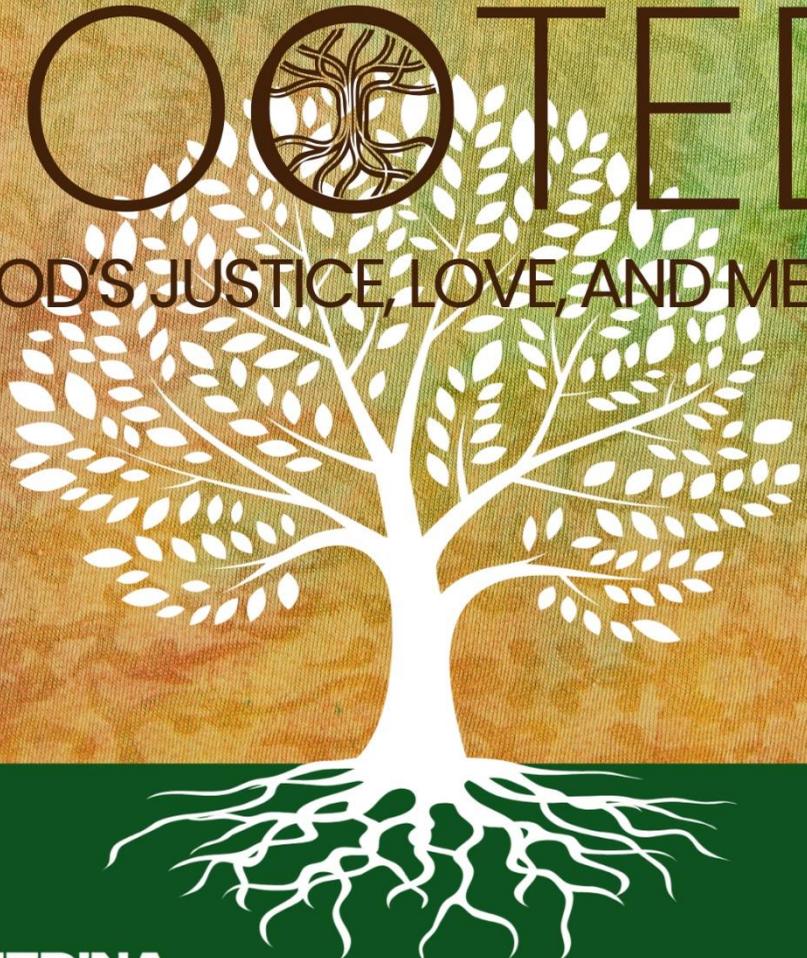


SURELY

ROOTED

IN GOD'S JUSTICE, LOVE, AND MERCY





Rooted: In God's Justice, Mercy, and Love

August 24 – September 26

This six-week series invites us to cultivate lives rooted in God's justice, mercy, and love. We are living in what the Rev. Dr. David Long-Higgins calls "these whiplash times," and it's good to stay rooted and strong in our values. Drawing from Jesus' teachings in Luke and the prophetic and pastoral witness of the lectionary, we'll explore how faith takes root not just in belief—but in practice, ethics, relationships, and priorities. As summer ends and routines reset, this is a time to remember what grounds us.

**Those who are able please stand*

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE "Ornamented Chorale" from *Partita on Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*

by Robert A. Hobby

Cathy Fafrak, Organ

WELCOME

PASSING OF THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

BEECHER 8.7.8.7.D

Charles Wesley, 1747; alt.

John Zundel, 1855



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, joy of heaven, on earth be found,
2 Breathe, O breathe your lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery trou - bled breast;
3 Come, al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all your life re - ceive;
4 Fin - ish, then, your new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less may we prove;



Fix in us a hum - ble dwell - ing, all your faith - ful mer - cies crown;
Let us all in you in - her - it, let us find your prom - ised rest;
Sud - den - ly re - turn, and ne - ver, ne - ver - more your tem - ples leave.
Let us see your great sal - va - tion per - fect - ly re - stored in you;



Je - sus, you are all com - pas - sion; pure, un - bound - ed love im - part.
Take a - way our love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;
You we would be al - ways bless - ing, love you as your an - gels love,
Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, till in heaven we take our place,



Vis - it us with your sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
End of faith, as its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
Pray and praise for your un - fail - ing, wound - ed arms out - stretched a - bove.
Crowned as saints, we ev - er shall be lost in won - der, love, and praise.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Jeremiah 17:7-8*)

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in God.

They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit.

May this worship help us root,

Into wisdom and kindness toward ourselves and our neighbor.

Come, let us worship!

***CONFESSION** (*see Romans 11:16-18 and John 15:5*)

Gracious Mystery, you are the root that gives us life.

You support us, and without you we cannot stand. You are the vine, and we are the branches.

**Yet we confess that we try to serve two masters. We serve money and we serve you,
but we know this cannot last. Money is a fine servant, but it is a cruel master.**

**Too often, we follow the powerful and the wealthy, instead of following you to the tables
where you sit with the poor, the weary, and the outcast.**

Our hearts are restless, and we have misplaced our trust.

Ground us once more in you, O God. Root us in your love.

Let our hearts find rest in your presence, and in the company of your people.

***ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Our God is with us,

Grace is new every day.

God is quick to wipe the debt from the ledger.

May we do the same and burn the receipts we keep of our neighbor and of our faults.

Thank you for your grace, Our God, Our Christ, Our Spirit; One God who loves us all. Amen.

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 "Shrewd" The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon (with much help from the Sermon Prep Bible Study)

HYMN "Praise with Joy the World's Creator"

LAUDA ANIMA 8.7.8.7.8.7.

The Iona Community, 1985; alt. © 1985 The Iona Community, used by permission of G.I.A. Publications, Inc.

John Goss, 1869



1 Praise with joy the world's Cre - a - tor, God of jus - tice,
 2 Praise to Christ who feeds the hun - gry, frees the cap - tive,
 3 Praise the Spir - it sent a - mong us, lib - er - a - ting
 4 Praise the Mak - er, Christ, and Spir - it, one God in Com -



love, and peace, Source and end of hu - man knowl - edge,
 finds the lost, Heals the sick, up - sets re - li - gion,
 truth from pride, Forg - ing bonds where race or gen - der,
 mu - ni - ty, Call - ing Christ - ians to em - bod - y



grace be - stow - ing with - out cease. Cel - e - brate the
 fear - less both of fate and cost. Cel - e - brate Christ's
 age or na - tion dare di - vide. Cel - e - brate the
 one - ness and di - ver - si - ty. Thus the world shall



Ma - ker's glo - ry, power to res - cue and re - lease.
 con - stant pres - ence— Friend and Strang - er, Guest and Host.
 Spir - it's trea - sure— fool - ish - ness none dare de - ride.
 yet be - lieve when shown Christ's vi - brant un - i - ty.

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

Invitation to Generosity

Church, you have worked hard.

Thank you for all the ways you give—of your time, talent, and treasure—both here in this community of faith, and in your workplaces, homes, and places of volunteering.

May you be fully present here, without rushing to the next thing.

Not everything needs to earn or produce.

**Sometimes, things can simply be—
a gift, an offering, an act of love.**

**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*

Generous God,

we thank you for the gifts you place in our lives:

for time to share, talents to offer, and treasures to give.

Thank you for work that challenges us,

for rest that renews us,

and for community that reminds us we do not labor alone.

We give thanks that not everything must produce or earn,

for in your presence we are free simply to be.

**Bless what we bring today—our offerings, our presence, our love—
that they may serve your purposes,**

draw us closer to one another,

and help your kingdom grow in this world.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

***SENDING HYMN**

"All Praise Be Yours, My God, This Night"

St. 1-3, Thomas Ken, 1692; alt. St. 4 Carl P. Daw, Jr. 1992. © 1995 Hope Publishing Company

TALLIS' CANON L.M.
Thomas Tallis, c. 1567



1 All praise be yours, my God, this night, for all the bless-ings
2 For - give me, by Christ's vic - tory won, the ill that I this
3 O let me on your love re - pose, let wel - come sleep my
4 Praise God who gives all bless-ings birth; praise God all crea - tures



of the light; Keep me, kind Mak - er of all things,
day have done, That from the fear of sin set free,
eye - lids close, Sleep from whose balm new strength I take
on the earth; Praise God, who makes, sus - tains, sets free:



be - neath the shel - ter of your wings.
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.
to serve my God when I a - wake.
one ho - ly God in per - sons three.

*ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BENEDICTION** (to this god, devotion by mjk, found <https://enfleshed.com/blogs/liturgies/to-this-god-devotion/>)

What I mean by 'god'
is bread for everyone
is shared rage at cruelty
is attention where it is needed
is grief held in community
is blooming uninhibited
is water flowing freely
is children at ease
is mystery and magic
is how trustworthy the rising
collective and determined,
powered by love,
rooted in truth,
sharing in risk.

Go and know you are all these and more. May you live with intention. May you walk humbly with your God. And may grace and peace be yours.

May we be a blessing to God's world. 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.

***POSTLUDE "Finale" from Partita on Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven - Robert A. Hobby**
Cathy Fafrak, Organ

Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service
Coffee Hour is hosted this week by Lorna Lindsley

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MISSION SPOTLIGHT – FALL 2025

Your generous support makes a difference! When you contribute to the Mission Fund you enable our church to help community partners like Cup's Cafe continue their important work. Thank you!

Cups Café: Impact. Connection. Hope. – 2024

Serving Meals. Building Community. Sharing Hope.



Behind every number is a name. A story. A spark of hope.

Find Hope. Share Hope. Serve Hope.

Quote 1:  Cups gives me more than a meal - it gives me dignity. 

Quote 2:  My D's are now B's - thanks to tutoring! 

Quote 3:  I came for the food. I stayed for the connection. 

Who We Serve 60% of our guests face significant challenges like homelessness or fixed income.
40% are community members seeking connection, belonging, or occasional support.



126 N. COURT ST
MEDINA, OH 44256

WWW.CUPSCAFE.ORG
330-241-5990

Established in 2007 Cups Café, is a faith-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit where meals are just the beginning. All donations are tax-deductible.

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER 21, 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

September 21 thru September 28, 2025 WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun **NOISY COIN OFFERING**

8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:00 am Children’s Choir
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
10:30 am Jesus Vibes
11:30 am Blake Donations Due
11:45 am Hospitality Team Meeting
3:30 pm Vibes Video Crew
4:30 pm Youth Group

Mon **2:00 pm Sermon Prep Bible Study**
7:00 pm New Member Class

Tues **7:00 pm Blessed Minds Book Study**

Wed 10:30 am Quilters
6:00 pm Bell Choir
6:30 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal
7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal

Thurs 6:30 pm Bible Study
7:00 pm Council Meeting

Fri

Sat

Sun **Blake Donations Sign-Ups**

8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
9:45 am Choir Warmup
10:00 am Children’s Choir
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
10:30 am Jesus Vibes
11:30 am Teen Council
3:00 pm Confirmation

COFFEE HOUR

Please consider signing up to host a future coffee hour. Hosting is simple! If you have any questions, Liz Wolff will be your “go to” person for help in Sept., Oct. and Nov. Signups are in the East Room Hallway. If no one signs up to host, there will be no coffee hour.

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

Scripture: Amos 8:4-7 & Luke 16:1-13

Sermon: “Shrewd”

The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

Communion Table: The flowers on the communion table are given by Alan Parkhurst in memory of his parents.

NOISY COIN OFFERING TODAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st

Look under the couch cushions, in the washing machine and check pockets. We will be having a noisy coin offering on Sunday, September 21st. 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 21st!

VIBES VIDEO CREW

Vibes Video Crew is for youth 2nd grade and up who are interested in making videos based on scriptures to be shown during church. We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays before youth group from 3:30-4:30. We will be writing the scripts, making props/sets, making videos and editing them to be shown during the church service. We will meet in rooms 9/10 at 3:30. A schedule will be available at our first meeting! Come join the fun!

NEW MEMBER CLASS

If you’ve been thinking about joining our church family, we invite you to our **New Member Class on Monday, September 22nd at 7pm** in the new library. It’s a relaxed time to learn more about who we are, who you are, ask questions, and get connected. Those who wish to join will be welcomed into membership during worship on Sunday, October 5th – a day of celebration for all of us!

BLESSED MINDS: Book Study

Tuesday, September 23rd from 7-8 pm.

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund visited us in the Spring. We will be reviewing her book Blessed Minds! Copies can be found at your favorite bookseller or the eBook through the Medina library.

SERMON PREP STUDY CONTINUES

Join us each week on Mondays at 2pm in the new library, as we gather around the scripture for the upcoming Sunday's worship. We'll read together, ask questions, share insights, and wrestle with how this ancient story speaks into our world today. This isn't about having all the answers - it's about curiosity, conversation, and community.

FALL CLEANING!?

Following Luke's and Meghan's sermon "Break the Rules" instead of Spring cleaning, the Property and Grounds Team is "Fall" Cleaning the old garage on **Saturday, September 27th**. We will be purging and eliminating items that have accumulated in the grey garage over the years. Please stop by the office and ask Cindy and/or Cathy for a key to enter the garage to verify items that you want to keep. Labels will be provided to identify the items you need for your ministry at Medina UCC.

Please call/ email Carl Skorepa at 330-421-3189/ carlskorepa@yahoo.com with questions or for additional access times. To quote John Wesley: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

DONATION OF THE MONTH:

In September we're asking for non-perishable food items for tiny pantries in Medina. The youth group will take a walk to distribute these donations at the beginning of October! Please choose items that are lightweight and not made with glass. Canned meats (with a pull tab to open), fruit cups or applesauce, granola bars, jars of peanut butter, and cooking oils are some great options that help fill people's pantries.

ENDOWMENT FUND GRANT APPLICATIONS

Grant applications are available now to apply for funding for special projects and improvements beyond the 2026 Operating/Mission Budgets or individual Team Budgets. Each fall for the past few years the Endowment Committee has awarded funds for many worthwhile projects. Pick up an application soon in the rack near the church office or request one be emailed to you. Complete it and return to the Endowment Committee mailbox in the church office or email to yatesmsla@zoominternet.net, by November 16th. Any questions contact Kelly Charnley 330-421-3313 or Matt Yates 330-321-9679.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING

October 5, 2025

On the first Sunday in October, UCC congregations are called upon to collect a special mission offering to support a just and compassionate United States and beyond. One-third of the funds raised are used to support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as advancing a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Please consider giving generously to this special offering. Checks should be made payable to our church with "Neighbors in Need" noted in the memo.

WE NEED YOUR POP TABS!

Just a reminder that we collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald Houses of Northeast Ohio. We will take any tab (pop, soup can, beverage, pet food, canned fruit and vegetables) in any color or size. There is a container in the Welcome Area in which to put your tabs. Thanks for collecting!

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go out to Rex Rickly, who was recently inducted into the Medina Kiwanis Hall of Fame!

TREKKING THROUGH AUTUMN 2025

Hikes leave promptly at 2:00 PM on Sundays. All hikes are 2 miles or less. Award tracking sheets will be available at the first few hikes and in the church office. No RSVP required, come to any you can. Rain or shine except if storming. Look for Pastor Luke, Kate Lindon, and/or Stacie Yates. Email Kate at katewlindon@gmail.com to be added to the email reminder list.

Third Hike: 9/21: Granger Wetlands Wildlife Sanctuary – 4023 Beachler Rd., Medina 1.3 Miles

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

Rehearsals for all our UCC Music groups have started for the year. If you are an adult or in high school and are interested in singing in the choir, contact tracy@uccmedina.org. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at 7:15 pm. Mrs. V directs the Children's Choir and they practice Sundays at 10:00 in the Chapel. All children grade Pre-K through 8th grade are welcome! For more information, please contact her at jen@uccmedina.org

FEEDING BLAKE FAMILIES

Feeding Blake Families mission launches for the 2025-26 Academic Year

The Feeding Blake Team is ready for congregational generosity in donating menu items to create a meal and snacks to 8 local families every other week this year. This ministry will impact 30 children this academic year for families most in need that attend Blake Elementary, a concentrated Title 1 school.

Donation sign-ups are posted on our announcement board in the hallway and menu items are due to the church by the **following Sunday**. Shelf stable donations can be placed in our labeled cubbies in the mission area on the church's lower level. Refrigerated and frozen goods can be delivered to the kitchen.

Thank you for considering adding a few items to your shopping list to feed your food insecure neighbors!

Extra items (hygiene, household needs, food, and snacks) are ALWAYS welcome. We ask that you (or you and a friend) consider donating in multiples of 8 to benefit all our families.

Feeding Blake Families Team

MISSION OPPORTUNITY

Join us for the annual **Step Up to Prevent Suicide Walk** on Sunday, September 21, at 1:00 p.m. As a proud WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) congregation, our church is sponsoring the walk this year as part of our commitment to reducing stigma and supporting mental health awareness. To join our church group, we will meet at 12:45 in front of the church entrance on the corner of Liberty and Broadway (be sure to stop by at the event registration table well beforehand to sign in and get your t-shirt first). To register, donate, or get more information, visit the event website. www.alternativepaths.org. We hope to see you there!

MICAH – UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETING

Discussion: Building workforce housing.

All are welcome!

Workforce Housing Gathering

Heartland Community Church

September 25, 2025

9:00 -11:00 am

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

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Prayerful Living

I recently discovered there's a monastery just over the mountain from my home in Vermont. Founded in 1960 by a Carthusian monk, the monastery prides itself on being very private. Throughout the years, only once was a newspaper reporter invited inside its holy of holies. Perhaps this guarded solitude is what helps the monks true to their motto, "the cross is steady while the world keeps turning."

While closed to the public, the monastery does have a website. You can imagine my husband's reaction when he found me reading the "how to join us" page. Lucky for him, I did not have any of the qualifications. That hasn't stopped me, though, from desiring a cloistered life.

The world just seems so volatile these days. It doesn't take much for my faith to waver, and many times I feel my cross is unsteady in this turning and churning world. I need more quiet moments amid the chaos. I need a stronger prayer life.

What I need the most, however, is to find a way to live a monastic life while still being plugged into the world. Is that even possible? According to author, Kathleen Norris, it is.

Norris wrote at length about the power of capturing "monk moments" as you go about your day. She explains that it isn't necessary to turn your back on the world to have deep communion with God. Monk moments are those moments of grace, epiphanies, and peace that are happening all the time. We just need to be open to them.

In fact, I am having a monk moment right now as I write this reflection in a crowded airport en route to preach for a friend in Miami. At first glance, this setting is anything but conducive to writing. The air is thick with the stress of many flight delays. The chatter is loud as people call loved ones with new estimated arrival times and gate changes blare over airport speakers.

And yet, this is my holy ground. There is nothing that is stopping me from talking to God. I can pray. Right here, right now. I can pray for the family that just walked right by me. I can pray for the woman sitting across from me worrying about her flight connection. I can pray for the loved ones I hold in my heart as well as the strangers filling the seats here at the airline gate.

After all, being a praying people is what God desires from us. And as the Apostle Paul reminds his young disciple, Timothy, our thanksgivings to God should be made for all people in all places. I don't need to run away to a monastery to pray. I can — and am — having a monk moment right now. What about you?

All-knowing and ever-listening God, fill our days with beautiful monk moments — moments where amid the noise and chaos of the world, we find peace and solace in your presence. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.