

ENTERING
THE
PASSION
OF JESUS
LENT 2025

A photograph of a church interior at night. The central focus is a large, glowing cross on a brick wall. To the left and right are two tall, arched stained glass windows with diamond patterns. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the cross and the windows. The overall mood is solemn and contemplative.

Teachings

This Sunday, we will examine the teachings of Jesus. This series is based on *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week* by author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine. We also meet with St. Paul's Episcopal and St. Matthew Lutheran to watch and discuss the video series by Dr. Levine each Wednesday in Lent at 6 p.m.

**Those who are able please stand*

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE "Amazing Grace" - arr. Mary McDonald

Cathy Fafrak, Piano

WELCOME

PASSING OF THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

"O Love, How Fast, How Flowing Free"

DEO GRACIAS L.M.

Latin, 15th century; trans. The New Century hymnal, 1994

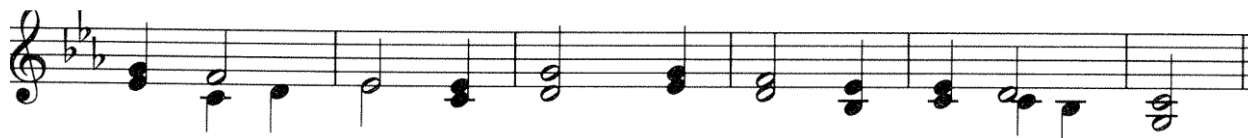
"The Agincourt Song," England, c. 1415



1 O Love, how vast, how flow - ing free, O Love how
2 Not as an an - gel vis - it - ing, nor form ce -
3 For us bap - tized, and fast - ing long, for us was
4 For us was beat - en, whipped, and tried, and tak - en



filled with ec - sta - sy, That God a hu - man
les - tial or - bit - ing, But born in flesh God
tempt - ed by the wrong, For us the pangs of
to be cru - ci - fied, So Love all this for



form should take, and mor - tal be for mor - tals' sake.
chose to be, robed in our own hu - man - i - ty.
hun - ger knew; for us the Tempt - er o - ver - threw.
us en - dured, and dy - ing, life for us pro - cured.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come, all who are weary, all who carry heavy burdens,

We come, not because we are perfect, but because we are loved.

Come, not to prove your worth, but to rest in grace.

We come, not to escape our flaws, but to be met by a God who knows us and stays with us.

God's justice is kind, God's love is steadfast, God's grace is enough.

Let us worship the One who welcomes us as we are and calls us into life together.

SPECIAL MUSIC "When Jesus Wept" – William Billings/arr. Philip Roberts

Chancel Choir

SCRIPTURE Mark 12:13-17, 38-44 (N.T. pg. 46)

Nick North, 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 "Teachings"

The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

HYMN "Amazing Grace"



1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to



now am found, was blind but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779; alt.

St. 5, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790

NEW BRITAIN C.M.

Columbia Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829; ar. Edwin O. Excell, 1900

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

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. You can also give through VENMO. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

UCC Medina
@uccmedina



venmo

Offering Invitation

We give, not out of obligation or guilt,
but in response to grace.

Giving is not about proving our goodness;
it is about participating in God's justice and love.

Let us give freely, trusting that our imperfect offerings
are multiplied by God and guided to those who need it most.

Lenten Reflection: What burden of perfection, expectation, or guilt are you ready to lay down in order to receive grace? *Write it on the paper as an act of letting go.*

***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.**

***Give Thanks**

**Jesus who offers us so many good gifts,
Thank You for meeting us in our humanity—
Not demanding more than we have,
But receiving what we give with joy.
Bless these gifts that they might serve your work of love.
Bless us, that we might live honestly, act justly,
and walk humbly with you and one another.
In your holy name, we pray. Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit"

Words & music by Doris Akers © 1962. Renewed 1990 Manna Music, Inc. Admin by Gaither Copyright Management. All rights reserved.



1. There's a sweet, sweet Spir - it in this place,
2. There are bless - ings you can - not re - ceive



and I know that it's the Spir - it of the Lord.
till you know Him in His full - ness and be - lieve.



There are sweet ex - pres - sions on each face, and I
You're the one to prof - it when you say, "I am



know they feel the pres - ence of the Lord. Sweet Ho - ly
going to walk with Je - sus all the way."



Spir - it, sweet heav - en - ly Dove, stay right here with us,



fill - ing us with Your love. And for these bless - ings we lift our hearts in



praise. With - out a doubt we'll know that we have been re - vived when



we shall leave this place.

***ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

MARCH 30, 2025

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

Live streaming of the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service is available at www.uccmedina.org/live

March 30 thru April 6, 2025

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun	ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
	8:15 am Chapel Worship
	9:00 am Gathering Worship
	9:15 am 3 rd Grade Bible Class
	9:15 am Choir Rehearsal
	10:00 am Blake Food Donations Due
	10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
	10:30 am Teen Church
	10:30 am Jesus Vibes
	11:30 am Children’s Choir Rehearsal
Mon	
Tues	
Wed	10:30 am Quilters
	6:00 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal
	6:00 pm Ecumenical Lenten Study at UCC
	7:00 pm Community Engagement Team
Thurs	6:15 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
	6:30 pm Bible Study
Fri	6:00 pm Sr. High Sleepless Lock-In
Sat	
Sun	8:00 am Blake Donation List Posted
	8:15 am Chapel Worship
	9:00 am Gathering Worship
	9:15 am 3 rd Grade Bible Class
	9:15 am Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
	10:30 am Jesus Vibes
	11:30 pm Women’s Retreat Follow-Up
	11:30 am Children’s Choir Rehearsal
	4:30 pm Youth Group

SAVE THE DATE!

Vacation Bible School will be held June 9-13!
More details will be available soon and registration will begin in April.

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

Scripture: Mark 12:13-17, 38-44

Sermon: “Teachings” – The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

Communion Table: The flowers on the communion table today are given by Pete & Alice Metzloff in memory of loved ones.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING IS TODAY

March 30, 2025

One Great Hour of Sharing is a UCC Church Wider Mission that can help those in need and change the trajectory of their lives! This Lenten offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty the wider church ministries provides resources, educated staff, and volunteers to help shelter, calm, uplift and guide others through these devastating times. Immediate help is given along with long-term guidance. Your contributions make a difference! Please consider a generous donation on March 30. Checks should be made payable to our church with “OGHS” noted in the memo. Your donation may also be made online through Realm - see the line item for OGHS.

MAY IS THE LAST CHANCE TO HOST UNTIL FALL!

Please consider signing up to host a coffee hour. **Three Sundays in May are still open to host!!** There are no coffee hours in the summer months. If you have any questions, Jane Watt will be your “go to” person for help. **If no one signs up to host, we will not have coffee hour.** Signups are in the East Room Hallway.

LENTEN SERIES

ENTERING THE PASSION OF JESUS

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERIES:

March 30: Teachings

April 6: The First Dinner

April 13: The Last Supper, with Dr. Greg Carey
preaching

April 13 at 4 p.m.: **Guest Speaker: Dr. Carey in
the Sanctuary**

ECUMENICAL WEDNESDAYS

WEEKLY AT 6 P.M.

Join us for our Wednesday Lenten series, along
with St. Matthew's and St. Paul's churches.

April 2 - The First Dinner: Risking Rejection
UCC, Congregational - 217 E. Liberty St.

April 9 - The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of
Friends. St. Paul's Episcopal - 317 E. Liberty St.

WOMEN'S RETREAT FOLLOW-UP

A group will meet next Sunday, April 6th after the
10:30 service to continue the dialog and
fellowship from the January retreat. All are
welcome!

HUGS IN A BOX

Our graduated UCC, C students were so touched
by our "Hugs in a Box" care packages, we are
going to do one more round this academic year:
"GOOD LUCK ON FINALS" boxes.

The lists were posted online on Sunday, March
16th. Any unclaimed items will be put on paper
lists (near the Blake Family sign-ups) on March
31st. **All donations due to the church on
Sunday, April 13th.**

If church members would prefer to donate to
defray shipping costs, they can do so via the
church Venmo:

<https://account.venmo.com/u/uccmedina> (last
four digits of the church phone number is 4559).
Type "Hugs in a Box" in the 'what's this for' box.
Thank you! Ellen Nolan & Liz Wolff

EASTER BAGS

It's time again to make Easter bags for kids with
incarcerated parents. If you would like to help,
please grab a white bag and plastic eggs, fill the
bags with age-appropriate items, **and return by
April 13th (Palm Sunday)** to be blessed.
Thanks for helping the Mission Team spread
some love to kids whose parents are not able to
celebrate Easter with them!

EASTER CANDY NEEDED

The DELTS will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt
at church after the 10:30 service on Easter
Sunday. We are asking for **individually
wrapped** Easter candy donations to stuff the
Easter Eggs. There will be a container outside
in the welcome area to put your donations in.
Thank you in advance! The kids appreciate it!

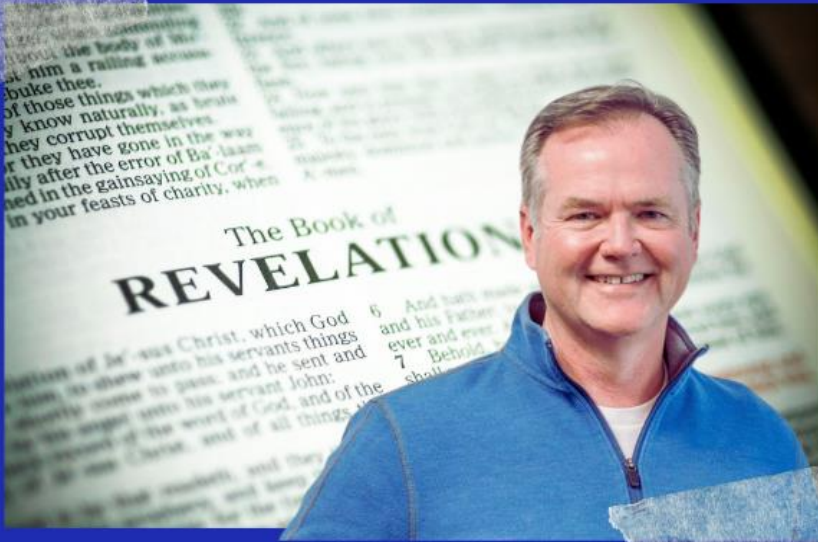
APRIL MONTHLY DONATION

We will be collecting **laundry detergent** to
distribute to Cups Café, Prospect Pantry and
other local pantries. Please place your
donations for the Mission Team in the marked
bins across from the elevator by the Mission
table. Thank you for your generosity!

EASTER FLOWERS

**This year will be a little different for ordering
flowers for Easter.** If you would like to order an
easter flower, please plan to take it home after
10:30 worship on Easter Sunday, or plan to
deliver it to someone yourself. **We no longer
have a "flower committee" to deliver flowers.**
*An assortment of lilies, tulips, daffodils and
hyacinths will be used to decorate the Chapel,
Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary for Easter
services (type of flower claimed will be on a first
come, first served basis).* Flowers are \$10 each.
You can order on Realm or by filling out a paper
form (can get these from the ushers) and
returning it to the office.

UNMASKING POWER REVELATION AND THE FORCES OF DOMINATION



DR. GREG CAREY

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT AT
LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Sunday | 217 E Liberty Street

April 13 | Medina, OH 44256

PREACHING: 8:15, 9 AND 10:30 AM

4P.M. AFTERNOON TALK

MEDINA

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. CONGREGATIONAL

JUNK DRIVE 2025

A Medina UCC Youth Trip Fundraiser

RECYCLE YOUR OLD, BROKEN, & UNUSED TECH TO SUPPORT OUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SUMMER TRIP!

PLEASE READ THE LISTS BELOW CAREFULLY BECAUSE WE EDIT THEM YEARLY
BASED ON WHAT WE CAN RECYCLE TO RAISE FUNDS

We Can Recycle

Cellphones, Tablets, MP3 players and Smart Watches
Laptops, Desktops, and All-In-One Computers
Gaming Consoles and Video Games
Metal Encased Stereo Receivers
Small Metal Appliances
VHS/DVD Players
Cords and Cables



We Cannot Recycle

Printers, Fax Machines, and Plastic Analog Phones
Refrigerators or any items containing refrigerant
Plastic or Wood Encased Radios and Speakers
Thermostats or anything containing Mercury
Vacuum Cleaners and Plastic Appliances
Marine, Deep Cycle, or Car Batteries
Humidifiers or Air Conditioners



Recycling Guidelines

- 1) Please remove your personal data before donating, or let us know if you need help doing so.
- 2) Smart phones and tablets must be unlocked and removed from your personal accounts before donating.
- 3) Please remove disposable batteries (AA/AAA/C/D batteries) from your devices and recycle appropriately.
- 4) We will take CRT/Tube TVs and Monitors for a \$20 donation and LCD Monitors and flat screen TVs up to 55" for \$10. We still want to help you recycle them, but these cost money rather than make it!
- 5) If we can't take your items, you can find an e-waste recycling bin near you at <https://summitecycle.com/bin-locations/>

Drop-Off Schedule and Locations

At Medina United Church of Christ
217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio

TUES. APRIL 8, 4:30-6:30PM

SAT. APRIL 12, 8:30-11:30AM

TUES. APRIL 22, 4:30-6:30PM

SAT. APRIL 26, 8:30-11:30AM

Questions?
Call the church office at 330-725-4559
or email meghan@uccmedina.org

At The Lodi Family Center
301 Mill St. Lodi, OH 44254

SAT. APRIL 12, 4:30-6:30PM

TUES. APRIL 15, 4:30-6:30PM

SAT. APRIL 26, 4:30-6:30PM

We are excited to partner with
the Lodi Family Center
Robotics and Tech Club
who will help us with
disassembling computers
for better recycling!



Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Embracing Love

For centuries, renowned artists have captured the varied emotions among the characters in Jesus' parable of the prodigal son, depicting on canvas and in stone the forgiving father, the bitter brother and the repentant prodigal.

If you were to pick up a brush on this the fourth Sunday in Lent, which of the characters would you paint first? Who would it be that you — answer honestly now — relate to the most? The one extending forgiveness or the one bitter because that forgiveness has been extended. Or maybe you are putting on those ancient sandals, trekking back home to make amends?

Don't worry too much about your answer, because over the course of our lives we will find ourselves identifying with each of these characters. There will be times where we are grace-filled, times where we begrudge forgiveness, and times where we are truly sorry for the things we have done.

Famed Dutch artist, Rembrandt, has two versions of the prodigal son in which he painted in his lifetime. The first was done while he was a young man at the height of his fame and domestic bliss. With a loving wife, children and an audience who clamored for his work, Rembrandt had it all. It's not surprising that at this time in his career he depicted himself as the prodigal without a care in the world, a woman seated on his lap, and a drink lifted high in his hand.

Life though changed for the artist. His children and wife died. His wealth was gone, as were his patrons who once commissioned works created by his hands. Rembrandt returned to the prodigal son for one of his last paintings before his death. Only this time, each brushstroke revealed a man who knew all too well what it meant to be broke and broken.

Great artists create from what they know in life. Rembrandt was no exception, capturing in his prodigal son paintings a joy that was fleeting and sorrow that was soul crushing. It would be the latter that would become the artist's most well-known painting.

And in the end, Rembrandt found himself running home into the loving arms of God. He died on Oct. 4, 1669, and was buried with no family and no fanfare in a grave set aside for paupers that was owned by the church.

We will all someday find ourselves running into the arms of a loving and forgiving God, who will welcome his prodigal children — always. But for now, how do we get better at extending this holy and healing forgiveness to others? How do we not become bitter? How do we find the strength to make the amends we must make? How would a great artist paint us right now in such a story of grace?

Praises to You, O God, who never turns Your back on us — no matter how far from home we have ventured. Embrace us now with Your love and may that love soften our hearts to the point where we our arms begin to open wider to all Your children who are lost and lonely. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.