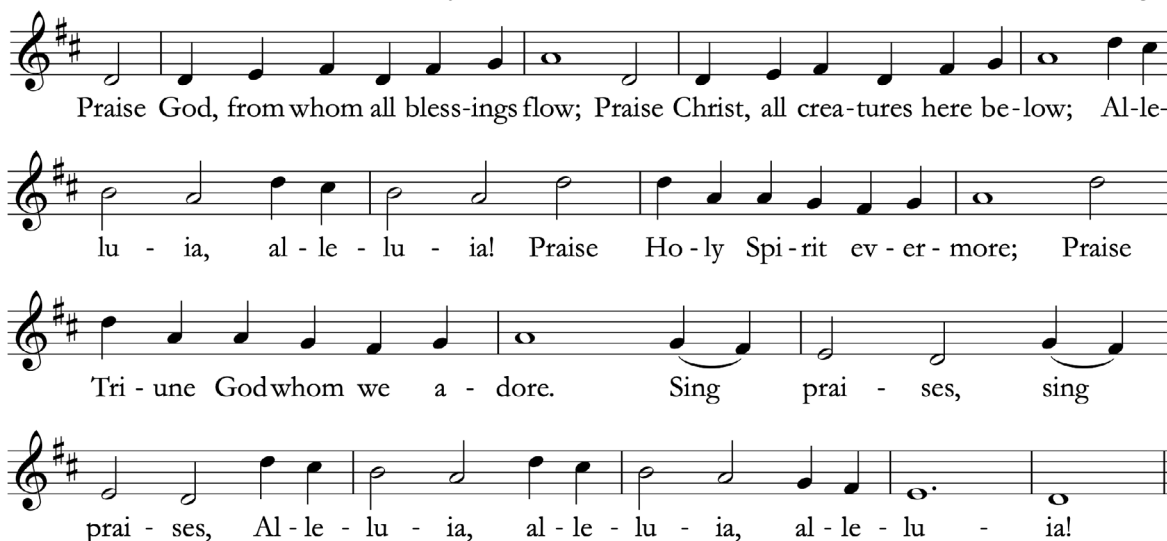
School of English Church Music, 1934

*This anthem is offered today in acknowledgement of the completion of
First Church Choristers' inaugural season, and the advancement of choristers
Julia Bumbico, Amira Donaldson, Anna Light-Gregory, and Harper Patterson.*

Bless, O Lord, us thy servants who minister in thy temple; Grant that what we sing with our lips, we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*DOXOLOGY

Lasst uns erfreuen, Auserlesene Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1623



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise Christ, all crea-tures here be-low; Al-le-
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more; Praise
Tri - une Godwhom we a - dore. Sing prai - ses, sing
prai - ses, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Fisher Ferguson

O God of wind and fire, breathe your Holy Spirit upon us again this day. Help us to hear one another and untangle the differences that may separate us one from another. May your Spirit give us the power to serve you as one body and one people seeking to build your beloved community of justice, mercy, and hope. As we offer our gifts to you this day, set us on fire, once again, and fill us with your power. In Christ, we pray amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Naomi Holt

Leader: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.

*CLOSING HYMN

Abbot's Leigh, Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941

"Holy Spirit, ever living"

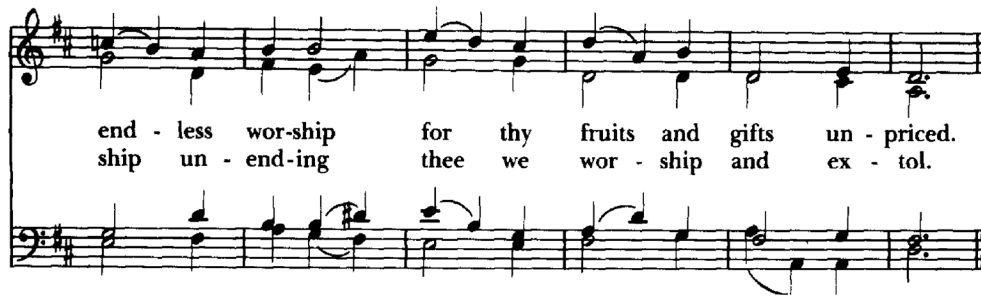
Timothy Rees, 1922

1 Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er liv - ing as the Church's
2 Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er work - ing through the Church's

ve - ry life; Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er striv - ing
min - is - try; quick - ening, strength - ening and ab - solv - ing,

through her in a cease - less strife; Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er
set - ting cap - tive sin - ners free; Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er

form - ing in the Church the mind of Christ; thee we praise with
bind - ing age to age, and soul to soul, in a fel - low -



*BENEDICTION

Aarav Peter

Go from here with open arms, with heads held high and with love in your hearts. Each one of us is beautiful and loved by God. No matter what happens, always remember that. Always believe in yourselves.

Go out and follow your dreams, and if your dreams go up in smoke, build new dreams and follow them. Grab hold of your future and change your world as Christ has changed your lives. Be everything you can be. Be at peace with your neighbor and your God. Discover God's joy in your life! Amen.

POSTLUDE

Tocatta in Seven

John Rutter, 1975

Please be seated for the Postlude.

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.

† THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given to the glory of God and in honor of all of the 2024 Confirmands and their teachers by the Vogt family.

† COFFEE HOUR THIS MORNING are in hosted by the Jovial Neighborhood Care Circle.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Samuelson — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Ms. Kulwicki — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Mr. Stafford — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)



Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

May 19, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, May 19

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
4 p.m. Choral Evensong (Sanctuary)

Monday, May 20

- 12 Noon Grief Support Group (Zoom)
1 p.m. Records Retention Committee Mtg
(Fanning Rm)
6:30 p.m. Transition Team Mtg
(Classroom C & Zoom)

Tuesday, May 21

- 6:40 p.m. BREAD Nehemiah Action
(Celeste Ctr., doors open at 6:15 p.m.)

Wednesday, May 22

- 7 p.m. Neighborhood Care Circle Mtg (Zoom)

Thursday, May 23

- 4:30 p.m. Choristers (Choir Rm)
6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Friday, May 24

- 10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)
12 Noon Faith Mission Dinner Prep & Serve
(Kitchen)

Saturday, May 25

- 2 p.m. Music Concert to Celebrate Benjamin Wiant
(Sanctuary)

Sunday, May 26

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
First Serves (Sam Gordon Playground)
11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)

Choral Evensong for Pentecost

Today at 4 p.m.

Worship in the beauty of holiness with the First Church Choir.

May First Serves

Sunday, May 26 at 10 a.m.

First Church Garden

The next First Serves happens on Sunday, May 26. We will be planting marigolds in the raised beds by the playground. You can bring marigold plants to plant in the garden or help plant the donated flowers. Bring your green thumb and help us with our First Serves Project in May. Stop by the giving tree to pick up a reminder or a First Serves envelope to make a monetary contribution.

Your generosity of time, talent, and treasure each month allows us to continue and expand this monthly intergenerational mission program. Thank you!

Calling All Graduates!

If you or a family member is graduating from high school or college this year, please send us information, including the individual's name, the school they are graduating from, and their degree and possible future plans. We will be recognizing our graduates in an upcoming Connections email and in worship on June 9. Send the information to awagner@first-church.org. You also may include a photo (electronic image only).

Nursery in Need of Donations

In recent months the Church Nursery has had a baby boom! As the weekly number of regular attendees grows, the nursery needs a few items to help accommodate the babies.

If your family no longer needs the gently used items listed below, please consider donating them to the Church Nursery. We ask that the items be gently used and manufactured within the past five years to keep up with current safety standards.

The items needed are: 1 bouncy seat and 1 exersaucer.

If you would like to donate any of these items, please email Rev. Joanna (jsamuelson@first-church.org). Thank you for your generosity!

B.R.E.A.D. Nehemiah Action

Tuesday, May 21, 6:30 p.m.
Celeste Center,
Ohio State Fairgrounds

Nehemiah Action takes place Tuesday, May 21; 6:15 p.m. doors open; 6:40 p.m. event starts, at the Celeste Center, Ohio State Fairgrounds. Please be there to join other members from our congregation. Parking is free, but car-pooling is encouraged. Call Steve Sterrett (614-262-4586) or Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen (1-240-557-9770).

This weekend is the last chance to get your tickets. Network members will be distributing the blue tickets. They will also be available in the Church office and online using the QR code.

B.R.E.A.D. RISES!



We Want to Hear From You

As the church moves toward Rev. Ahrens' retirement and our time for an Interim Minister, the Transition Team wants to hear from you. We will do this through small group discussions, surveys, commission meetings, and casual conversations. We want to know what you think are our strengths, what areas you think need improvement or attention, as well as other thoughts you have as we plan for a successful transition from where we are to where we hope to be.

Please join members of the Transition Team at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 30, for our first small group discussion. Everyone's voice is important and each of us has a part to play in these changing times.



Healthy Congregations Workshop

Sunday, June 9
12:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.
Parish Hall



Stonewall Columbus Pride March

Saturday, June 15
March Steps Off at 10:30 a.m.
at Broad and High Streets

First Church will participate in the 2024 Pride March. More information is coming soon about how to join us!

2024 Gladden Lecture:

The Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk

Join us Sunday, June 23, at 4 p.m. for the 2024 Gladden Lecture series featuring The Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk. For over 60 years, Rev. Delk has been a strong ally in the fight for human and civil rights for people of color, children, and the poor. In 1974, Rev. Delk became the first African American woman to be ordained as clergy in the UCC.

Rev. Delk is the editor of the book *Afro-Christian Convention: The Fifth Stream of the United Church of Christ*. This is the story of faith, survival, and empowerment in the hostile environment of racism. Click the QR Code below to read her full biography.

The Rev. Delk will also preach at the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services on Sunday, June 23.

The 2024 Gladden Lecture is being co-sponsored by the Washington Gladden Social Justice Park and a reception following the lecture will be held in the Social Justice Park.



Full Circle Connections

Friday, May 24 at 10 a.m.

The Church Parlor

Everyone is invited to the circle to develop deeper conversations and connections. Full Circle Connections will meet regularly on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Church Parlor.

The Golden Jubilee Service

for G. Dene Barnard

June 2 at 11 a.m.

Join us on Sunday, June 2, at 11 a.m. as we celebrate 50+ years with our beloved Minister of Music Emeritus, G. Dene Barnard. We'll honor Dene's half-century at First Church with a Festival Communion Service followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

We invite all choir alumni to join the First Church Choir to sing the service. We'll gather for fellowship and rehearsal on Saturday morning, June 1. If you'd like to sing with us, please visit firstchurcharts.org/dene and fill out the linked form. If you have a memory, greeting, or photos you'd like to share, please email music@first-church.org

Schedule of Events

Saturday, June 1

Alumni Choir Rehearsal

9:30 a.m. Registration and Refreshments

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Rehearsal

Sunday, June 2

10 a.m. Alumni Choir Rehearsal

11 a.m. Golden Jubilee Service

12:30 p.m. Reception in Parish Hall

First Church Book Club:

Wednesday, June 5, 7 p.m.

The Fraud

Wednesday, July 10, 7 p.m.

Poverty, by America

Come enjoy lively conversation and fellowship this June and July with the First Church Book Club on Zoom. Questions? Want to receive book club emails? Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742.

Keep in Prayer

Members Tim Holt; Julia Myers; Steven and Katie Deliman; Dene Barnard; Mary Kay Beall Carter and John Carter; Carol Lowy; Scott Warrick; Clinton Brown; John and Francille Firebaugh; Tom Bishop; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; and Janice White.

Family and friends Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Al Adcock's sister, Barbara Ontal; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Margaret Cipriani's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; Barry Moenter's brother-in-law, Tom Huss; Gilda Perry's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; L.J. and Gretchen Cooks' brother, Kione Cooks; Jim Griffin's friends, Andy Bell and John Alatsis; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; Todd and Mary Anne Jacobson's friend, Lisa Lang, and Mary Anne's nephew, Peter Poppleton; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; Susie Loik's grandson, Alex Glover and his parents, Kristen and Wes; Arevena Nirote's sister and brother-in-law, Marlene and Gary Gallion; Fran and Bruce Panek's friends, Richard and Beverly Cicenias; and Victor John's cousin, Devin Endlick, and his parents, Charles and Mary Jane, and sister.

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

We pray for members of Bethany UCC as they have their final worship service after 134 years of life in the City of Cleveland.

We pray for all people in war zones around the world including Gaza/Israel and other Middle East conflicts, Sudan, Ukraine, and Myanmar.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Indian Ocean Islands of Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, and Seychelles. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Missionary Covenant between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, and the Pentecostal Churches of the UEPV in Venezuela.

Give

At First Church, our financial resources enable us to "Enter to worship, depart to serve." You can support the mission and ministry of First Church now by using Realm, EasyTithe or PayPal, by visiting <https://www.first-church.org/give/>, or by sending your offering directly to First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For more information, please contact Annette McCormick at amccormick@firstchurch.org.

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Bearing Hope**, a nonprofit organization focused on supporting children diagnosed with cancer at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Oncology Unit, Floor 12, Columbus, Ohio. Alea Ramsey, who was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in 2018, founded Bearing Hope to provide support and advocacy to fighters and families with Childhood Cancer. Bearing Hope donates twenty seasonal Hope Bags every other month to Childhood Cancer patients at Nationwide. Bearing Hope Bags include themed comfort items such as: seasonal treats, games, blankets, fidgets, letters, and always something to snuggle with to bring comfort. The focus is to "Bear Hope" to the fighters and families, because no one fights cancer alone. Alea was a ten-time cancer survivor who loved poetry, writing, snowboarding, and of course, Bearing Hope. She passed away in January 2024 but her wish for Bearing Hope to continue and for her not to be forgotten will be her legacy allowing her to shine and be remembered. Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Mission Offerings

May 19
May 26

Bearing Hope
Deep Griha

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, D.Min., M.Div.

Designated Minister: Rev. Joanna Samuelson, M.Div.

Minister of Music: Joshua Stafford, M.M.

Administrative Manager: Amy Wagner

Communications Manager: Melissa Kulwicki

Office Assistant: Pat Patterson

Business Administrator: Annette McCormick

Building and Grounds Superintendent: Quang Pham

Custodians: Alexis Wayne, Bill McCabe

Wedding Coordinators: Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani

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 Program Coordinator: Gary Glover

Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Training Coordinator: Wendy Kennedy

Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator: Susie Loik

Senior Deacon: Tom Kiesel

Deacons: Allen Baker, Heather Jones, Brian Kemp, Nan Kreimer, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Fran Panek, Andy Smith Verhage, Thom Smith, Lynn Wallich, Martha Worth

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairperson: Frank Cook

Trustees: Greg Halbe, Elizabeth Iannarino, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Melody Leidheiser, Janet Miller, Judy Smith, (Secretary), Hugh Schultz

CHURCH COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Moderator: Gregory Halbe

Moderator-elect: Sarah Reed

Treasurer: James Velo

Treasurer-elect: Ramona Moenter

Secretary: Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

Secretary-elect: Martha Wilson

Nominating Chair: Sarah Reed

COMMISSIONERS

Church Stewardship and Church Growth: Janice Taft

Church Stewardship and Church Growth-elect:

Church Vitality: Pat Patterson

Church Vitality-elect:

Communications and Technology Commission: Mike Kennedy

Communications and Technology Commission-elect: Stefan Duga

Faith Formation Commission: Mariner Taft

Faith Formation Commission-elect: Cami Curren

House & Grounds: Eric Klintworth

House & Grounds-elect:

Justice & Mercy: Janet Miller

Justice & Mercy-elect:

Music, Arts & Heritage: Jim Griffin

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Cheryl Hoskinson

Member-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean

Personnel: David Hogrefe

Personnel-elect: Sandra Mathias

Youth Member-at-Large:

WELCOME STATEMENT

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.

FIRST CHURCH IS A FAITH COMMUNITY

† Called together by God, the Creator 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.

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

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