



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.

LEADERSHIP IN TODAY'S LITURGY

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

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *co-celebrant*

Maggie Myers, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Ann Eliot, *pianist*

Geoff Dean, *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

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Maggie Myers

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: In the midst of struggle and strife, God is with us.

People: Praise be to God for God's steadfast presence.

Leader: Even though many things in life hurt and disappoint us, God is with us.

People: We seek God's mercy and grace to heal our wounded souls.

Leader: Come, bring your needs and wants to God,
for God will hear your cries and restore your souls.

People: Praise be to God for mercy, peace, and hope. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

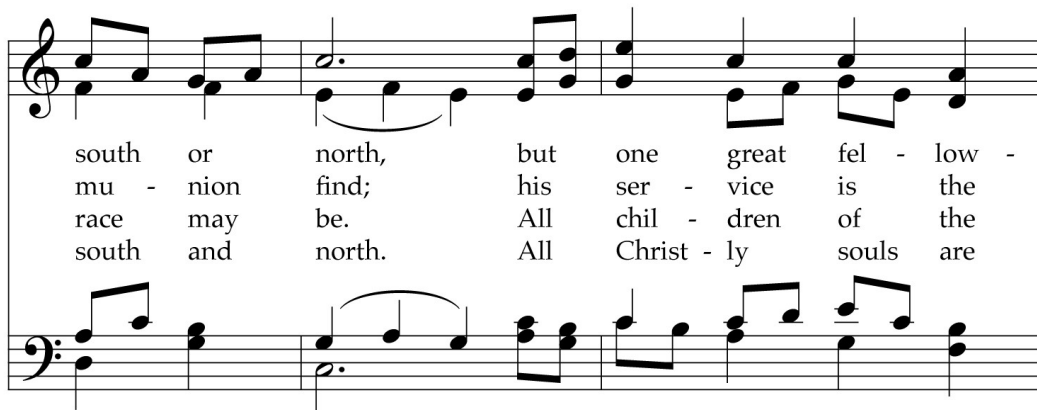
“In Christ there is no east or west”

McKee, American Spiritual

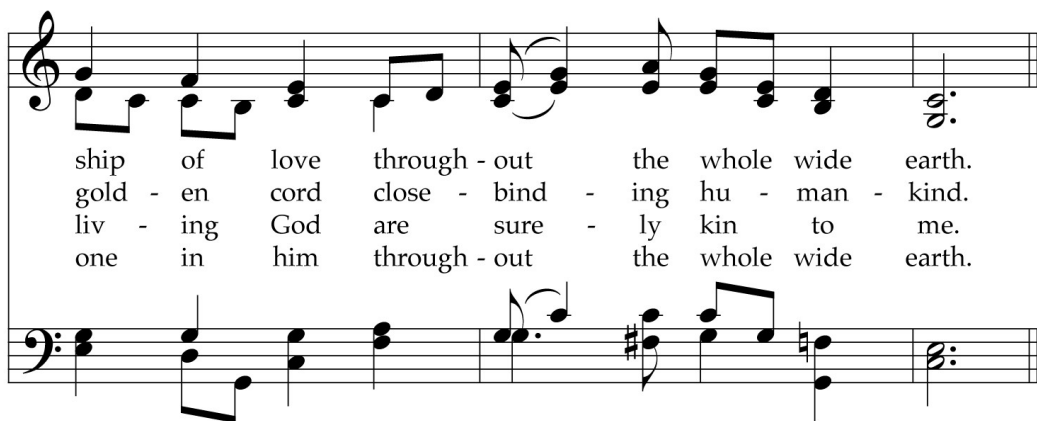
John Oxenham, 1908 alt.



1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no
2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery - where their high com -
3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what - e'er your
4 In Christ now meet both east and west; in him meet



south or north, but one great fel - low -
mu - nion find; his ser - vice is the
race may be. All chil - dren of the
south and north. All Christ - ly souls are



ship of love through - out the whole wide earth.
gold - en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.
liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
one in him through - out the whole wide earth.

*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. 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,
sign the pad and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them 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 Leslie Fulford.*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Genesis 2:18-24

Maggie Myers

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

The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones

and flesh of my flesh;

this one shall be called Woman,

for out of Man this one was taken."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALTER

Maggie Myers

Psalms 8

The St. Helena Psalter

O God our Governor,

how exalted is your Name in all the world!

**Out of the mouths of infants and children,
your majesty is praised above the heavens.**

You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries,
to quell the enemy and the avenger.

**When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,**

What are we that you should be mindful of us,
mere mortals that you should seek us out?

**You have made us but little lower than the angels;
you adorn us with glory and honor;**

You give us dominion over the works of your hands;
you put all things under our feet:

**All sheep and oxen,
even the wild beasts of the field,**

The birds of the air, the fish of the sea,
and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.

**O God, our Governor,
how exalted is your Name in all the world!**

THE GOSPEL

Mark 10:2-16

Rev. Ahrens

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

Some Pharisees came, and to test Jesus they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Divorce and Children”

Rev. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ahrens

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 Depart to Serve:



Cash and designated gifts go to support **Church World Service (CWS) Emergency Response Fund**. When disaster and conflict strike, the CWS Emergency Response Fund supports vulnerable communities in their time of greatest need. On September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm and carved a devastating path from Florida's Gulf Coast to Tennessee. The massive surge resulted in power outages for millions of individuals across several states. Thousands of homes sustained major structural damage or were destroyed, and so far, there have been 120 confirmed fatalities. Extensive flooding from Helene has severely impacted western North Carolina and multiple communities in several states, hampering the delivery of critical supplies. CWS is distributing 3,296 Emergency Cleanup Buckets 4,360 Hygiene Kits to partners in impacted states and will also be involved in long-term recovery to help meet the needs of those impacted in the months and years to come. Your contributions ensure that CWS can provide critical and life-saving resources when it is most needed. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN
"Jesu, Jesu"

Chereponi, Ghanaian folk melody
Tom Colvin, 1969; rev. 1997, alt.

Refrain

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love; show
us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - es their
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and
3 These are the ones we should serve; these are the ones we should
4 Lov - ing puts us on our knees, will - ing to wash oth - ers'

feet, Mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.
race; neigh-bors are near us and far a - way.
love; all these are neigh-bors to us and you.
feet; this is the way we should live like you.

to Refrain

COMMUNION
COMMUNION HYMN
"Eat this bread"

Revs. Ahrens and Samuelson
Berthier, Jacques Berthier, 1984
Robert J. Batastini and Taizé Community, 1984

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The lyrics are: "Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread; drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst."

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Samuelson

Leader: Let us pray.

All: We give you thanks, Almighty God, that you have brought us from darkness to light, from slavery to freedom, from death to rebirth. Transform our lives with this heavenly food, that we may shine with your love and take to the world the risen life of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

COMMUNITY NOTICES - DEPART TO SERVE

Ms. Kulwicki

Leader Let us depart with a heart to serve.

People: Thanks be to God.

*CLOSING HYMN

“God be with you till we meet again”

Randolph, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Jeremiah Eames Rankin, 1880

1. God be with you till we meet a - gain; Lov - ing coun - sels
guide, up - hold you, With a Shep-herd's care en - fold you:
God be with you till we meet a - gain.

The image shows a three-system musical score for the hymn. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

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.

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

Enter to Worship
Depart to Serve

This Week at First Church

Sunday, October 6

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
Sunday Morning Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
BREAD House Mtg (Parish Family Rm)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion
(Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 4:30 p.m. Evensong Service in remembrance of G. Dene Barnard
(Sanctuary)

Monday, October 7

- 10 a.m. Stewardship & Growth Commission Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 12 Noon Congregational Care Ministry Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 6:30 p.m. House & Grounds Commission Mtg
(Classroom D & Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Transition Listening Session (Zoom)

Tuesday, October 8

- 5:30 p.m. Budget & Finance Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Executive Committee Mtg (Class C & Zoom)

Wednesday, October 9

- 7 p.m. Faith Formation Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

Thursday, October 10

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

Friday, October 11

- 10 a.m. Full Circle Connections (Parlor)

Sunday, October 13

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion
(Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Bible Study (Classroom C)
Sunday School (Various Classrooms)
Sunday Morning Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
Transition Listening Session (Classroom D)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)

October 6, 2024

Choral Evensong in Remembrance of G. Dene Barnard

We celebrate the life of our beloved Dene Barnard this afternoon with a service of choral evensong. An extended prelude will be offered at 4:30 p.m., with Evensong following at 5 p.m.. Choir alumni will return to sing with the First Church Choir, and we welcome the return of Dene's successors Timothy Smith, Jamie Bobb, and Kevin Jones to play for the service. A reception follows in the Parish Hall where you will be welcome to share remembrances of Dene.

Dene Barnard Items

In his lifetime, Dene Barnard amassed an impressive collection of books, vinyl records, CDs, travel guides, city & country maps, art work, organ music, and more. Much of it has been sorted and arranged in the basement room directly under the Fanning Room, which is next to the Parlor. Please come and view it before and/or after services and take whatever you would like. Dene's treasures in this room will be available to you only until the end of October.

Congregational Care Ministry

First Church is excited to announce the establishment of our Congregational Care Ministry. Lead by our Stephen Ministry Leadership team: Wendy Kennedy, Susie Loik, and Gary Glover, this ministry will coordinate and support member care. A network of groups and their volunteers will work together to provide service to the congregation promoting the care and well-being of our faith community, by our faith community, through loving service.



Congregational Care
Ministry

Beginning Bells

First Church continues to provide new ways for the congregation to participate in the music program. Starting this fall, we will have a Beginning Handbell Choir meeting on Monday evenings. Bell ringers can find a new way to share their love of music, and become part of a new community of musicians, learning the joy of playing handbells. The group will build coordination skills while learning various handbell techniques. A knowledge of rhythms and the ability to read music are essential for success in this new group. We will share music in worship a few times each season. If you are interested in joining this new group, please contact Jennifer Fry, handbell director, by emailing her at jfry@first-church.org.

Transitions News: A Time for Service

During our transition time, we have a great opportunity to share the gifts we have been given. In our Engagement Fair, we learned of the many ministries and opportunities to serve First Church. Please consider what excites you about these ministries and where you will offer your services. If you are passionate about our extravagant welcome, then become a Deacon. If you have ideas about the future of First Church, consider a position on our leadership team. If children and youth excite you, raise your hand to help with faith formation.

We have so many gifts and so many opportunities! Contact Moderator Greg Halbe (greghalbe@gmail.com) or Moderator-Elect Sarah Reed (sjr1800@gmail.com) to let them know of your interest. Remember, today, tomorrow and the tomorrow after that, together, we serve our God!

Upcoming Listening Circle:

10/7, 7 p.m., Open Zoom Meeting,
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89952811834?pwd=cgAo782HmtOxFYs6EYyAUvooo0bO9n>.

Meeting ID: 899 5281 1834

Passcode: 474080

10/13, 10 a.m., Classroom D

Time Out Tuesday Tuesday, October 29 at 6 p.m. Napa Kitchen & Bar

Join us on Tuesday, October 29 at 6 p.m. at Napa Kitchen & Bar in Dublin! Located at 7148 Muirfield Drive, this great restaurant offers sophisticated New American meals with a Mediterranean influence and wine flights. Tuesdays are half-price wine nights and a wonderful collection of wines are offered! Scan the QR code below to register!



"Purse" for Rev. Ahrens

We have entered the final month of Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens's ministry at First Congregational Church. This is a time like no other, a time to remember, reflect, and celebrate. We will receive donations as a gift for Rev. Tim between now and Tuesday, October 15. Please make your check payable to First Congregational Church with the memo indicating your gift to Rev. Ahrens. Checks may be placed in the Sunday offering plates, delivered to the church office, or mailed to Annette McCormick, Business Administrator, First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3885. You can also click the button below to donate online through Realm or Easytithe. Please select "Staff Purse" from the dropdown menu.

Thank you for your generosity as we thank, bless, and release the only Senior Minister a whole generation of our church family has ever known.



First Serves October: Halloween Candy for Gladden Community House Sunday, October 27 at 10 a.m.

The First Serves project for October is assembling bags of Halloween candy for the children who attend the yearly Gladden Community House Halloween Party. We are asking for donations of bagged Halloween candy. Donated candy can be placed in the baskets around the Giving Tree, located in the Education Wing Breezeway, now through the morning of First Serves.

Quality control will be conducted as we bag the candy to ensure it is all of the highest (and yummiest) grade. All ages are invited to join this fun research opportunity.

What is Bridge Ministry?

*For everything there is a season
and a time for every matter under heaven.*

In just two short weeks we will gather together as a congregation to celebrate the Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens and his vibrant and visionary ministry at First Church during these past 24-plus years. During these next two weeks, our focus as a congregation, will be on thanking and saying good-bye to Rev. Tim before he retires.

Meanwhile, our Transition Team has been meeting frequently and is hard at work to plan and prepare for the next chapters of ministry, here at First Church, including hiring an "intentional interim senior minister."

It is in keeping with best practices of interim ministry to plan for what is described as a "bridge time" which refers to the "gap time" between the departure of a settled pastor and the arrival of the intentional interim minister. Bridge ministry offers the congregation a "breathing space" and provides continuity of pastoral leadership including worship planning, pastoral care/visitation, staff support, and the overseeing of administrative tasks.

We are pleased to announce that our First Church Bridge Team includes those who are already known and familiar to our congregation. Rev. Joanna Samuelson will lead our bridge team which will include First Church members Rev. Ron Botts, Rev. Amanda Conley, and Rev. Dr. William Nirote. Each one of them has graciously agreed to serve First Church throughout this upcoming bridge time until an intentional interim minister is hired. Please click the QR Code to read more about the Bridge team.

If you need additional information about our bridge team plans, please contact Rev. Samuelson (jsamuelson@first-church.org) or Rev. Sarah Reed (sjr1800@yahoo.com), who is our moderator-elect and coordinator of our Transition Team.



Keep in Prayer

Members Mike Weddle; Twink Starr; Victor John; Elaine Warren; Janice Taft; Ashton Smith; Margot Connor and John Anderson; Francille Firebaugh; Pauline Fritz; Nancy Burba; Mary Kay Beall Carter and John Carter; Carol Lowy; Clinton Brown; Dan Axt; Anne Morganstern; Martha Huey; and Janice White.

Family and friends George Ferzli's family, Tanios, Julie, Maher, Michel, Cynthia, Gabriel, and Lynn; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Rose and David Kandel's friend, Lou Kline; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Tim Ahrens' mother, Lorene Ahrens and Sarah Stadie's daughter, Hazel Stadie; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood, and her sister and brother-in-law, Velma and Jamie Christy; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Jill Hultin's brother, Ken Hultin; 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 Martha Wilson and family on the death of her mother, Jinny Welch; friends and family of Lynn Roseberry on her passing; Greg Buzzell and family on the death of his father, Robert Buzzell; and Sallie Danneberger on the death of her friend, Lisa Colosimo.

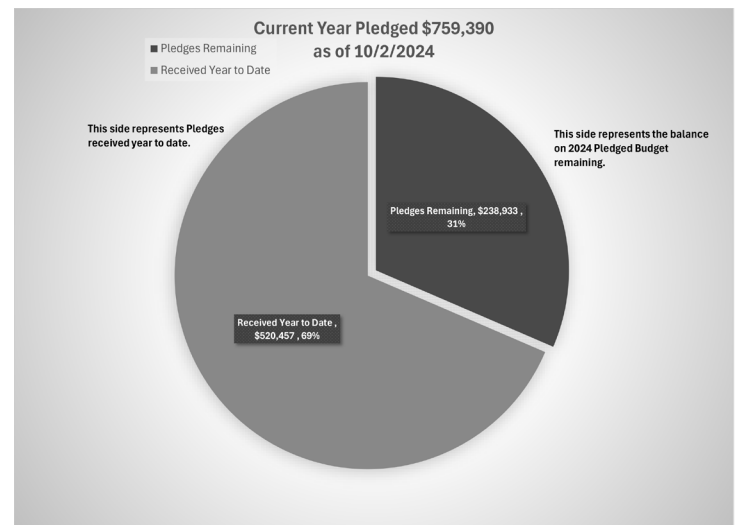
We keep Stephen Ministers in prayer as they care for our church members.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Peace Bible Schools in El Salvador.

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.

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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

