



MEDINA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. CONGREGATIONAL

August 29, 2021

10:00 a.m.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio 44256 330-725-4559
www.uccmedina.org Email: office@uccmedina.org

“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS”

**Those who are able please stand*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

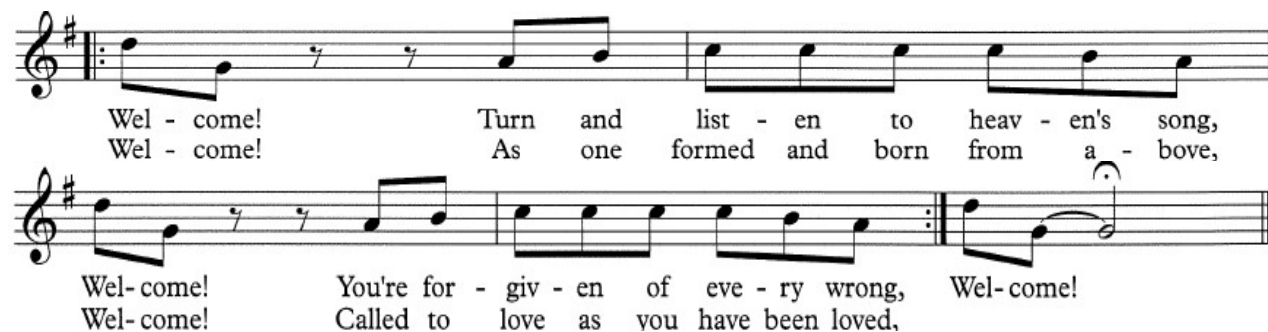
*OPENING SONG

“Welcome”

Gathering Band

Music & lyrics by Rob Leverage © 2015

Wel - come! There's a prom - ise that's keep - ing us, Wel - come! We are
Wel - come! To this move - ment in fel - low - ship, Wel - come! There are
fash - ioned and found by this love and in - vit - ed to trust
ma - ny now shar - ing the road as the jour - ney un - folds
Wel - come! Bless - ed child of the cov - en - ant Wel - come! ev - er
Wel - come! Sift - ed in - to three meas - ures worth Wel - come! Now com -
placed in the pres - ence of God, ev - er held by the Son Let the
miss - ioned to leav - en the world 'til the Kin - dom has come! When you
wat - er and word nour - ish life and be - lief in you Mak - ing
wan - der or fail you'll be lift - ed a - gain by love There's no
out - ward and vis - i - ble grace that's at work in you
slan - der or sin that can claim you, a child of God



Wel - come! Turn and list - en to heav - en's song,
 Wel - come! As one formed and born from a - bove,
 Wel - come! You're for - giv - en of eve - ry wrong, Wel - come!
 Wel - come! Called to love as you have been loved.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Erasmus of Rotterdam)

Rev. Pam Branscome

Erasmus is a Dutch Catholic theologian who lived from 1469 to 1536. He was known as the "Prince of the Humanists" who was committed to reforming the Catholic Church from within during the Reformation and debated with Protestants.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ,

People: You are the sun that rises, but never sets.

You are the source of all life, creating and sustaining every living thing.

You are the source of all food, material and spiritual,

Nourishing us in body and soul.

Leader: You are the light that dispels the clouds of error and doubt,

People: And goes before me every hour of the day, guiding my thoughts and actions.

May I walk in your light,

Be sustained by your mercy,

And warmed by your love. Amen.

***CENTERING POEM** (*Things to Do in the Belly of the Whale* by Dan Albergotti)

Dan Daubner, Jr.

Leader: Measure the walls. Count the ribs. Notch the long days.

People: Look up for blue sky through the spout.

Leader: Make small fires with the broken hulls of fishing boats.

People: Practice smoke signals.

Leader: Call old friends, and listen for echoes of distant voices.

People: Organize your calendar. Dream of the beach.

Leader: Look each way for the dim glow of light.

People: Work on your reports.

Leader: Review each of your life's ten million choices.

People: Endure moments of self-loathing.

Leader: Find the evidence of those before you.

People: Destroy it.

Leader: Try to be very quiet, and listen for the sound of gears and moving water.

People: Listen for the sound of your heart.

Leader: Be thankful that you are here, swallowed with all hope, where you can rest and wait.

People: Be nostalgic. Think of all the things you did and could have done.

Leader: Remember treading water in the center of the still night sea, your toes pointing again and again down, down into the black depths.

***RESPONSE**

Richard Gillard, 1977; alt.

"Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?" (vs 1-3)

SERVANT SONG 8.7.8.7.

Richard Gillard; arr. Betty Carr Pulkingham, 1977; adapt.



1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;



Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.
We are here to help each oth - er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE FAMLY OF GOD

Stacie Yates

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 2:1-10

Brad Rice

SERMON

"Standing on the Shores of Nineveh"

Rev. Luke Lindon

***SONG**

CCLI #3118757

"God of Wonders"

Marc Byrd & Steve Hindalong

Gathering Band

©2000 Never Say Never Songs

Lord of all creation, of water earth and sky
The heavens are Your tabernacle
Glory to the Lord on high

**God of Wonders beyond our galaxy
You are Holy, Holy.
The universe declares your majesty,
You are Holy, Holy.**

**Lord of heaven and earth,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

Early in the morning I will celebrate the light
When I stumble in the darkness
I will call Your name by night.

**God of Wonders beyond our galaxy,
You are Holy, Holy.**

**The universe declares your majesty,
You are Holy, Holy.**

**Lord of heaven and earth,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

To the Lord of heaven and earth
To the Lord of heaven and earth
To the Lord of heaven and earth

God of Wonders, beyond our galaxy,
You are Holy, Holy.
Precious Lord, reveal Your heart to me,
Father hold me, hold me.

The universe declares your majesty,
You are Holy, Holy.

You are Holy (Repeat)

A RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR OUR CITY

Nora Nolan

Leader: Gracious Mystery, you created us all and everything that surrounds us

People: These trees and the birds and squirrels in them.

Leader: While you didn't create these cars and distracting semi-trucks...

People: You did create each soul who drives them. Bless them in their travels.

Leader: These buildings were built by our ancestors whose names are at the top and whose lives are within the walls

People: Bless our city and town. May the business thrive and be fair, blessing their workers. May our police and firefighters be blessed and bring blessing to our town.

Leader: You made each of us and we are so thankful to gather here in the Square to bless you, our town, and one another. Bring healing where we need it, forgiveness and restoration in the withered places of our lives, and unbridled joy at the gift of being alive. Hear us now as we in silence send our joys and concerns to you.

Silence is kept.

Leader: Hear your children as we pray...

People: 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

Offertory Invitation

Vicki Marty

There are offering baskets on either side of the gazebo. You can place your offering there now or at the end of the service. Or you can text UCCMEDINA to UCCMEDINA to 73256 and follow the prompts.

We know that there is nothing we can do to earn God's love or lose it. Let us now offer our time, talent, and treasure to God.

Choral Anthem "Jonah (Quit Your Belly-Achin'!)"

Chancel Choir

Words & music by Anna Laura Page & Jean Anne Shafferman

Prayer of Dedication

Vicki Marty

Gracious Mystery, thank you for the unexpected gift of life. Thank you for this time to worship you together as a community of faith within our community of Medina. Thank you for your first testament of nature and our beautiful Square and all our metro parks and fields. May what we offer today be a blessing to your world and help others seek your beloved community. Amen.

*HYMN

"I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

Isaac Watts, 1715, alt.

ELLACOMBE C.M.D.
Gesangbuch der herzoglichen, 1784



1 I sing the might-y power of God that made the moun-tains rise,
2 I sing the good-ness of our God that filled the earth with food;
3 On earth there's not a plant or flower but makes your glo - ry known.



That spread the flow-ing seas a - broad, and built the loft - y skies.
God formed the crea-tures with a word, and then pro - nounced them good.
The clouds a - rise and spread their showers by or - der from your throne.



I sing the wis-dom that or - dained the sun to rule the day;
Oh, how your won-ders are dis - played, wher - e'er I turn my eye:
All life is but a gift from you and ev - er in your care;



The moon shines full at God's com-mand, and all the stars o - bey.
If I sur - vey the ground I tread, or gaze up - on the sky!
Wher - ev - er peo-ple gath - er, you, O God, are pres-ent there.

***BENEDICTION** (Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Rev. Luke Lindon

We know MLK Jr as a great civil rights activist but often forget he was a pastor. This prayer comes from his book "Thou, Dear God: Prayers that Open Hearts and Minds" the first and only collection of sixty-eight prayers by MLK Jr. Beacon Press, November 29, 2011.

Leader: We thank thee, O God, for the spiritual nature of humanity.
We are in nature but we live above nature.

People: **Help us never to let anybody or any condition to pull us so low as to cause us to hate.**

Leader: Give us strength to love our enemies and to do good to those who despitefully use us and persecute us.

People: **We thank thee for thy Church, founded upon thy Word, that challenges us to do more than sing and pray, but go out and work as though the very answer to our prayers depended on us and not upon thee.**

Leader: Then, finally, help us to realize that we are created to shine like stars and live on through all eternity.

People: **Keep us, we pray, in perfect peace; help us to walk together, pray together, sing together, and live together until that day when all God's children, black, white, red, and yellow will rejoice in our common band of humanity in the kingdom of our Lord and of our God, we pray. Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE "God Be With You"**

God be with you 'til we meet again; By His counsels guide, uphold you;
With His sheep securely fold you; God be with you 'til we meet again.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

POSTLUDE

Gathering Band

(There are offering baskets are on either side of the gazebo to accept your offerings as you depart)

"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"

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PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - email: luke@uccmedina.org
Karen Brocco-Kish, Visitation Pastor

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - email: office@uccmedina.org
Jeff Miller, Financial Director - email: jeff@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education
Nicole Rubino, Co-Director of Youth
Jim Kiser, Director of Music
Cathy Fafrak, Organist
Rebecca Rosen, Nursery Supervisor
Jennifer Vilimonovic, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool
Jack Sharpe, Maintenance
Dan Daubner, Custodian

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

AUGUST 29, 2021

**“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS.
MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY!”**

Live streaming of the Sanctuary service is available at www.uccmedina.org/live

August 29, 2021 thru September 5, 2021

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun	10:00 am	Alive on the Square & Blessing of the Backpacks
Mon	6:30 pm	Hobby Horse Parent Orientation
Tues	6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Hobby Horse Parent Orientation Bible Study
Wed	10:30 am 6:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Quilters Bell Practice Gathering Band Practice Choir Practice
Thurs		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun	8:15 am 9:00 am 9:40 am 10:30 am	Chapel Worship (in Sanctuary) Gathering Worship Choir Warm-up Traditional Worship

Worship Highlights: 10:00 am at the Gazebo

Scriptures: Jonah 2:1-10

Sermon: “Standing on the Shores of Nineveh”
Rev. Luke Lindon

Communion Table Flowers: The flowers today are given by Cheri and Arnold Ingraham in honor of their anniversary.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY**

REGISTER NOW FOR NEW MEMBER CLASSES

Would you like to join our church family!? Join us for our next new member classes! The next classes will be held **Monday, September 20th & 27th**. **Classes will be held from 7 pm – 9 pm** in the New Library. New members will join the church on Sunday, October 3rd at **ONE UNIFIED SERVICE OF WORSHIP AT 10:00 a.m.** Childcare is provided if needed during class. Please [register here](#) or contact the Church Office at 330-725-4559 if you are interested and let us know if you will need childcare.

14th ANNUAL “ALIVE ON THE SQUARE”

Join us **Sunday, August 29th at 10 a.m.** at the Gazebo on the square for worship and picnic lunch (expertly prepared by the Kiwanis). Bring your lawn chairs, family, and friends! (In case of rain, worship will be in the sanctuary and lunch will follow the service in Fellowship Hall.) **See you there!**



Our next series, REBUILD starts September 12th. We're disoriented. We're feeling loss we don't have a name for. How can we plan for the future when everything is in ruins? Our sacred stories can help us. Our ancestors in faith have been here before. We'll look at the prophet Nehemiah and how he navigated an uncertain time. Few things stifle the imagination than ungrieved grief. We shall walk through the stages of grief together and imagine a future we can build toward.

DEADLINE TOMORROW!!!

We will be printing a new church directory to be **available on Rally Day, September 12th**. **Please notify the office with any telephone, address, or email changes no later than August 30th**. Please call or email: 330-725-4559 or office@uccmedina.org. Thank you.

CHANCEL CHOIR & BELL CHOIR START SEPTEMBER 1st

Anyone interested in singing with the Chancel Choir and/or playing with the Bell Choir, please plan to come to our first rehearsals **this Wednesday, September 1st**. The Bell Choir rehearsal will begin at 6:30 and the Chancel Choir will begin at 7:30. If you have any questions, you can contact Jim Kiser at 815-275-4285 or via email at jim@uccmedina.org. I hope to see lots of new faces!

COIN JARS FOR SENIORS

Last year our Coin Collection Jars were cancelled because of Covid-19.

This year we will be collecting your spare change again to purchase meat for seniors living in high rises in Medina County. Feeding Medina County will handle distribution.

The jars will be in the East Room for pick-up. Please take a jar and add your name to the sign-up sheet.

We encourage all three services to help provide for our seniors during the Christmas holidays.

Jars will be collected on November 28th.

SPECIAL WELCOME FOR OUR "COVID" NEW MEMBER CLASS

Due to rising numbers of Covid, Coffee Hours will be postponed till further notice. However, on **Sunday, September 12th we will welcome our February 2021 new members from the pandemic class in church.**

To honor them, please help yourself to a boxed cupcake as you exit the church service and weather permitting, a cup of coffee under the pergola.

CHILI COOK-OFF POSTPONED!

Due to rising numbers and with consensus of Caring Team and general vibe of the three services, the Chili Cook off will be postponed until January 30th. (This will be held after one service of worship at 10 a.m.)

This will be subject to our numbers at that time. We hope to ensure the safety of those who can meet and eat without their masks on. For now, we will err on the side of caution.

RALLY DAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th

It's hard to believe that school has started, and we are getting ready to start another program year. On Sunday, September 12 we will officially "kick off" another year of Sunday School. There will be a scavenger hunt and a special treat. We will also be introducing some new ideas for our Sunday mornings together. Make sure you come to experience all the fun we will be having. See you there!

NOISY COIN OFFERING

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th

Look under the couch cushions, in the washing machine and check pockets. We will be having a noisy coin offering on Sunday, September 12th as part of Rally Day. All the money collected will go to help support Innocent, the now young man who we adopted from Uganda. Let's make lots of noise on September 12th!

PASTOR'S Q & A

This week's question is **“Talk about Baptism as so many young parents are not getting their children baptized.”**

This question seems appropriate following two baptisms that we have had recently. Baptism is one of our two sacraments. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the River Jordan. While the term baptism is not found in Jewish rituals, there are purification rites which have some similarity to baptism. Immersion in water is for ritual purity for Jews who have become ritually unclean through contact with a corpse or other instances of impurity.

Immersion is also required for those who convert to Judaism. This represents a change in status, a purification, restoration, and acceptance into the full life of the community and religious participation.

John turns this on its head. His claim is that the temple is corrupt and impure. He ventures out into the wilderness, God's first testament of nature. And he baptizes people in the River Jordan which was seen as a boundary between the Jews and their Gentile neighbors. The early church had a rigorous method of joining for converts. After a 5-year study, they would be baptized. The significance of this sacrament has been widely debated but it has been around since the start. Paul writes in Romans 6:3 “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” The old life is gone. The new life in Christ has started.

As the years marched on, baptism became less about adults and more about infants as the church became a cultural force. Baptism then became about washing away original sin. I think this is a late addition to the sacrament and I struggle with it. I don't think Jesus felt he was washing away his original sin. He didn't have any! It's not in the gospels. Yet there is a sense of a repentance of sin and being loved by God that pervades the baptism stories in the Gospels.

What I think I'm doing is accepting a child into our community. Before this child has done anything, in fact before this child CAN do anything other than smile and cry and burble, we love and accept this child just as God has loved and accepted us in Christ. That means this child is ours no matter what. That God loves this child, and they will always have a home with us no matter what they end up doing with their life. No matter if this child plays Carnegie Hall by age 6 or is on trial at age 16. We will love and support them and be as Christ to them and see how God is reflected in their life. Baptism is a tangible sign and seal of a community of God's invisible love for us all.

Jesus' work on the cross is final whether I believe in it or not. God's love is total outside of my feelings and ability. It's an absolute in a world of relativity. It's why I can freely baptize infants, for while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. God loved us. The Holy Spirit is active.

Yet there is something to baptism as adults or at the time of confirmation. For the one choosing to be baptized, that exercise of free choice to say yes to the Trinity... yeah... that's something else, too. This is too great for me to understand, and totally worth celebrating. Events of watching people choose their baptism reminds me that my own is something I need to say yes to each and every morning and at each temptation. Remember your baptism. Remember who and whose you are.

Continued on next page

I'm more than fine with young parents not getting their children baptized. It doesn't mean God loves them less or that their child is automatically headed to hell or purgatory. I think that's superstition, not biblical. If the parents have no interest in the communal life of the church, then I'm happy they are being honest about it, and not getting their kids baptized. They aren't making vows that they have no intention of following.

Christian existentialist Soren Kierkegaard stated that "When everyone's a Christian, then no one is a Christian." meaning that our religious life gets watered down or reduced to a photo opportunity that really holds no meaning for people. They are just going through the motions as this is what's expected of them. We need ritual and the spirit it was given in.

People these days aren't looking for just going through the motions or doing the same ol' thing. They are looking for meaning. So we must be clear and discerning on why we do what we do. We welcome, love, and serve because those are the values we want to reflect from the life and teachings of Jesus. We want to join with others and welcome them in baptism and share communion with them. This sacramental time, time carved out, is special to God and to God's people. It's not that other people are excluded from this time, it's that we the church, the Body of Christ, witness to these gifts from a loving God that would be ignored by others.

YOUTH GROUP KICK OFF

September 19th - 4:00-6:00 pm

Mark your calendars now. Youth Group will kick off the year on Sunday, September 19th. We will be having a pizza party and playing some fun 'Minute-to-Win-it' games. Youth group is open to all youth who are in grades 3-12. Come enjoy good food, fun and fellowship.

TEACHERS NEEDED!

We are going to be trying some new and exciting things with Sunday School this year. One thing that hasn't changed is that we need adults to help on Sunday mornings with the children. If you are interested in working with the children once a month please see Stacie Yates or email her at stacie@uccmedina.org for more information.

**The deadline for submission of articles for NEXT Sunday's *Messenger* is this Sunday at 11:30 am
Please submit articles to the church office at office@uccmedina.org
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm MONDAY THRU FRIDAY**



Ring the bell. Pray. Remember 20 years ago those who tragically lost their lives. Listen to first responders reflect on the day.

Medina UCC, Congregational 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

James 1:17-27

Be Love

In the United Church of Christ, we rely on testimonies, not tests of faith. So, unlike other faith communities you may have experienced, most UCC churches do not regularly recite creeds during worship. In keeping with that philosophy, the UCC's Statement of Faith (here reprinted in the form of a doxology) is not a doctrine of beliefs that must be adhered to, but instead is the beginning of a conversation. What about the statement of faith resonates with your understanding of the work of God in the world? What seems true to you? What makes you uncomfortable? What do you have questions about? Being willing to enter into conversation with the Statement of Faith is one more way that "God is still speaking" in our church.

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Amen.