



## 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, *worship leader*  
The Rev. Sarah Reed, *liturgist*  
Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*  
Joshua Stafford, *pianist*  
Peter Murray, *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

Rev. Sarah Reed

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: Servants of God, lift up your heads—

**People: That the Lord of life may behold our eyes!**

Leader: Servants of God, lift up your hands—

**People: That the Lord of life may bless our works!**

Leader: Servants of God, lift up your hearts—

**People: That the Lord of life may abide within!**

**All: The Lord of life will abide within!**

\*OPENING HYMN

*Aurelia*, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864

“The church’s one foundation”

Samuel John Stone, 1866, alt.

1 The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.  
 2 Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,  
 3 Though with a scornful wonder this world sees her oppressed,  
 4 Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,  
 5 Yet she on earth has union with God, the Three in One,

She is his new creation by water and the word.  
 her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.  
 by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,  
 she waits the consummation of peace forevermore:  
 and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won:

From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride.  
 One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,  
 yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up: "How long?"  
 till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,  
 O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,

With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.  
 and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.  
 And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song,  
 and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.  
 like them, the meek and lowly, may live eternal-ly.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

Leader: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**People: Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, that we may continually be given to good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

\*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. 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, sign the pad and pass it on to your neighbor so you may greet them by name.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Melissa Kulwicki

THE EPISTLE

Hebrews 12:1-3

Rev. Reed

Leader: A reading from the book of Hebrews, the twelfth chapter.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALTER

Rev. Reed

Psalms 91:9-16

The St. Helena Psalter

Because you have made God your refuge  
and the Most High your habitation,

**There shall no evil happen to you,  
neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.**

For God shall give the angels charge over you,  
to keep you in all your ways.

**They shall bear you in their hands,  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

You shall tread upon the lion and adder;  
you shall trample the young lion and the serpent under your feet.

**Because you are bound to me in love,  
therefore will I deliver you;**

**I will protect you, because you know my Name.**

You shall call upon me, and I will answer you;

I am with you in trouble; I will rescue you and bring you honor.

**With long life will I satisfy you  
and show you my salvation.**

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

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Run with Perseverance the Race That is Set Before You"

Dr. Ahrens

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Samuelson

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:*



MISSION INVITATION

Rabbi Alex Braver

Cash and designated gifts go to **Jewish Family Services**. Since 1908, Jewish Family Services has helped individuals and families achieve economic self-sufficiency and emotional stability. Rooted in a rich history of Jewish values, we serve people of all races, ethnicities, and religions, and from all economic circumstances. Their staff and board reflect the diversity of the people they serve. Jewish Family Services helps people find good jobs, navigate challenges related to aging, address mental health issues, and connect to community resources. They offer a variety of ways for volunteers to give back to the community. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN  
"Be thou my vision"

*Slane*, Irish ballad  
trans. Mary E. Byrne, 1905; vers. Eleanor Hull, 1912, alt.



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
3 High King of hea - ven, when vic - tory is won,



all else be nought to me, save that thou art—  
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;  
may I reach hea - ven's joys, bright hea - ven's Sun!



thou my best thought, — by day or by night,  
thou my great Fa - ther; thine own may I be;  
Heart of my heart, — what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
thou in me dwell - ing, and I one with thee.  
still be my vis - ion, O Ru - ler of all.

COMMUNION  
COMMUNION HYMN  
"Eat this bread"

Dr. Ahrens and Rev. Samuelson  
*Berthier*, Jacques Berthier, 1984  
Robert J. Batastini and Taizé Community, 1984

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and nev - er be hun - gry. 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.

CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF THE REV. DR. TIMOTHY C. AHRENS

Past Moderator Thomas Brownfield: On November 21, 1999, First Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio extended its call to you, Timothy Carl Ahrens, to become our Senior Minister. God called you to a ministry of peace and justice. As you listened to that call, you have strengthened the course of this congregation and enriched its legacy of social justice. For 25 years First Congregational Church has grown in wisdom and in strength, guided by your care and insight.

Moderator Dr. Gregory Halbe: We called you to be our pastor: to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members, to confirm our youth, to officiate marriages, and to preside at our celebration of the Lord's Supper. You comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones.

Dr. Ahrens: I have sought to proclaim the Word of God faithfully among you. Here is the Bible that expresses this. (The Bible is given to a member of the congregation.)

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Dr. Ahrens: I have shared, through God's grace, in your baptisms. Here is water from the river Jordan which symbolizes God's gift of belonging in Christ. (A vessel of water is given to a member of the congregation.)

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Dr. Ahrens: Prayer and our prayer in song is how our relationship with God grows. Here is our hymn book. (The book is given to a member of the congregation.)

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Dr. Ahrens: Bread and wine are the gifts of creation and the way we receive the true body and blood of Christ. (Bread and wine are given to a member of the congregation.)

**All: Amen.**

Dr. Halbe: Today we mark the end of your ministry here at First Congregational Church. This is a time to look back, and a time to look forward, a time of joy, and a time of sadness. In the words of the prophet, may “you leave with joy and be led away in safety” (Is 55:12).

Dr. Ahrens: I thank First Congregational Church, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last twenty-five years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. When I was impatient, or responded harshly, or dishonored you, please forgive me. I am grateful for your encouragement, acceptance and grace. You have enriched my ministry, and you will always be in my prayers.

**All: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that your time with us is ending. Each of us is flawed and graced. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. We express our gratitude for your ministry among us. We give thanks for the ways that God has blessed you and the ways you have shared your blessings with us. Your influence on our faith and ministries will not leave us at your departure.**

Dr. Ahrens: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Dr. Halbe (to those gathered): Do you, the members and friends of First Congregational Church release Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens from his duties as Senior Minister?

**All: We do, with the help of God.**

Moderator-Elect Rev. Sarah Reed (to those gathered): Do you offer your encouragement for his ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

**All: We do, with the help of God.**

Rev. Reed: Rev. Ahrens, do you release First Congregational Church from seeking your counsel or support, or depending on you in any way?

Dr. Ahrens: I do, with the help of God. I have been challenged and blessed by ministry at First Congregational Church. I now separate from this ministry and take my leave from being your pastor. For the entirety of the interim, plus one year after the call of a new settled pastor, I will not lead or participate in the programs and ministries of First Church, until or unless invited by Council and the pastor.

Dr. Halbe: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry of First Church and for the relationship with others who will come to serve?

Dr. Ahrens: I do, with the help of God.

Past Association and Conference Moderator Robert Kutschbach: On behalf of the Central Southeast Association of the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release.

Dr. Ahrens: I thank the United Church of Christ for the love and support shown me in my ministry. I

ask forgiveness for my transgressions. I am thankful that the United Church of Christ has been a place for me to serve God and grow as a voice for the social gospel.

Mr. Kutschbach: On behalf of the Association, I receive your gratitude and offer forgiveness. I ask your forgiveness for hurts caused by the Association. With First Congregational Church, we share our gratitude for your ministry. The member churches of our Association and Conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

Dr. Ahrens: I forgive the Association and accept its gratitude.

Dr. Halbe: Thanks be to God. Let us pray.

**All: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. We give thanks for these twenty-five years together. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories, ready to move in new directions, until that time when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

\*CLOSING HYMN

*Randolph*, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

“God be with you till we meet again”

Jeremiah Eames Rankin, 1880

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "God be with you till we meet again". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "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."

\*BENEDICTION

Dr. Ahrens

*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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*Enter to Worship*  
**Depart to Serve**

## **This Week at First Church**

### **Sunday, October 20**

- 9 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Communion (Parish Hall & Virtual)
- 10 a.m. Sunday School (Various Classrooms)  
Sunday Morning Choir Rehearsal (Choir Rm)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour, Sales & Reception (Parish Hall)

### **Monday, October 21**

- 10 a.m. Stewardship & Church Growth Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 6 p.m. Beginners Bell Choir Rehearsal (Classroom C & Zoom)

### **Tuesday, October 22**

- 7 p.m. Deacons Mtg (Zoom)

### **Thursday, October 24**

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

### **Friday, October 25**

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

### **Saturday, October 26**

- 9 a.m. Faith Mission Lunch Prep & Serve (Kitchen)

### **Sunday, October 27**

- 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)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary & Virtual)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class (Classroom C)
- 4 p.m. Organ + Film (Sanctuary)

**October 20, 2024**

**Dene Barnard**

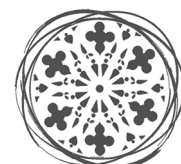
## **Items**

In his lifetime, Dene Barnard amassed an impressive collection of books, vinyl records, CDs, travel guides, city and 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.

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## **Full Circle Connections Friday, October 25 10 a.m.**

Join the Circle! Full circle connections will meet at 10 a.m. This month's focus will be "Change.....How We Handle It." For more information, contact Jan Hamilton ([hamiltonjan30@yahoo.com](mailto:hamiltonjan30@yahoo.com))



*Full Circle  
Connections*

## Congregational Care Ministry

First Church is excited to announce the establishment of our Congregational Care Ministry. Led by our Stephen Ministry Leadership team comprised of 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

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## 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](mailto:jfry@first-church.org).

## 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!



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## From the Archives

Who was Henry Howe?  
As you explore the exterior of First Church, you'll notice several plaques attached to the building. One of these plaques claims that the property was once the site of Henry Howe's home. But who was Henry Howe, and where exactly is this plaque located? Click the QR code below to find out more.



## **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 and encouraged to wear your Halloween costume if you would like!

First Serves is an intergenerational service project that takes place during the 10 a.m. education hour on the fourth Sunday of each month. It's the perfect opportunity to connect with your First Church friends and make some new ones while doing a project to serve others in our community and beyond. Come join us!

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## **October Mission Offerings**

**10/20 Jewish Family Services**  
10/27 BREAD

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## **Save the Date**

Healthy Congregations on Sunday,  
November 17 following 11 a.m. worship!  
More information coming soon!

## **First Stories Interviews with The Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens**

Today, the Heritage Committee is pleased to present the second of two interviews with the Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens, shared through First Stories, as he nears the conclusion of nearly 25 years of ministry at First Congregational Church.

Join journalist and First Church member Nancy Gilson Braverman as she hosts a reflection by Dr. Ahrens on the rich history and beauty of our sanctuary, including:

- How our sacred space fosters deeper connections with God, the clergy, and fellow worshippers.
- The meticulous restoration of the one-million-piece Jeffrey stained-glass window above the Chancel.
- The stories behind the Friendship and Gladden Windows in the East and West Transepts, and the Rose Window, now partially obscured by the Beckerath Organ.
- The gift of 16th-century Belgian tapestries, donated by member Frederick Schumacher in the late 1930s.
- The addition of the Clerestory and Aisle windows in the 1980s and their Biblical symbolism.
- The restoration of the Kimball Organ, made possible by a bequest from Jean MacNevin.
- The Veterans Memorial in the southwest corner of the nave, completed as part of Adam Wade's Eagle Scout project.
- Our newest stained-glass windows: the Music Window, honoring G. Dene Barnard, and the Social Justice Window.

We are honored to share this final interview with Tim and hope you find it both meaningful and enjoyable.



# Keep in Prayer

**Members** Malcolm Gillies; Mike Weddle; Elaine Warren; Twink Starr; Victor John; 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.

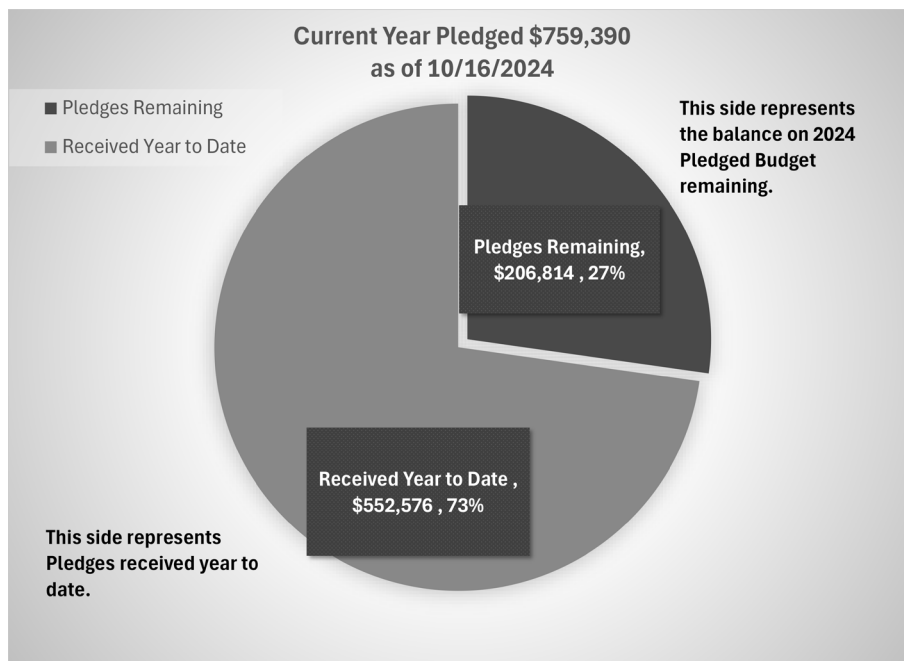
**Family and friends** Pat Patterson's brother, Dan Stone; Linda Patten; George Ferzli's family, Tanios, Julie, Maher, Michel, Cynthia, Gabriel, and Lynn; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; Rose and David Kandel's friend, Lou Kline; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Tim Ahrens' mother, Lorene Ahrens, and his granddaughter 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** David Wyatt on the death of his friend, Karen Eubanks; Melissa Kulwicki's cousin, Sandy Anschutz on the death of Sandy's husband Bob; Martha Wilson and family on the death of her mother, Jinny Welch; and family and friends of Lynn Roseberry on her passing.

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

We continue to pray for those in Florida and North Carolina who have endured devastating hurricanes that have brought destruction and death to so many in those states.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the people and churches in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Church of Christ in Congo in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



# 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](http://www.first-church.org/Worship.aspx)*

