



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. Amanda Conley, *preacher*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *worship leader*

Maggie Myers, *liturgist*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Leslie Fulford, *worship leader*

Joshua Stafford, *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 glory of the Lord shall be revealed,

**People: and all flesh shall see it together.**

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

Leader: God has done great things for us!

**People: God's love is heralded in the promise of Christ.**

Leader: Holy is God's name!

**People: God's promises are fulfilled in the coming of Christ.**

Leader: God's mercy extends from generation to generation!

**People: God's salvation is offered in the gift of Christ.**

\*OPENING HYMN

Veni Emmanuel, Plainsong

“O come, o come Emmanuel” vv. 1-3

Latin prose, pre-9th c., trans. composite



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som  
 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest  
 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy  
 4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile  
 all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge  
 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the  
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
 law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.  
 save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Amanda Conley

Leader: God be with you.

**People. And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**People: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The Myers Family

Leader: O God, you exalted the humble and meek:  
give us humble and contrite hearts.

Lord, have mercy.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you grew towards birth in the Virgin's womb:  
be planted also in our hearts and lives.

Christ, have mercy.

**People: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: Holy Lord, you overshadowed Mary,  
that she might become the God-bearer:  
fill us with your heavenly gifts.

Lord, have mercy.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

*A moment of silence is observed as the candles are lighted.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Conley

In Jesus Christ, God has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed. May our eyes be open to God's truth, our hands be strengthened to do God's will, and may we find the joy of God's kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, our sins are forgiven. **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION OF REV. BECKY DAVID, INTERIM SENIOR MINISTER  
AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Sarah Reed and  
Dr. Greg Halbe

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 and Leslie Fulford

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

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Micah 5:2-5a

Maggie Myers

Leader: A reading from the book of the prophet Micah, the fifth chapter.

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.  
Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.  
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;  
and he shall be the one of peace.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**O God of hosts,  
how long will you be angered  
despite the prayers of your people?**

You have fed them with the bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

THE GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-52

Rev. Conley

Leader: A reading from the gospel according to Luke, the first chapter.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

ADVENT MEDITATION

“Prophetic Praise and Blessed Assurance”

Rev. Conley

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

Debi Cunningham

Cash and designated gifts go to support **Huckleberry House**, which provides services to adolescents and young adults who are struggling with homelessness, family conflict, poverty, and violence. They work to provide safety and support to youth. They offer a range of services, including a teen crisis shelter available 24/7; a transitional living program; a counseling center and a youth outreach program. Operating since 1970, Huckleberry House helps hundreds of youth and families every year. Their website provides more details about services as well as volunteer opportunities. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN

*Valet will ich dir geben*, Melchior Teschner, 1614

“O Lord, how shall I meet you?”

Paul Gerhardt, 1653, tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.

1. O Lord, how shall I meet You, How wel - come You a - right?  
 2. Love caused Your in - car - na - tion, Love brought You down to me;  
 3. A glo - rious crown You give me, A trea - sure safe on high,

Your peo - ple long to greet You, My hope, my heart's de - light!  
 Your thirst for my sal - va - tion Pro - cured my lib - er - ty.  
 That will not fail nor leave me As earth - ly rich - es fly.

O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, A lamp with - in my breast,  
 O love be - yond all tell - ing, That led You to em - brace  
 My heart shall bloom for - ev - er For You with prais - es new,

To do in spir - it low - ly All that may please You best.  
 In love all loves ex - cel - ling Our lost and fall - en race.  
 And from Your name shall nev - er With - hold the hon - or due.

COMMUNION  
COMMUNION HYMN  
"Wait for the Lord"

Revs. Samuelson and Conley  
*Wait for the Lord*, Jacques Berthier, 1984  
Taizé Community, 1984

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The second system also has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands.

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

*Come, Come Emmanuel*, James J. Chepponis, 1995

"Come, come Emmanuel"

Come, come Em - man - u - el. Come, Em -

man - u - el. man - u - el.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The second system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands. The second system includes a 'For repeat' section and a 'Final ending' section.

POSTLUDE

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*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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“Come, come Emmanuel.” Words and Music: James J. Chepponis, 1995. © 1995 GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved.



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

**December 22, 2024**

**This Week at First Church**

**Sunday, December 22**

- 8:30 a.m. BOBS Prep Work  
(Kitchen & Parish Hall)
- 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)
- 4 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

**Monday, December 23**

- 9 a.m. BOBS Prep Work  
(Parish Hall & Kitchen)

**Tuesday, December 24**

- 12 Noon Church Office Closes  
for Christmas Eve
- 3 p.m. Christmas Eve Family  
Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service &  
Pageant of the Nativity (Sanctuary)
- 10:30 p.m. Festive Prelude (Sanctuary)
- 11 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service  
(Sanctuary)

**Wednesday, December 25**

- Church Office Closed in  
Celebration of Christmas
- 7:30 a.m. Bethlehem on Broad Street

**Sunday, December 29**

- 10 a.m. Worship Service (Sanctuary)

**Bethlehem On Broad Street**

Bethlehem On Broad Street is preparing again this year to serve as many as 300 of our downtown and nearby neighbors, with a hot, sit-down, Christmas dinner and a day of music, fellowship, worship, gifts, and kind shoulders to lean on. This is all made possible by volunteers who give their time on Christmas Day, by home bakers who bake and donate turkeys, hams, breakfast treats, and desserts, and by financial contributors. BOBS still needs this help for this year's program, now just days away. You can still volunteer to help:

**Personal Volunteering**

- Sunday, Dec. 22 from 12:15 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Pre-Christmas Preparations
- Monday, Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Pre-Christmas Preparations
- Wednesday, Dec. 25 from 8:30 to 4 p.m.  
Christmas Day Event Help

**Delivering Your Baked Turkeys, Hams, and Desserts**

- Sunday, Dec. 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
to Church Kitchen
- Monday, Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
to Church Kitchen

For more info, click the QR Code below to visit the BOBS website or call or text Jim Lowe (614-397-7512) or Gail Lowe (614-208-2905).



## HoneyBaked Ham Sale

Faith Formation is partnering with HoneyBaked Ham to raise money for a summer mission trip and it couldn't be easier to support! If you like HoneyBaked Ham and goodies for the holidays, just order a gift card online to pay for your items and 20% of the purchase will go to First Church! You can take care of your whole menu in one spot – ham, brisket, BBQ, bacon (a Christmas morning favorite!) sides and desserts. Gift cards make great gifts too! Click the QR Code below to order.



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## Volunteers Needed for Laundry Love "Love Never Ends"

Laundry Love needs volunteers in January, February, and March at Washland at 1469 W. Broad Street. Volunteers help on the last Tuesday of the month and the hours are 5:15 p.m. until 7:15 p.m. If you are interested please join us on December 17 at Washland at 1469 W. Broad Street. Volunteering for Laundry Love is easy and very rewarding. Volunteers use a form to keep a tally of washers and dryers used. They put the detergent and fabric softener in the machines. The most important job is meeting and talking with the people who come in to do their laundry. The people we help are very appreciative and respectful to our volunteers. Please join us on December 17 at Washland if you are interested in supporting this important mission.



## First Church Book Club: Wednesday, January 8, 2025

7 p.m. on Zoom

*North Woods*

## Wednesday, February 5, 2025

7 p.m. on Zoom

*Master Slave, Husband Wife:  
An Epic Journey from Slavery to  
Freedom*

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

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## Upcoming Missions

December 22 Huckleberry House

December 24 Good Samaritan

December 29 Sandy Hook Promise

## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Allison Lowery Palmer; Steven and Katie Deliman's daughter, Caroline; Mike Weddle; Elaine Warren; Victor John; 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** BOBS volunteers, John Holly and Sandy Waters-Holly; Shelly Gies' brother, Mike Simms; Victor John's father, Charles and mother, Mary Jane; Amy Wagner's friends Lee Gatton and Bill Kelley; Michael Russell's friend, Teresa Elliott; Amanda Butler's aunt, Hattie Coatney; Leslie Fulford's sister-in-law, Donna Fulford; Jennifer Provenzano's friend, Anita Wright; Pat Patterson's brother, Dan Stone; George Ferzli's family, Tanios, Julie, Maher, Michel, Cynthia, Gabriel, and Lynn; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Tim Ahrens' mother, Lorene Ahrens; 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; and Fran and Bruce Panek's friends, Richard and Beverly Cicenas.

**Those who mourn** Leslie Fulford on the death of her friends Ann Aldrich and Lew Wexler; John Matchett and family on the death of his brother, Nelson Matchett; Geneva Rice on the death of her sister-in-law, Margaret Leick; and Melva Fisher on the death of her sister, Mary Barbara Bittle.

We pray for Rev. Becky David and her family as she transitions to her new role as our interim senior minister.

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 Japan, North Korea, and South Korea. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission in Afghanistan.

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## Growing our Future Together Annual Stewardship Campaign Update

**Family Units:**

**142 Family Units**

**57% of 250 Goal**

**Pledged Dollars**

**\$632,116**

**72% of \$877,854.00 Goal**

- To pledge online, scan the QR Code
- If you prefer, you can also fill out a hard copy and place the form in the offering plate during Sunday services or mail your pledge form to First Congregational Church, 444 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215



# CHURCH LEADERSHIP

**Interim Senior Minister:** Rev. Becky David, 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  
**Maintenance:** Mike Sharrock  
**Custodians:** Alexis Wayne, Bill McCabe, Bob O'Brien  
**Handbell Director:** Jennifer Fry  
**Wedding Coordinators:** Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani, Denise Vogt  
**Nursery Staff:** Miranda Brooks, Shelly Gies, Celecia Smith  
**Commissioned Minister for Social Justice:** Tom Brownfield  
**Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction:** Jacquelyn Dean  
**Stephen Leader and Stephen Ministry 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:** Amanda Butler  
**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:** Jim Lowe  
**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



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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