



WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! For more than 172 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.

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher and co-celebrant*
Brian Kemp, *liturgist*
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*
Joshua Stafford, *organist*
Aran Cunningham, *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

Capriccio

John Ireland, 1911

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Brian Kemp

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: Summer wanes and the autumn draws close.

People: Lord, help us to be ready for opportunities of service.

Leader: We have felt the refreshment of time away.

People: Lord, give us spirits of joy for the times ahead.

Leader: Come, let us celebrate God's eternal presence and love.

People: Let us open our spirits to receive God's direction for our lives. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

“Come down, O love divine”

Down Ampney, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Bianco da Siena, c. 1367; trans. Richard Frederick Littledale, 1867

1 Come down, O Love Di - vine; seek out this soul of mine,
2 O let it free - ly burn, till earth - ly pas - sions turn
3 And so the yearn - ing strong, with which the soul will long,

and vis - it it with your own ar - dor glow - ing.
to dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing.
shall far out - pass the power of hu - man tell - ing.

O Com - fort - er, draw near; with - in my heart ap - pear,
And let your glo - rious light shine ev - er on my sight,
For none can guess God's grace, till Love cre - ates a place

and kin - dle it, your ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
and clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

INVOCATION

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: God of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Ahrens

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 may greet one another by name.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Melissa Kulwicki

During the sermon time, the young children are welcome to participate in "Sunday Stories" with Melissa Kulwicki and Janice Taft.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Mr. Kemp

Leader: A reading from the book of Deuteronomy, the fourth chapter.

Moses said: So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL HYMN

How Can I Keep From Singing, Robert Lowry, 1869

“My life flows on in endless song”

Robert Lowry, 1869

1 My life flows on in end-less song, a-bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion.
2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu - sic ring - ing.
3 What though my joys and com-forts die? I know my Sav - ior liv - eth.
4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing!

I hear the clear, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.
It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?
What though the dark-ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

Refrain

No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.

Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Mark, the seventh chapter.

When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile." For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

"Love Works"

Rev. Ahrens

Sixth in a six part sermon series entitled "Then and Now"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ahrens

THE OFFERTORY

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



MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated gifts go to support the **Mid-Ohio Workers Association (MWA)**, a free and voluntary, unincorporated membership association, uniting service workers, temporary workers and others who are low income since 2001. MWA is 100% volunteer run and independent of government funding. MWA seeks to eradicate the poverty status of this majority segment of the workforce, and achieve a means to determine our own collective destiny. MWA's members are the backbone of the economy, yet often receive wages that don't cover survival needs for a family. 30% of Central Ohioans don't earn enough to afford food, rent and utilities. The majority of MWA's membership work in jobs that are not recognized by the federal labor laws and they therefore do not have the right to form unions and engage in collective bargaining. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN

“God is Love, the heavens are telling”

Abbot's Leigh, Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941

Timothy Rees, 1922, alt.

1. God is love! The heav'ns are tell - ing. God is love, let earth re -
 2. God is love, and love en - folds us, All the world in one em -
 3. God is love! With mer - cy bound-less God sus - tains all hu - man

joice; All cre - a - tion sing - ing, prais - ing And ex - alt - ing
 brace: With un - fail - ing grasp God holds us, Ev - 'ry child in
 life. God's e - ter - nal lov - ing kind - ness Guides us through our

with one voice. God who laid the earth's foun - da - tion;
 ev - 'ry place. And when hu - man hearts are break - ing
 earth - ly strife. Sin and death and hell shall nev - er

God who spread the heavens a - bove; God who breathes through all cre -
 Un - der sor - row's ir - on rod, Then they find that self - same
 O'er us fin - al tri - umph gain. God is love, so love for

a - tion: God is love, e - ter - nal love.
 ach - ing Deep with - in the heart of God.
 ev - er O'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

*DOXOLOGY

Old 100th

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow”

Genevan Psalter, 1551

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all creatures here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

We practice open communion: Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at the Lord's table.

*INVITATION

Rev. Ahrens

Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

*SURSUM CORDA

Plainsong

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system shows the Leader's part (left) and the People's part (right). The lyrics are: "The Lord be with you. And also with you." The second system continues the Leader's part (left) and the People's part (right). The lyrics are: "Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord." The third system continues the Leader's part (left) and the People's part (right). The lyrics are: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise." The notation uses a simple, rhythmic style with a mix of quarter and eighth notes, and rests.

*COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being. We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none. We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless. We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory.

We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory. And now we give you thanks for the hope to which you call us in your Son, that following in the faith of all your saints, we may run with perseverance the race that is set before us, and with them receive the unfading crown of glory. We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons, daughters, and all children of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 hea - ven and earth are full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bles - sed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The congregation may be seated.

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory. We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service on behalf of all people. We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us. Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

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.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

Please come forward as directed by the deacons to receive the common elements for communion.

Receive the bread and grape juice at one of the stations. You are invited to consume the elements as you receive them.

Gluten-free bread is available in the center of the tray. Place empty cups in the baskets on the tables by the transepts.

If you are worshipping online, you are invited to gather elements of communion in your home.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: Let us pray.

People: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. Kulwicki

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

*CLOSING HYMN

“Love divine, all loves excelling”

Hyfrydol, Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

Charles Wesley, 1747

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

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

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

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

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

POSTLUDE

Nicht schnell und sehr markiert from Sketches for Pedal Piano

Robert Schumann, 1845

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 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 memory of Wally Giffen by Sarah Giffen.

† COFFEE HOUR THIS MORNING is hosted by the Celebrate Neighborhood Care Circle.

† GREETING AT THE EXITS

Rev. Ahrens — Narthex (Broad Street entrance)

Mr. Stafford — East Door (Ninth Street entrance by the Church Office)

Ms. Kulwicki — West Door (Cleveland Avenue entrance by the Chapel)

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Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

September 1, 2024

This Week at First Church

Sunday, September 1

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Open Discussions with Rev. Tim (Parlor)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12 Noon Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales (Parish Hall)

Monday, September 2

Church and Church Office is closed in celebration of Labor Day

Tuesday, September 3

- 4 p.m. Church Vitality (Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Security Mtg with Steve Flowers (Classroom C & Zoom)
- Justice & Mercy Commission Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- Communications (Zoom)

Wednesday, September 4

- 6:30 p.m. Stephen Ministers Monthly Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- Book Club (Zoom)

Thursday, September 5

- 9 a.m. Good Sam Distribution Day
- 4 p.m. Choristers (Choir Rm)
- 6 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (Bell Rm)
- 7:15 p.m. First Church Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)

Saturday, September 7

- 9 a.m. House & Grounds Work Day & Mtg
- 10:30 a.m. Sacred Earth Mtg (Adult Library)
- 1 p.m. Spiritual Gifts Workshop (Classroom C)

Sunday, September 8

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Engagement Fair (Parish Hall)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:15 p.m. Engagement Fair (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Open House (Classroom C)

Open Discussion with Rev. Tim **10 a.m. in the Church Parlor**

Each Sunday at 10 a.m. during the Summer Sermon Series, join Rev. Tim in the Church Parlor for an open discussion time. The parlor is located on the main floor across from the church office.

House and Grounds Workday

Saturday, September 7

9 a.m.- Noon

The House & Grounds Commission will hold a work day Saturday, September 7, from 9 a.m. to Noon. All skill levels are welcome. There will be both indoor and outdoor work, weather permitting. Text or call Eric Klintworth at 614-499-7056 for a door code or to discuss.

The Commission will hold our business meeting after the work day.

Transition News

On Saturday, October 19, we are all invited to join Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens to celebrate his ministry with First Congregational Church through the last twenty-five years. During his ministry with us, the church has nearly doubled in membership, increased its property holdings and created the Social Justice Park, added stained glass windows that commemorate its ministries, raised its voice in sharing the Social Gospel, grown ministry partnerships in the greater Columbus area, added a 9 a.m. worship service to welcome families, and there is so much more. Please join the party. The dinner ticket price is \$26. Additional contributions and sponsorships will provide those in need the opportunity to attend, as well as offset the total cost of the event. Scan the QR Code below to purchase tickets or make a contribution

On October 20, Rev. Tim will lead us in worship for the last time as our Senior Minister. On the next day, we begin a period of separation between us that will last one year beyond our call of a new settled pastor. This separation will likely be 24 – 36 months in duration. It's both appropriate and important for him and members of the church to establish healthy boundaries during this time. Rev. Tim creates a time for rest and renewal, First Church creates a space to reflect on the ministry of the last twenty-five years and the next twenty-five, and our Interim Ministers have clear opportunities to build relationships with this congregation. This promises to be an exciting time for all of us!

Upcoming Listening Circles

9/15, 10 a.m., Open meeting for members, Classroom D

9/16, 7 a.m., Open meeting for members, Zoom



Spiritual Gifts Workshop Saturday, September 7, 2024 1-3 p.m. Room C

Have you ever wondered what your spiritual gifts are and how you can be of service to the life and mission of First Congregational Church and to our community? Have you ever felt that you would step up and volunteer if you just knew where your gifts fit in?

Please come on Saturday, September 7 for a Spiritual Gifts Workshop where these and other pertinent questions will be answered.

The workshop will be led by Jacquelyn Dean our Commissioned Minister in Spiritual Formation and Direction from 1-3 p.m. Room C in the Education Wing.

You can register by contacting Jackie Dean at jelainestith@hotmail.com.

Deadline to register is Tuesday, September 3.

Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace September 22, at 4 p.m. First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ 444 East Broad Street Columbus, Ohio 43215

Join us for an afternoon of prayer and music as we come together to pray for peace.

**First Church Book Club:
Wednesday, September 4**

Our Missing Hearts

7 p.m. on Zoom

Wednesday, October 2

Gender Queer: A Memoir

7 p.m. on Zoom

Come enjoy lively conversation and fellowship this September and October with the First Church Book Club.

On Wednesday, September 4, Mary Jacobson will lead a discussion of *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng. This is the story of the bond between a mother and child living in a fearful society.

Government overreach causes ordinary people to be jailed and children removed from their parents. Police violence, political protest, book banning, and discrimination thrive. What are the powers—and limitations—of words, of stories, of art, to create change in the world? What lessons and legacies do we pass on to our children? How do any of us survive a broken world with our hearts intact?

On Wednesday, October 2, Kathy Reed will lead a discussion of *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by nonbinary, queer author and illustrator Maia Kobabe. This 2019 graphic memoir recounts Kobabe's journey from adolescence to adulthood growing up non-gender-conforming, exploring gender identity and sexuality, ultimately identifying as being outside of the gender binary. The American Library Association ranked it as the most challenged/banned book in schools and public libraries in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Questions? Want to receive book club emails? Please call Kathy Reed, 614-442-7742.

First Church Engagement Fair

Sunday, September 8

10-11 a.m., 12:15-1:15 p.m.

Parish Hall

Come learn about all the amazing projects happening at First Church at our Engagement Fair! Join us Sunday, September 8, in Parish Hall, right after either worship service, for an exciting opportunity to learn about our activities and connect with other members.

As you see the many ways we work in the community and within our church family, you may discover a group whose activities speak to your heart! And you'll get to connect with folks you see in worship but might not have met yet. From small discussion groups to "done in a day" projects to serving on a committee, you'll see many opportunities for connection here.

Our Technology Help Desk will be available to answer your questions about our Realm online member directory and how to register online for church events using Realm. We'll even take your picture for our online member directory.

Come chat with fellow members, put names with the faces, and explore wonderful opportunities for service, finding those that speak to your heart!

See you there.

Keep in Prayer

Members Margot Connor and John Anderson; Francille Firebaugh; Pauline Fritz; Jean Wetmore; Nancy Burba; Mary Kay Beall Carter and John Carter; Carol Lowy; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; Rick Sayre; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; Twink Starr; and Janice White.

Family and friends Bob O'Brien; Quang Phan and wife; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Joanna Samuelson's friend, Jo Anne Nay; Tim Ahrens' granddaughter and Sarah Stadie's daughter, Aurelia Stadie; Wendy Reber's cousin, Marie Disney and family; Nancy Loy's friend, Rev. Peggy O'Connor; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood, and her sister and brother-in-law, Velma and Jamie Christy; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick, and her friend, Shellie Thompson; Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Margaret Cipriani's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; Gilda Perry's friend, Kathryn Schlarb; L.J. and Gretchen Cooks' brother, Kione Cooks; 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.

Those who mourn family and friends of Richard (Rick) Sayre; and family and friends of G. Dene Barnard.

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

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Benin, Ivory Coast, and Togo. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Theological Education by Extension in Zambia.

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 the **Mid-Ohio Workers Association (MWA)**, a free and voluntary, unincorporated membership association, uniting service workers, temporary workers and others who are low income since 2001. MWA is 100% volunteer run and independent of government funding. MWA seeks to eradicate the poverty status of this majority segment of the workforce, and achieve a means to determine our own collective destiny. MWA's members are the backbone of the economy, yet often receive wages that don't cover survival needs for a family. Thirty percent of Central Ohioans don't earn enough to afford food, rent, and utilities. The majority of MWA's membership work in jobs that are not recognized by the federal labor laws and they therefore do not have the right to form unions and engage in collective bargaining. Thank you for your generosity.

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.

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: Quang Pham

Custodians: Alexis Wayne, Bill McCabe

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 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:

Nominating Chair: Sarah Reed

COMMISSIONERS

Church Stewardship and Church Growth:

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: Sebastian Kulwicki

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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www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx

