



RESTORING



BEAUTY



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL

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

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

**10:30 a.m. Worship Service  
February 4, 2024**

*All of the liturgy for today is from February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

## **RINGING OF THE TOWER BELL**

## **GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE** “Morning Prayer” – Laura Bergquist”

Cathy Fafrak, Pianist

## **\*CALL TO WORSHIP (John 1:1-5)**

One: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind.

**Many: And we shall love our neighbor as we love ourselves.**

One: By this everyone will know that we are Christ’s disciples,

**Many: if we have love for one another.**

One: Beloved, since God loved us so much,

**Many: We also ought to love one another.**

**All: Let us come and worship our God!**

## **\*OPENING HYMN**

Awake, Awake to Love and Work, #177

## **\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

One: How blessed we are to know God’s unconditional love and grace firsthand! What a gift to know that God is with us, whatever we might experience.

**Many: And yet it is difficult to live God’s ways. We confess that we can be mean, we can ignore those in need, and we can carry grudges for years.**

One: Let us pray for forgiveness. Let us ask God to transform and renew our hearts.

## **\*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

One: Friends of Christ, God forgives our sins and calls us once again to the ways of compassion, generosity, understanding, and forgiveness.

Many: **Thanks be to God! May God’s ways become our ways!**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL PRAISE RESPONSE** Awake, Awake to Love and Work (vs. 2)

**CHILDREN’S SERMON**

**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.**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Introduction of guests

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**Joys and Concerns, Silent Prayer & Morning Prayer**

**Prayer Response** Blest Be the Tie That Binds, verses 1 &2 (inside of back cover)

<b>SCRIPTURES</b>	Genesis 38:24-26	O.T. pg. 34	Nick North, Lay Reader
	Joshua 6:22-23	O.T. pg. 189	
	Ruth 2:8-12	O.T. pg. 231	
	2 Samuel 11:2-5	O.T. pg. 271	

**CHOIR ANTHEM** “Rejoice for Women Brave” – Lisa Neufeld Thomas & Frances McCollin  
Women of the Chancel Choir

**SERMON** “In The Shadows of the Past” Rev. Meghan Malone

**OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

**Offertory Meditation**

Jesus Calls us to follow the example of God, to love our enemies, to pray for those who hurt us, to go the extra mile for others... and to give generously out of all that we have. Let us worship with our tithes and offerings.

**\*Doxology:**  
**Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;**  
**Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Unison Prayer of Dedication**

**God of our neighbors and our enemies, we bring these gifts to you, practicing the kind of generosity you practice with us. Bless all who give, bless all who receive, and bless all who are not able to do either this day. Amen**

**COMMUNION HYMN**

Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken, #212

**SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION (Hymnal Pages 27-29)**

*All are welcome at the Lord's table. You do not need to be a member of the United Church of Christ to partake in the Holy Sacrament.*

**Invitation to the Table**

**Prayer of Blessing**

**Words of Institution**

**Distribution of the Elements**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**\*SENDING HYMN**

I Love to Tell the Story, #199

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

**“GOD BE WITH YOU”**

**God be with you till we meet again; By His counsels guide, uphold you,  
With His sheep securely fold you: God be with you till we meet again.**

**POSTLUDE “Be Joyful in the Lord!” – Marc Jordan**

Cathy Fafrak, Organist

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**\*All who are able please stand.**

**\*\*\*Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service\*\*\*  
*Coffee Hour is hosted this week by the Wolff family***



### ***PASTORAL STAFF***

Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister – [luke@uccmedina.org](mailto:luke@uccmedina.org)

Rev. Meghan Malone, Associate Pastor of Youth & Mission - [meghan@uccmedina.org](mailto:meghan@uccmedina.org)

Karen Brocco-Kish, Visitation Pastor – [karen@uccmedina.org](mailto:karen@uccmedina.org)

### ***OFFICE STAFF***

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Jeff Miller, Financial Director - [jeff@uccmedina.org](mailto:jeff@uccmedina.org)

### ***PROGRAM STAFF***

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education – [stacie@uccmedina.org](mailto:stacie@uccmedina.org)

Jennifer Cochran, Director of Music - [jenny@uccmedina.org](mailto:jenny@uccmedina.org)

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Jennifer Vilimonovic, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool – [jen@uccmedina.org](mailto:jen@uccmedina.org)

Jack Sharpe, Maintenance

Nick Brlan, Custodian

A  
WORSHIP BEYOND WALLS  
CONFERENCE  
MASTERPIECE  
April 12th & 13th, 2024

**FEATURING**

Join us as we come together knowing you are welcomed, worthy, valued, wonderfully made, and beloved by God just as you are.

**Hosanna Wong**  
Featured Speaker

**Brad & Rebekah**  
Praise & Worship

**Meant for More**  
Praise & Worship

**Nicole & Kayleigh**  
Master of Ceremonies

**Wendi Clardy Podolaki**  
Guest Speaker

**Andrea Hutchinson**  
Vocalist

**Harry Richardson**  
Pianist

**NEO women**  
[www.neowomen.org](http://www.neowomen.org)  
[contact@neowomen.com](mailto:contact@neowomen.com)

# THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

## FEBRUARY 4, 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 4 thru February 11, 2024 WEEK AT A GLANCE

<b>Sun</b>	8:15 am	Chapel Worship
	9:00 am	Gathering Worship
	9:30 am	Third Grade Bible Class
	9:45 am	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 am	Sanctuary Worship
	4:30 pm	Men's Group
	4:30 pm	Family Board Game Night
<b>Mon</b>	Cook for Cups	
	2:00 pm	"Life As We Know It" Study
	7:00 pm	"Life As We Know It" Study
	7:00 pm	Youth Book Club
<b>Tues</b>	8:00 am	Men's Breakfast
<b>Wed</b>	10:30 am	Quilters
	6:00 pm	Gathering Band Rehearsal
	6:15 pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 pm	Evangelism Team Meeting
	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thurs</b>	7:00 pm	Mental Health: Keep Talking
<b>Fri</b>	7:00 pm	Mental Health Support Group
<b>Sat</b>		
<b>Sun</b>		
		<b>FOUNDERS DAY</b>
	8:15 am	Chapel Worship
	9:00 am	Gathering Worship
	9:30 am	Third Grade Bible Class
	9:45 am	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 am	Sanctuary Worship
	11:30 am	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Class
	11:45 am	Mission Team Meeting
	3:00 pm	Confirmation Class
	6:00 pm	Temple Israel Visit

### DRIVE THRU ASHES

Drive thru Ashes will be available at the church on Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, from 1-2 pm. with Pastor Luke and Pastor Meghan.

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

Scripture: Genesis 38:24-26, Joshua 6:15-17  
Ruth 2:8-12, & 2 Samuel 11:2-5

Sermon: "In The Shadows of the Past"  
Rev. Meghan Malone

**Communion Table:** The communion table flowers are given by Ken & Sue Dean in memory of their parents.

## ENDOWMENT FUND CELEBRATES 30 4 30

The church family is invited to celebrate a milestone marking the success of the Endowment Fund. The Fund is celebrating thirty years of giving! Founded in 1994, Endowment dollars have continued for thirty years to finance special projects and activities within the church. Now, we are asking our church family to consider a THIRTY DOLLAR donation to the Endowment Fund to celebrate THIRTY YEARS of giving. These dollars send folks to Costa Rica, upgrade our beautiful building, and strengthen our mission. You can donate to this fund online here: [Give Now \(onrealm.org\)](http://GiveNow.onrealm.org) (select 30 4 30 in the dropdown menu) Your giving makes a difference. It matters. Please consider a gift of \$30 to celebrate!

## TONIGHT IS FAMILY BOARD GAME NIGHT

Bring your favorite board game from home and snacks to share **today, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 4:30-6pm!** DELTS will provide the drinks. Everyone is invited to come relax and have fun together in Fellowship Hall!

## **“LIFE AS WE KNOW IT” BOOK STUDY**

This guided book journey will take you deeper into the lives of your friends, family, neighbors and beyond. Come at 2 or 7 pm on Mondays, January 22<sup>nd</sup> – February 12<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall to work your way through this book and learn to share our stories together. Topics include how we’ve redeemed pain, learned life lessons, and talked about God’s unfolding narrative of our life. Books available while supplies last.

## **MEN’S BREAKFAST**

Mark your calendars for the next Men’s Breakfast on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at Buehler’s River Styx at 8:00 am. All men of the church are invited. No reservations required. We hope to see you there!

## **CHILI COOK OFF RESULTS**

What a great Chili Cook Off Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>! We had a fabulous turnout, 13 great chilis to sample, and most of all, wonderful fellowship. A big thank you goes to our chili winners this year: 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Alan Parkhurst, with his mild and meaty smoked paprika chili, 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Kenzie Armbrust with her sweet turkey chili, and our 1<sup>st</sup> place winner: Jeanette Fagan with a white chicken chili. Congratulations to all our winners!

## **COFFEE HOUR**

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 Caring Team member should you have any questions. Hosting is to be simple, so would you please consider hosting Coffee Hour one Sunday?

## **DONATION OF THE MONTH**

**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!

## **SONshine MEALS**

Did you know we have a ministry that provides meals for members in need? If you’re ill, expecting or have fallen on hard times, please let us help! If you know of a need or would like to help fulfill a need, please contact Becky: [beckybauer@zoominternet.net](mailto:beckybauer@zoominternet.net) or 216-288-6877.

We will be refreshing our list of volunteers so if you’d like to be (or continue to be) on the list of people we call to possibly provide meals, please text or email Becky.

## **NEW PODCAST HOME**

Heads up if you listen to our worship podcast: We have a new look and name! Search for “Medina UCCC Sermons,” currently on Spotify and Apple podcasts. Look for this graphic. Listen to the Scripture and sermon while you cook, walk the dog, drive, or sip your hot cocoa…it’s up to you!



## **SAVE THE DATE**

The Ladies and Girls Tea will be held on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> from 12 pm – 2 pm. Tickets will go on sale on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> in the East Room following the worship services. The program this year will be “A First Lady Tea” presented by Women in History from Cleveland. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** Contact Beth Hari, Becky Weber or Darlene Bagley-Fazekas with any questions.

## **HOPE RECOVERY COMMUNITY DINNER DONATIONS**

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.

## COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS - PRICE CHANGE!

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We just received notice from Flower Gallery that they have raised their prices on 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.

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

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Jesus was a skilled storyteller and perceptive teacher who used parables from everyday life to effectively convey his message and meaning. Life in first-century Palestine was very different from our world today. 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., Medina

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

**March 6:** UCC, Congregational

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

**March 21:** UCC, Congregational

## 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!

## CIRCLE OF CARING

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Valentines Day crafts ready for delivery

Stop by the display table in the Welcome Area.

On the sheet provided: Sign your name/initials next to a recipient's name, indicating a craft was taken for delivery. Please call the recipient to make arrangements for delivery visitation. Thank you!



## COOKING FOR CUPS

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It is Cups Café sign up time again! Please consider signing up to provide a free meal to youth and families in need. Plan on enough food to serve 60-80 guests. The cooking schedule for the upcoming months is as follows:

*February 5<sup>th</sup> – Dan Daubner*

*March 4<sup>th</sup> – Youth Group*

**April 1<sup>st</sup> - OPEN**

**May 6<sup>th</sup> - OPEN**

Please let us know if you or your team would like to cook for one of the open days. You can cook individually or have a few people from your circle of friends/team split the workload. The meals can be delivered hot or cold (to be reheated) at 10:00 am on the day.

Dan Daubner can assist in bringing the food to Cups Café on the drop date, if needed. Just let him know.

Thank you all for taking care of our community!

## SCHOOL LEVY Q&A

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Medina City Schools will have an operating levy on the ballot on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from the district will be sharing the most up-to-date information and answering your questions in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. and Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. Congregationalists have long advocated for public education and an informed electorate, so please join us and invite a friend!

## MISSIONS UPDATE REPORT FROM DECEMBER

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The Mission Team is so pleased to share the bounty of your generosity for the month of December. With your wonderful support our church made a positive impact on:

Hope Recovery

Operation Homes

The Juvenile Detention Center

Garfield Families and Prospect Closet through the Giving Tree and our ongoing fund to eventually fully fund a home for Habitat for Humanity.

So many benefited from individual kindnesses combined to create big outcomes. Thank you for continuing to reach out into the community and for being believers of action and love.

# ONA NOTES

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Dear Friends,

After worship this morning, meet members of your Open and Affirming team in the East Room. Bring questions, comments—just come and chat and get to know us!

Long time member Vicki Miller writes a reflection on being gay and being in the church. She and Tammie McGivern are members who have moved out of the area, but remain members and come when they can.

Questions/comments? Email [ONA@UCCMedina.org](mailto:ONA@UCCMedina.org)

Your Open and Affirming Task Force: Dan Daubner, Vicki Marty, Lily Wolff, Brad Rice, Pam Branscome, Alan Parkhurst, and Mike Sferro

## **Vicki's reflection:**

I came out 40 years ago! A lot has changed over those 40 years (mostly for the good) and some things have stayed just as awful as they always have been. I happened to come out just as I had joined the military. I was a newly minted Lieutenant and Lesbian at the same time. I was a Military Police Officer and my first assignment at my new duty station was a prisoner escort to the correctional facility at Ft. Leavenworth. I thought this was a great assignment until I learned my “prisoner” was a female JAG officer who was going to serve 14 months for having an affair with another female officer. That was my first “whoa, this gay thing really does have a serious downside” moment. Tammie and I met in the Army but did not begin our relationship until we were both civilians.

We moved to Lakewood and became very active in the local gay community. The first thing we did was join Liberation UCC- a congregation started as a ministry by and for the LBGTQ community. We quickly realized the important role Liberation UCC played in the entire Northeast Ohio area. There was a great need to serve the gay community and we became a soft-landing spot for men and women who had been forced out of their home churches. We were very active members of that congregation for 18 years.

This led me into a more activist role in the community. One of the things I am proud of is my work with Soul Force- an organization created to confront religion-based discrimination and violence using nonviolent resistance. One of the Direct Actions we were involved in was at Jerry Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church. Before our non-violent protest against Falwell and his churches anti-gay teachings, a group of us were to have a small meal with members of the congregation and attend the Sunday service. A few years prior, a similar event had been very successful and there was hope to continue the goodwill and understanding that was started at that first meal. We arrived and there was no one there. There was bread and water for us, and the service had already started. We were told they were not “going to break bread with homosexuals” . . . There are many more wonderful stories than there are horrific ones and the changes for the better far outweigh the bad. However, there is a lot of work left to do. Creating a safe and welcoming space for our LGBTQ community will have a huge impact- you may not see it, but trust me, it will.

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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**

February 6, 2011

Matthew 5:13-20

## Actions Speak Louder Than Words

**T**oday's Gospel lesson in Matthew comes from the familiar Sermon on the Mount preached by Jesus. In it, he essentially was instructing us symbolically, through the use of two very common elements, salt and light, about how we should live our lives. In Jesus' day salt was held in high value and sometimes distributed in place of money to laborers. In fact, the word salary comes from the Latin word for salt, *salarium*. Not only was salt important for trade purposes, it was also an essential commodity for curing the food people consumed, giving it longer shelf life. So for Jesus to refer to us as the "salt of the earth" is to say we are both valued and given the opportunity to show it daily in our actions toward others.

'Funny how certain childhood phrases never seem to leave your memory: my mom would often tell me, "words are easy, but your actions are what really count." So, like the salt, if we are each a unique and valued gift from God, then it's imperative that our actions show those qualities and encourage others who might not be feeling quite so gifted at the moment! Luckily for us, those actions can often be as simple as a smile or a "hello."

Similarly Jesus instructs us on letting our light shine on a lamp stand as a source for others, helping them find their way, rather than hiding it under a basket. Again, reminding us to be that living light so others are able to see potential around them. No doubt you remember in Sunday school singing, This Little Light of Mine. How I loved the animations; either trying to blow out our imaginary finger candle or better yet, yelling, "hide it under a bushel - NO!"

Today across the United Church of Christ many of our churches are celebrating the beginning of Women's Week. This special Sunday offers churches the opportunity to celebrate the many gifts of leadership women offer the church. Take a moment and reflect on the women in your life who have been "salty" at those times when you most needed it. Likewise, who are the women who have offered illumination on life's path for you? Individually, each of us has unique value and possibility for ministry. So today, in honor of the special women who provided salt and light in your life, show those around you that actions really do speak louder than words!

Deborah Bailey  
Congregational Vitality and Discipleship  
Mistry  
United Church of Christ