



## 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. Sarah Reed, *preacher*

The Rev. Becky David, *worship leader*

Leslie Fulford, *liturgist and worship leader*

Melissa Kulwicki, *worship leader*

Joshua Stafford, *pianist*

Geoffrey 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

#### ENTER TO WORSHIP

Leslie Fulford

Leader: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**People: And we have seen his glory.**

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

Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come!

**People: The glory of the Lord has risen upon us!**

Leader: Like sages from afar, come and behold your Christ!

**People: Let us fall on our knees in his honor! Let us lift our hearts in praise of his name!**

\*OPENING HYMN  
"As with gladness men of old"

Dix, Conrad Kocher, 1838  
William Chatterton Dix, c. 1858

1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;  
2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,  
3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy man-ger, rude and bare,  
4 Ho-ly Je - sus, ev - ery day keep us in the nar-row way;

as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam-ing bright;  
there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heaven and earth a - dore;  
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,  
and when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last

so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led to thee.  
so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.  
all our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heaven-ly king.  
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.

\*INVOCATION

The Rev. Becky David

Leader: God be with you.

**People. And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

**People: O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

\*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Rev. Sarah Reed

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 many greet one another by name.*

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

## THE HEBREW LESSON

Sirach 24:1-8

Mrs. Fulford

Leader: A reading from the book of Sirach, the twenty-fourth chapter.

Wisdom praises herself

and tells of her glory in the midst of her people.

In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth,

and in the presence of his hosts she tells of her glory:

"I came forth from the mouth of the Most High

and covered the earth like a mist.

I encamped in the heights,

and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.

Alone I compassed the vault of heaven

and traversed the depths of the abyss.

Over waves of the sea, over all the earth,

and over every people and nation I have held sway.

Among all these I sought a resting place;

in whose inheritance should I abide?

"Then the Creator of all things gave me a command,

and my Creator pitched my tent.

He said, 'Encamp in Jacob,

and in Israel receive your inheritance.'

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## THE PSALTER

Psalm 147:12-20

Mrs. Fulford

The St. Helena Psalter

But you have pleasure in those who fear you,

in those who await your gracious favor.

**Worship God, O Jerusalem;**

**praise your Sovereign, O Zion;**

For the Holy One has strengthened the bars of your gates

and has blessed your children within you.

**Peace has been established on your borders;**

**you are satisfied with the finest wheat.**

You send out your command to the earth,

and your word runs very swiftly.

**You give snow like wool**

**and scatter hoarfrost like ashes.**

You scatter your hail like bread crumbs;

who can stand against your cold?

**You send forth your word and melt them;  
you blow with your wind and the waters flow.**

You declare your word to Jacob,  
your statutes and your judgments to Israel.

THE GOSPEL

John 1:1-5, 14-18

Rev. Reed

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

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION MEDITATION

"A Word for Us"

Rev. Reed

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. David

Gracious and loving God,  
we come to you with hearts to be opened  
to your word and your love.

**Hear our prayers for all who need  
your tender touch of healing in their lives –  
those we name, and those who are known  
only to you within our hearts.**

God of life and death, we pray for those who are facing the end of life.  
May they know that your love reaches out to enfold them, even in death.

**We pray for those in our world for whom it always seems winter,  
who have no hope of warmth, those who have no food,  
no home, no money, no work.**

**Help us to find ways to share what we have with them.**

We pray for all of creation. May we care for all that we see,  
knowing that you are present in this time and place.

**Guide our leaders and those of all nations  
that this world might truly be as you created it to be—  
a world of peace, hope and love.**

In this season of change, we pray for our congregation  
as we face challenges for the future and seek your will for us.  
Help us to be wise in deciding what, if anything, to discard,  
and what new vision we might pursue.

**In all our decisions, keep us focused on the mission and ministry to which you call us and lead us forward.**

God, you have heard our prayers on this day, those spoken and those whispered.  
Pour out your blessing on each one, as we join in the prayer that Jesus taught:

**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

Rev. Reed

Cash and designated gifts go to support **UCC Hurricane Relief Appeal**. Hurricane Helene landed in Florida on September 26 as a category-four storm. It brought a devastating 20-foot storm surge and 140 mph winds. Less than two weeks after Hurricane Helene devastated the region, Hurricane Milton landed on Florida's west coast. Now, months later, as cold weather has hit the Carolinas, families are still living in tents and trailers. The National Ministries of the United Church of Christ has a long history of supporting communities as they recover from disaster and their plight fades from the headlines. Please give generously.

OFFERTORY HYMN  
"In the bleak midwinter"

Cranham, Gustav Holst, 1906  
Christina Rossetti, 1872, alt.



1 In the bleak mid-win - ter, frost - y wind made moan;  
2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor earth sus - tain;  
3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there;  
4 What can I give him, poor as I am?



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;  
heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:  
cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim thronged the air;  
If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;



snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed  
but his moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;



‡ in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.  
the Lord God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.  
‡ wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

COMMUNION  
COMMUNION HYMN  
"Come and fill our hearts"

Revs. Reed and David  
*Confitemini Domino*, Jacques Berthier, 1982  
Jacques Berthier, 1982

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system has four measures with chords D, Bm, D, and A. The lyrics are: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly." The second system has five measures with chords Em, C, Em, A, and D. The lyrics are: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu-ia!"

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. David

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  
"Christ, be our light"

Bernadette Farrell, 1993

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the  
dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your  
church gath - ered to - day.

\*BENEDICTION AND DISMISSAL  
POSTLUDE

Rev. Reed

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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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"Christ be our light." Words and music by Bernadette Farrell. ©1993 OCP. All rights reserved.



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

January 5, 2025

**This Week at First Church**

**Sunday, January 5**

- 9 a.m. Morning Worship & Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Sunday School (Various Classrooms)  
Parent Conversations (Adult Library)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour & Coffee Sales (Parish Hall)
- 12:30 p.m. Unhanging of the Greens (Church)

**Monday, January 6**

- 9 a.m. Good Samaritan Distribution Day
- 10 a.m. Stewardship Commission Mtg (Fanning Rm)
- 12 Noon Card Care Ministry (Fanning Rm)
- 7 p.m. House & Grounds Mtg (Classroom C & Zoom)

**Tuesday, January 7**

- 4 p.m. Church Vitality Mtg (Zoom)
- 7 p.m. Justice & Mercy Mtg (Zoom)  
Personnel Mtg (Zoom)  
Communications & Technology Mtg (Zoom)

**Wednesday, January 8**

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

**Thursday, January 9**

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

**Friday, January 10**

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

**Saturday, January 11**

- 10 a.m. Family Organ Day (Sanctuary)

**Sunday, January 12**

- 9 a.m. Morning Worship & Holy Communion (Parish Hall)
- 10 a.m. Sunday School (Various Classrooms)  
Parent Conversations (Adult Library)
- 11 a.m. Worship Service & Holy Communion (Sanctuary)
- 12:15 p.m. Welcome Reception for Rev. Becky David (Parish Hall)

**Unhanging of  
the Greens  
Today  
12:30 p.m.- 4 p.m.**

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**Welcome Rev.  
Becky David  
Sunday,  
January 12  
Following 11 a.m.  
Worship**

Join us as we celebrate and welcome Rev. Becky David, Interim Senior Minister, into the life and ministry of First Congregational Church.

We can also help welcome Rev. Becky by wearing a name tag. Stick-on name tags can be found at all the doors. If you would like a new name tag, please email [home@first-church.org](mailto:home@first-church.org).

**The Annual Meeting  
Sunday, January 26  
One Worship Service  
at 10 a.m.  
Meeting at 11 a.m.**

Everyone is encouraged to attend this very important yearly event in the life of our church. Childcare will be provided during worship and the annual meeting.

Voting Members are active members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio. Voting Members must be present to vote. Non-Voting Members are Associate Members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, and Guests.

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**Upcoming Missions**

**January 5 UCC Hurricane Recovery Appeal**  
January 12 Columbus Relief  
January 19 NAACP Legal Defense Fund  
January 26 Trustees' Knight-Perry Fund

**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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**First Church Arts  
The 2nd Annual  
Family Organ Day  
Saturday, January 11  
at 10 a.m.**

Join First Church Arts for the 2nd annual Family Organ Day on Saturday, January 11 starting at 10 a.m.: an opportunity for the young and young-at-heart to meet the two magnificent pipe organs at First Church!

Click the QR Code below to view the event.  
All are welcome - please reach out to us if you or your child(ren) need any accommodations!



## Keep in Prayer

**Members** Bernie Martin; 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** Rev. Joanna Samuelson's neighbor and friend, Rev. Dr. George Zoehl; 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 friend Lee Gatton; 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; Bob and Lorraine Quinichett's daughter, Susan Webster; David Hogrefe's mother, Linda Hogrefe; Melva Fisher's daughter, Susan Wood; Annette McCormick's father, Charles McCormick; Janet Axt's mother, Alice Paugh; Diana and Bob Kutschbach's cousin, Carson Samples; 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 family and friends** of Rev. Dr. Jeffrey P. Kee; Jill Hultin on the death of her brother-in-law, Kris Hultin; Jonathan and Finnegan Miller on the death of Jonathan's mother and Finnegan's grandmother, Ann Wall Richards; Leslie and David Fulford on the death of her of friends Ann Aldrich and Lew Wexler.

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 Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. We also pray for our UCC partner in mission, the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon.

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## Growing our Future Together Annual Stewardship Campaign Update

**Family Units:**  
**150 Family Units**  
**60 % of 250 Goal**

**Pledged ]Dollars**  
**\$655,008**  
**74.61% 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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