

May 18, 2025



MEDINA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. CONGREGATIONAL





Medina UCCC's WISE Covenant calls to welcome, include, support, and engage those with neurodiverse mental health experiences. In *Metamorphosis*, we affirm that all people—regardless of ability—are created in God's image and called to ministry. As the Body of Christ, we walk together in love, breaking stigma and embracing each person's unique gifts. Through Scripture, we'll explore transformation, resilience, and God's work in every life.

**Those who are able please stand*

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE "For the Beauty of the Earth" - arr. John Purifoy

Cathy Fafrak, Piano

WELCOME

PASSING OF THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

"Canticle of the Sun"

Words & music by Marty Haugen, b. 1950

© 1980, GIA Publications, Inc.

The heav - ens are tell - ing the glo - ry of God,
and all cre - a - tion is shout - ing for joy. Come,
dance in the for - est, come, play in the field, and
sing, sing to the glo - ry of the Lord.

Verses

1. Praise for the sun, the bring - er of day, He car - ries the
2. Praise for the wind that blows through the trees, The seas might - y
3. Praise for the rain that wa - ters our fields, And bless - es our
4. Praise for the fire who gives us his light, The warmth of the
5. Praise for the earth who makes life to grow, The crea - tures you
6. Praise for our death that makes our life real, The knowl - edge of



light of the Lord in his rays; The moon and the stars who
 storms, 7 the gen - tl - est breeze; They blow where they will, they
 crops 7 so all the earth yields; From death un - to life her
 sun 7 to bright - en our night; He danc - es with joy, his
 made 7 to let your life show; The flow - ers and trees that
 loss 7 that helps us to feel; The gift of your - self, your



light up the way Un - to your throne.
 blow where they please To please the Lord.
 mys - t'ry re - vealed Springs forth in joy.
 spir - it so bright, He sings of you.
 help us to know The heart of love.
 pres - ence re - vealed To lead us home.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We have written down these words which are trustworthy and true,
God is the Alpha and Omega,
 God is the Beginning and the End.
All who come do the Living Water will never be thirsty.
 The water God gives is without cost from the spring of the water of life.
To this we worship. To this we witness. Amen!

SPECIAL MUSIC "Sing a Jubilant Song" by Jim Stanton

Chancel Choir

SCRIPTURE Revelation 21:1-6 (N.T. pg. 244)

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS Dave Butler & Rebecca Cline, Eric & CJ Conrad, James & Christine Johnston, Phillip & Molly Reecer, and Jeff & Amy Weber.

Congregation, when prompted, please respond:

We promise our love, our support and our care.

Let us pray.

O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith. Together may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

POET OF THE SEASON: Bright Eyes. *Shell Games*. Track 2 on *The People's Key*. Saddle Creek Records, 2011.

If I could change my mind, change the paradigm
Prepare myself for another life
Forgive myself for the many times
I was cruel to something helpless and weak

But here it comes, that heavy love
I'm never going to move it alone
Here it comes, that heavy love
Tag it on a tenement wall
Here it comes, that heavy love
Someone's got to share in the load
Here it comes, that heavy love
I'm never going to move it alone

COMMUNAL PRAYER

**God of new beginnings, You promise a world where every tear is wiped away,
where death is no more, and all things are made new.
A place where all your people gather in peace and are included in the Beloved Community.
We want to believe in that world— to see the new heaven and new earth breaking in—
but our eyes are tired, and our hearts are heavy.**

**We have carried things too long alone.
We have been cruel when we should have been kind.
We have looked away from the helpless and the weak.
Forgive us. Change our minds.
Change the patterns that keep us stuck.
This heavy love we cannot move it alone.
So teach us how to carry it together.
Write it on our walls and in our bones.
Let your love live in our hands, in our choices, in our presence.**

**Make us bold enough to believe.
Make us brave enough to carry.
Make us loving enough to live this new creation. Amen.**

SERMON "A WISE God"

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

The Rev. Dr. Lund is the senior pastor of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Indianapolis, Indiana and the UCC's Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice.

HYMN

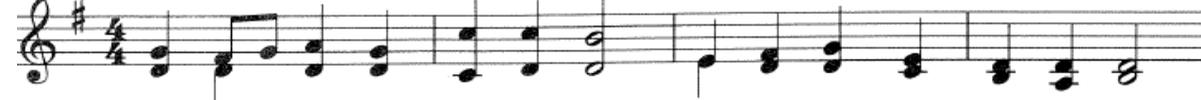
"For the Beauty of the Earth"

DIX 7:7-7:7. with refrain

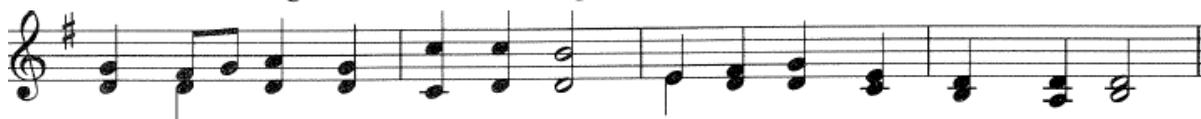
St. 1-3, Follitt S. Pierpoint, 1864; alt.

Conrad Kocher, 1838; adapt. William H. Monk, 1861

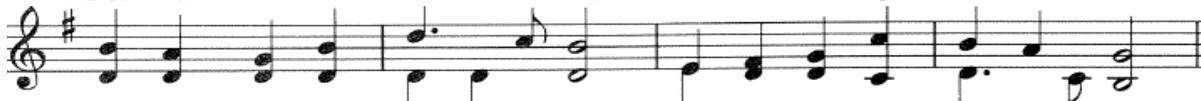
St. 4, Miriam Therese Winter, 1993. Permission given by Medical Mission Sisters.



1 For the beau-ty of the earth, for the splen-dor of the skies,
2 For the won-der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
4 For the good that love in-spires, for a world where none ex-clude,



For the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
Friends on earth, and friends a-bove, for all gen-tle thoughts and mild,
For a faith that nev-er tires, and for ev-ery heart re-newed,



God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.

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

To the thirsty,

You give water as a gift.

To the weary,

You give rest.

To the lonely,

You give presence.

Modeling your wisdom and love,

We give as we are able, and we unite our voices in praise

**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

Thank you for your prophets. Thank you for your ways, Our God, Our Christ, Our Spirit.
You do not give as the world gives. Your kingdom is from elsewhere. May we see you
moving and working in our lives, And live accordingly. Thanks be to you, Giver of Life and
Conqueror of Death. Amen.

*SENDING HYMN

"In the Midst of New Dimensions"

NEW DIMENSIONS 8.7.8.7. with refrain

Words and music by Julian Rush, 1985; alt.

Arr. The New Century Hymnal, 1994



1 In the midst of new di-men-sions, in the face of chang-ing ways,
2 Through the flood of starv-ing peo - ple, war-ring fac-tions and de - spair,
3 As we stand a world di - vid - ed by our own self - seek - ing schemes,
4 We are man and we are wom-an, all per-sua-sions, old and young,
5 Should the threats of dire pre-dic-tions cause us to with - draw in pain,



Who will lead the pil - grim peo - ples wan-dering in their sep - arate ways?
Who will lift the ol - ive branch-es? Who will light the flame of care?
Grant that we, your glob - al vil - lage, might en - vi - sion wid - er dreams.
Each a gift in your cre - a - tion, each a love song to be sung.
May your blaz-ing phoe-nix spir - it res - ur - rect the church a - gain.



God of rain-bow, fier - y pil - lar, lead-ing where the ea-gles soar, We your



peo-ple, ours the jour-ney now and ev - er, now and ev - er, now and ev - er - more.



THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

MAY 18, 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

May 18 thru May 25, 2025 WEEK AT A GLANCE

**Sun ANNUAL MEETING & SOUP LUNCH
NEW MEMBERS JOIN**
9:15 am Choir Rehearsal
10:30 am ONE SERVICE ONLY!
10:30 am Jesus Vibes
11:30 am Annual Meeting
12:00 pm Soup & Salad Lunch
3:00 pm Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund speaking
4:30 pm Youth Group

Mon

Tues

Wed 10:30 am Quilters
6:30 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal

Thurs 6:30 pm Bible Study

Fri

Sat

Sun 8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
10:30 am Summer Jesus Vibes

FINANCE UPDATE

Through April 30, 2025, we received \$156,442 in pledges, contributions or other receipts plus an unusual item of ERTC (covid era tax credits) of \$142,705. We spent \$173,6214 on our regular church operations, so through April we are in the black by a large number that will increase the Operating Fund reserves for future budget years.

If you have any questions about pledging or other church financial matters, you can contact Pete Metzloff via email at pete@uccmedina.org.

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

Scripture: Revelation 21: 1-6

Sermon: “A WISE God”

Guest Minister: The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

Communion Table: The flowers on the communion table today are given by the Lichtenberg family in honor of Will’s 1st birthday.

TODAY, SUNDAY, MAY 18TH: ANNUAL MEETING & ONE SERVICE OF WORSHIP at 10:30 a.m.

Today **we will have the Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund preach** during worship after which **we will have our annual team meeting**. The Rev. Dr. Lund will also deliver a talk at 3 p.m. entitled “Celebrating Neurodiversity and Supporting Mental Health.” The Rev. Dr. Lund is a UCC pastor and the head of our denomination’s mental health advocacy team.

STAY FOR LUNCH AFTER

Everyone is invited to lunch after the annual meeting today! Soup and salad will be served by our youth in Fellowship Hall. Plan to bring cash and make a donation towards our High School summer trip to Oklahoma!

SUMMER MUSIC

Here at UCC, the chancel, bell, and children's choirs break for the summer. This is where we need you! Summer is a great time to showcase one of your musical talents for the anthem. Individuals, groups, ensembles, dancers, kids, singers, instrumentalists, pets (just kidding about the pets) You can perform your selection at the 8:15 or 10:30 service or both. So, dust off those accordions, recorders, and ukuleles and share your talent or have your child share theirs! The sign up and details are hanging on the bulletin board in the East Room Hallway. See Tracy Gabrielsen if you have any questions.

MAY MONTHLY DONATION

We will be collecting **personal hygiene items**. These items will be used to stock up the 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!

UPPER ROOMS AVAILABLE

Our church receives bi-monthly editions of "The Upper Room", a daily devotional. Feel free to take one home with you to enrich your prayer life. Large print copies are available, as well. Look for them near the tower entrance and the chapel lobby.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

My name is Josh Swantek. I am an eighth-grade student at Buckeye Jr. High School and a member of Boy Scout Troop 500. During my four years in Boy Scouts, I have earned 36 merit badges. In my Troop, I have served as Librarian, Outdoor Ethics Guide, Troop Guide, Instructor, Patrol Leader, and Quartermaster. I have also attended the National Youth Leadership Training program and hope to return in 2026 as a staff member. My current rank is Life Scout, and I am working on attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. One thing that I need to do to reach this goal is to complete a service project.

The service project that I am working on is to build a table to house all the donations that come into the church for the Mission Team. It will be a permanent fixture and will replace the existing plastic table opposite the elevator in the welcoming area. The table will have space to display information about our church's missions and will have space to collect and store the items that the Mission Team collects. I thought to start this project:

- To increase the safety of the collection area by reducing the number of obstacles at the bottom of the steps in the donation area.
- To improve the overall organization of the collection space
- To improve the appearance of the donation area

Before I can begin building the storage unit, I need to raise money to purchase supplies. Based on my planning budget, I expect the cost to be \$900. Any funds that I raise beyond what is needed to complete this project will be directed to the church. If you would consider helping me with this part of my project, I would very much appreciate it. If you would like to help me raise money for this project, please send a check to the church payable to "Boy Scout Troop 500" and write "Joshua Swantek Eagle Project" in the memo line. Please either send this to the church office, or to my home at 898 Bunker Hill, Medina, OH 44256. If you would like a receipt for your donation, we will work with the church to ensure that one is provided for you. Thank you for your consideration!

Very Sincerely, Joshua Swantek





Memorial Day Volunteers Needed!

Once again, our church will be offering free popcorn, lemonade, and water during the Medina Memorial Day Parade. We are in need of people to help with set up, serving, and clean-up. If you are able to help (between 8:30 am and 11:00 am) on that day, please contact Mary Bessick at bessickm@gmail.com



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 am – 3 pm MONDAY THRU THURSDAY; FRIDAY 9 am – 12 pm

Revelation 21:1-6

Imagine

There's a magical place in New Jersey where children have been letting their imaginations run wild since 1954. It's called the Land of Make Believe and, just as its name says, it invites children to literally step into the nursery rhymes read to them at bedtime. There are the homes of the three little pigs to run through and the old lady's shoe — the one with so many children she didn't know what to do — to slide down from.

For years it was thought that as we grew older, we no longer visited these lands of make believe. It was thought our ability to imagine faded with each passing year. Researchers from Kent University in England proved otherwise as a recent study among 470 people between 4 and 81, showed that adult imagination was not only as vivid as a child's but became more vivid with age.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could right now play in our own lands of make believe? Wouldn't it be even better to enter God's land of belief that John is inviting us to do this day?

The beloved friend of Jesus writes to us from his seclusion on the Greek island of Patmos. It is there in a dank cave where he penned the visions, he received that would later become The Book of Revelation. And one such revelation calls for us to revisit the promise that God will indeed make all things new — a promise echoed all throughout scripture.

Today, we are being called to imagine a new heaven and a new earth for the former ones have passed away. This new heaven and earth don't necessarily mean that the current ones have been destroyed and something different has emerged. Rather the ancient Greek word for "new" — *kaine* — means "new in character" or "fresh." John is talking not about the *next* heaven and earth, but rather a *better* heaven and earth.

Let's now imagine together what this "better" might look like, especially for our earth today? Close your eyes. What do you see? How would you characterize this better earth? And more importantly, how is God asking you to be a pivotal player in making this better earth a reality rather than make believe?

Imagination is a wonderful thing for all ages — and it can be a powerful spiritual practice to engage in daily. For who wouldn't want to step into a place where God is making all things new, where death and crying and pain are no more? Let our imagining become the prayer portal for making this possible.

God of new beginnings, help us to look beyond the realities of this world and toward a better heaven and a better earth, where all Your children are fed, loved and safe. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.