



Rock

VS.

sand



**PARABLES**

LENT 2024

MEDINA

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio 44256 330-725-4559 [www.uccmedina.org](http://www.uccmedina.org)

**\*\*\*Assisted Listening Devices Available – Please Ask Your Usher\*\*\***

LIVE STREAMING OF THE SANCTUARY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE AT [UCCMEDINA.ORG](http://UCCMEDINA.ORG)

- *During the 10:30 service, Jesus Vibes Sunday School is available for ages 3-8<sup>th</sup> grade*

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

*Please take a moment to sign the attendance pads, (located at the end of each pew) so that you know who is worshipping near you and you may greet them by name.*

*\*Those who are able please stand*

### RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE “Near the Cross” arr. John Carter

Cathy Fafrak, Piano

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

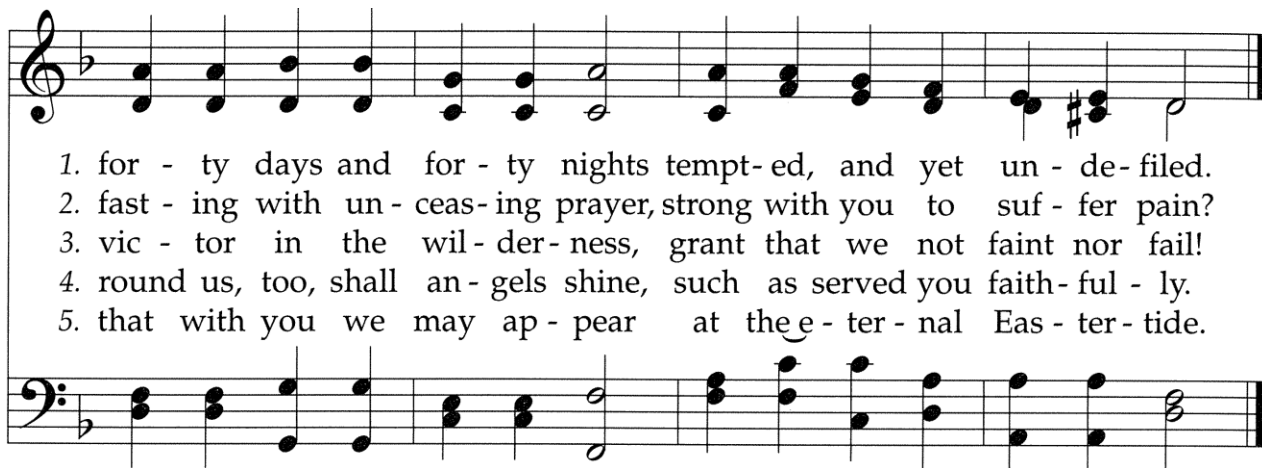
### \*OPENING HYMN

### “Forty Days and Forty Nights”

George H. Smyttan, 1856, alt.

HEINLEIN 7.7.7.7.  
Attr, Martin Herbst, 1676

1. For - ty days and for - ty nights you were fast - ing in the wild;  
2. Shall not we your sor - row share and from world - ly joys ab - stain,  
3. Then if Sa - tan on us press, flesh or spir - it to as - sail,  
4. So shall we have peace di - vine: ho - lier glad - ness ours shall be;  
5. Keep, O keep us, Sav - ior dear, ev - er con - stant by your side;



### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Every story has a beginning.

**This is ours for the next hour.**

A time where you're not sure what exactly is going to happen.

**Where the major themes have yet to reveal themselves.**

All the characters are in place.

**And when two or three are gathered, the main character of Christ is among us.**

Then let us begin the parable of this worship.

### SPECIAL MUSIC

"Jesus Loves Me"

Children from Hobby Horse Preschool

Children's Choir with John Karkosiak, guitar and Mike Janowitz, drums

### SCRIPTURE

Matthew 7:24-27 (N.T. pg. 7)

Pam Branscome, Liturgist

### MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY OF GOD

Stacie Yates

#### The Lord's Prayer

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.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

### SERMON

"Rock vs. Sand"

Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

### REFLECTION HYMN

"No Greater Love"

Michael Joncas, b. 1951

Michael Joncas, © 1988, GIA Publications, Inc.

Refrain



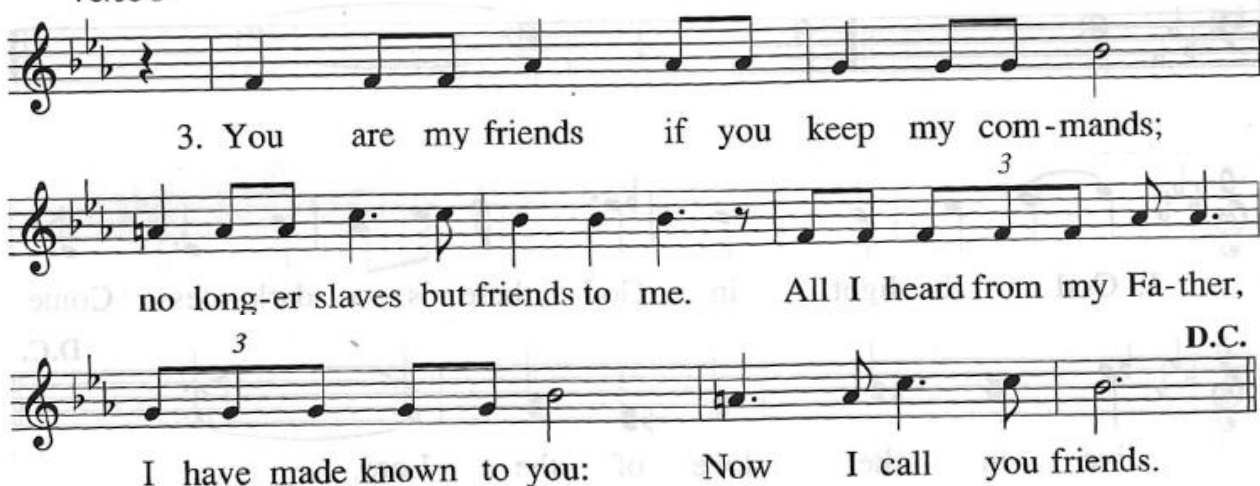
There is no great-er love, says the Lord, than to  
lay down your life for a friend; there is no great-er love,  
no great-er love, than to lay down your life for a friend.

Verse 2



2. All this I tell you that my joy may be yours and  
your joy may be com-plete. Love one an-oth-er as  
I have loved you: This is my com-mand. D.C.

Verse 3



3. You are my friends if you keep my com-mands;  
no long-er slaves but friends to me. All I heard from my Fa-ther,  
I have made known to you: Now I call you friends. D.C.

# "On the Rock"

Words & music by Barney Elliott Warren, 1897

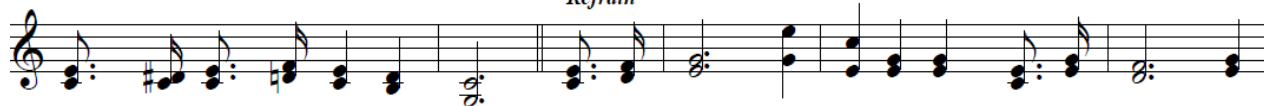


1. Are you build-ing on the Rock e - ter-nal? Are you build-ing on the sink-ing  
2. Are you build-ing on a strong foun - da-tion? Can you stand the stor-my sea of  
3. Are you build-ing on a strong foun - da-tion, With an an - chor that will keep the  
4. Are you build-ing on a strong foun - da-tion? Can you stand the aw - ful judg-ment



sand? Are you go - ing to that home su - per - nal, In that  
life? 'Mid the surg - ing bil - lows' wild com - mo - tion, Do you  
soul? Liv - ing in His love and truth un - shak - en, Ground - ed  
shock? Are you ground - ed in His great sal - va - tion, Fast - ened

## Refrain



bright-er far off hap-py land?  
con - quer in the rag-ing strife? Are you build - ing on the Rock, Are you build - ing  
firm and deep tho' bil - lows roll?  
like an an - chor to the Rock?



on the Rock? Are you build - ing on the Rock, Or, on the sink-ing sand?

## OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

*There is an offering plate if you feel led to deposit your envelope or an offering there. You can also give through our Realm app or get the link to give by texting UCCMEDINA to 73256. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!*

### Offertory Invitation

This is the last quarter of the story. Themes are being wrapped up. Stories resolving. Let us take this time to praise God for the themes revealed today and how we resolve to carry out the story. Let us rise in body and spirit and sing praise to our God.

### \*Doxology (words, Ruth Duck, ©2005, GIA Publications)

Praise God, the Source of life and birth; Praise God, the Word, who came to earth;  
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame; All glory, honor to God's Name! Amen.

### \*Dedication

We resolve, oh God, to be wise builders. May what we offer build on the solid rock of your love. Building a house where all can dwell and safely live. Through your guidance, grace, and peace, may it be so. Amen.

### \*CLOSING HYMN

#### "They'll Know We Are Christians"

ST. BRENDAN'S 7.6.7.6.8.6.w. refrain

Words & Music: Peter Scholtes, 1966

© 1966 FEL Publications, assigned to The Lorenz Corp.



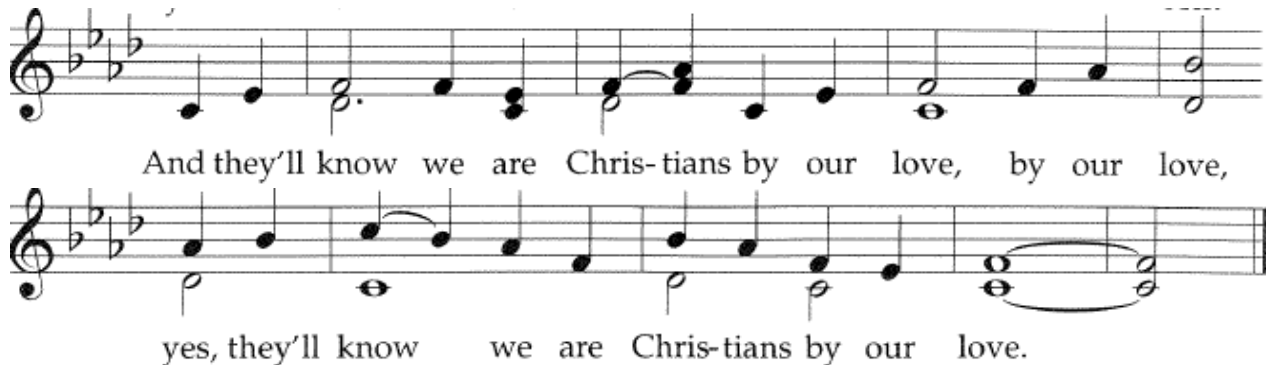
1. We are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,  
2. We will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,  
3. We will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,



we are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,  
we will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,  
we will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:  
and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:  
and we'll guard each one's dig - ni - ty and save each one's pride:



### \*BENEDICTION

This is the end of our parable.

**Where we reach the end of our text and ponder what it all means.**

May you know that Christ's teachings are solid rock.

**We know we are beloved of God.**

And that the Holy Spirit will go with you, wherever your story takes you.

**May we take our learnings with us into our days ahead and find God waiting with open arms.**

**The End.**

### \*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.

### \*POSTLUDE

"If You But Trust in God to Guide You" arr. Michael Cox

Cathy Fafrak, organ

## "MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"

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*\*\*\*Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service\*\*\**

*Coffee Hour is hosted this week by the Hobby Horse Preschool Team*

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Jack Sharpe, Maintenance

Nick Brlan, Custodian



# THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

## FEBRUARY 18, 2024

**“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](http://www.uccmedina.org/live)

### February 18 thru February 25, 2024 WEEK AT A GLANCE

**Sun**     **1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**  
**HOBBY HORSE THANK YOU DAY**  
8:15 am   Chapel Worship  
9:00 am   Gathering Worship  
9:45 am   Children's Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 am   Sanctuary Worship  
11:30 am   3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Class  
4:30 pm   Youth Group

**Mon**     **PRESIDENT'S DAY**  
**CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**

**Tues**

**Wed**     10:30 am   Quilters  
6:00 pm   Gathering Band Rehearsal  
7:00 pm   Short Stories By Jesus Study  
              @ St. Matthew Lutheran

**Thurs**     6:15 pm   Bell Choir Rehearsal  
7:00 pm   Congregational Council  
7:30 pm   Choir Rehearsal

**Fri**

**Sat**     9:00 am   Junk Drive (Parking lot)

**Sun**     **2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**  
8:15 am   Chapel Worship  
9:00 am   Gathering Worship  
9:45 am   Children's Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 am   Teen Church  
10:30 am   Sanctuary Worship  
11:30 am   3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Class  
3:00 pm   Confirmation Class

### DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know that **donations to the “30 4 30”** Campaign supporting the **Endowment Fund** can be easily made electronically on REALM, our digital method of giving? Check it out today.

**Worship Highlights:** 8:15, 9:00 & 10:30 am

Scripture: Matthew 7: 24-27

Sermon: “Rock vs. Sand” - Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

**Communion Table:** The communion table flowers are given by Dan & Vicki Marty in honor of their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

## HOBBY HORSE SUNDAY TODAY

Everyone is invited to Hobby Horse Preschool Day on February 18<sup>th</sup> at the 10:30 service. Hobby Horse Preschool wants to thank everyone for their past and continued support with a new church banner, a song sung by some of our Hobby Horse children along with our Children's Choir, and a Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall with delicious treats. We would also like to help Miss Stacie (aka Mrs. Yates) fill a noisy can with coins for our friend Innocent in Africa so bring your loose change. We hope to see many of you there!

## CONGRATS TO PASTOR LUKE

Pastor Luke was named the recipient of the Meck Award. The Meck Award from the Alumni Council of Lancaster Theological Seminary is presented annually to a graduate for distinguished service in the practice of pastoral ministry. The Awards and Recognition Committee looks at specific criteria for indications of excellence in ministry including: fostering the vitality of the ministry, exhibiting excellent pastoral presence, demonstrating creativity in ministry, enlisting and nurturing the gifts of others, and relating the Gospel to the commonly-shared experiences in the ministry.

## THANK YOU

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On behalf of the Costa Rica Mission Team, I would like to thank everyone who has supported our trip this year. Our church family has been, as usual, amazing! The church Mission Team, Endowment Fund, donations from the congregation and the purchase of squares for our Super Bowl fundraiser have provided us with funds to help defray our costs and allow us to provide some very necessary support for the family we are sponsoring. Over the next several weeks, I will be sharing more info about the family and our build experience. Again, thank you very much for your support!!

-Vicki Miller

## DONATION OF THE MONTH

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**February's donation of the month is period products!**

Period poverty (lacking access to menstrual products) affects millions of people, and stigma about menstrual hygiene makes it taboo for us to talk about. The Mission Team will distribute your donations to local charities to reduce period poverty here in Medina! Thank you!

## HOPE RECOVERY COMMUNITY DINNER DONATIONS

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Our church will be serving the Saturday night dinner at Hope Recovery Community on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Sign-ups to donate items and help serve dinner are located in the Welcome Area. Donations can be left in the baskets below the sign-up table by Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you for considering this community outreach.

## COFFEE HOUR

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Please consider hosting coffee hour one Sunday. Signups for March through May 2024 are available in the East Room hallway. Never hosted before? No worries! You'll receive a letter and a call from a Hospitality Team member should you have any questions. Hosting is to be simple, so would you please consider hosting Coffee Hour one Sunday?

## AN UPDATE ON OPERATION HOMES

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As you may already be aware, there is a plan to build a homeless shelter here in Medina that will house the individuals currently being housed through Operation Homes (OH). The board of OH is already preparing for the transition to supporting this shelter. In the meantime, OH will continue to provide refuge for the unsheltered. There are now only 6 churches participating in the program, so we've been asked to host three more weeks before the end of June – one more week than were expecting. Those weeks are March 4-10, April 15-21, May 27-June 2. Guests will stay in hotels for the remainder of the year, and we will still help to provide their meals. Thank you for the time, energy, and love you give to make these guests feel at home with us.

## “SHORT STORIES BY JESUS” – A LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

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In this wise and entertaining series, Amy-Jill Levine offers a fresh, timely reinterpretation of Jesus' narratives. She analyzes these “problems with parables,” taking readers back in time to understand how their original Jewish audiences understood them. Levine reveals the parables' connections to first-century economic and agricultural life, social customs, and morality, Jewish scriptures and Roman culture. With this revitalized understanding, she interprets these moving stories for the contemporary reader, showing how the parables are not just about Jesus, but are also about us – and when read rightly, still challenge and provoke us 2,000 years later.

We are partnering with our friends at St. Paul's Episcopal and St. Matthew's Lutheran for this companion study to our worship series!

We'll meet Wednesdays at 7 pm at the following locations:

**February 21:** St. Matthew's, 400 N. Broadway St.,

**February 28:** St. Paul's Episcopal, 317 E. Liberty St.

**March 6:** UCC, Congregational

**March 13:** St. Matthew's, 400 N. Broadway St.

**March 21:** UCC, Congregational

## COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS PRICE CHANGE

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We just received notice from Flower Gallery that they have raised their prices for our Sunday Flowers. We have been lucky enough for them to keep the price down for several years without an increase. **The new price for sponsoring the Sunday Communion Flowers will be \$25 effective immediately.** As always, you may [pay for these either online through REALM](#) or submit a check to the church with Sunday Flowers in the memo line.

## THE 2024 JUNK DRIVE IS HERE!

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This fundraiser takes broken and unwanted electronics and turns them into funds for our high schooler's summer mission trip! We're accepting Laptop and Desktop Computers, DVD/VHS players, Cords, Cables, Mice, Keyboards, Cellphones, Tablets, Smart Watches, Gaming Consoles, Games, Stereos, Radios, Mp3 players, iPods, old power tools, and small metal appliances.

There will be four drop-off windows in the church parking lot:

Saturday, Feb. 24 (9:00am-1:00pm)

Tuesday, Feb. 27 (5:00pm-8:00pm)

Saturday, March 2 (9:00am-1:00pm)

Tuesday, March 5 (5:00pm-8:00pm)

A huge shout out to Tracy Gabrielsen for setting us up with a storage truck from Penske! Please see the posters that are all around the building for answers to FAQs and reach out to Logan Malone with any other questions you may have. Thank you to Logan for leading this fundraising effort!

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**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](mailto:office@uccmedina.org)**

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9 am – 3 pm MONDAY THRU THURSDAY; FRIDAY 9 am – 12 pm**

Psalm 25:1-10

## God's Loving Paths

The psalmist asserts that God is with them all the way along the path. Sometimes, it is not so clear to see God's hand at work. To understand God's movement in your life, it can be helpful to create a spiritual timeline. Why wait? Use this paper to begin creation of your spiritual timeline right now.

When was the first time you remember sensing God's presence?

What names or images of God did you hold when you were younger that are different now?

List two or three times of illness, grief or despair when you experienced God with you.

List two or three times of gratitude or joy when you experienced God with you.

Looking back, was there a circumstance or common thread that is carried across all the memories you share here? Were you alone or with a group? Were you in a church building or in nature? Were you actively seeking God's presence, or did the Divine intrude unexpectedly into everyday life?

What does this exercise reveal about the presence of God in your life? Up to now? In this present moment? Into the future?