CONTEXT

is everything.

FALL 2026

HIT THE BOOKS

Falling in Love with the Bible Again

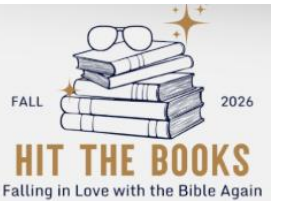
MEDINA UCC CONGREGATIONAL

September 6, 2026

HIT THE BOOKS: Falling in love with the Bible again

The Bible isn't a rulebook to master but a living library that invites us into wonder, wrestling, and transformation. When we release the need for certainty and control, we discover a text that is less about having the right answers and more about learning how to ask better questions, see more deeply, and live more faithfully.

Fall in love again with a book you assume you already know. Like rediscovering an old trail and realizing it was never a straight line to begin with, but a winding path full of switchbacks, shade, and sudden vistas. *August 30th – September 27th*



**Those who are able please stand*

PRELUDE "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" – arr. Gail Hazard Cathy Fafrak, Piano

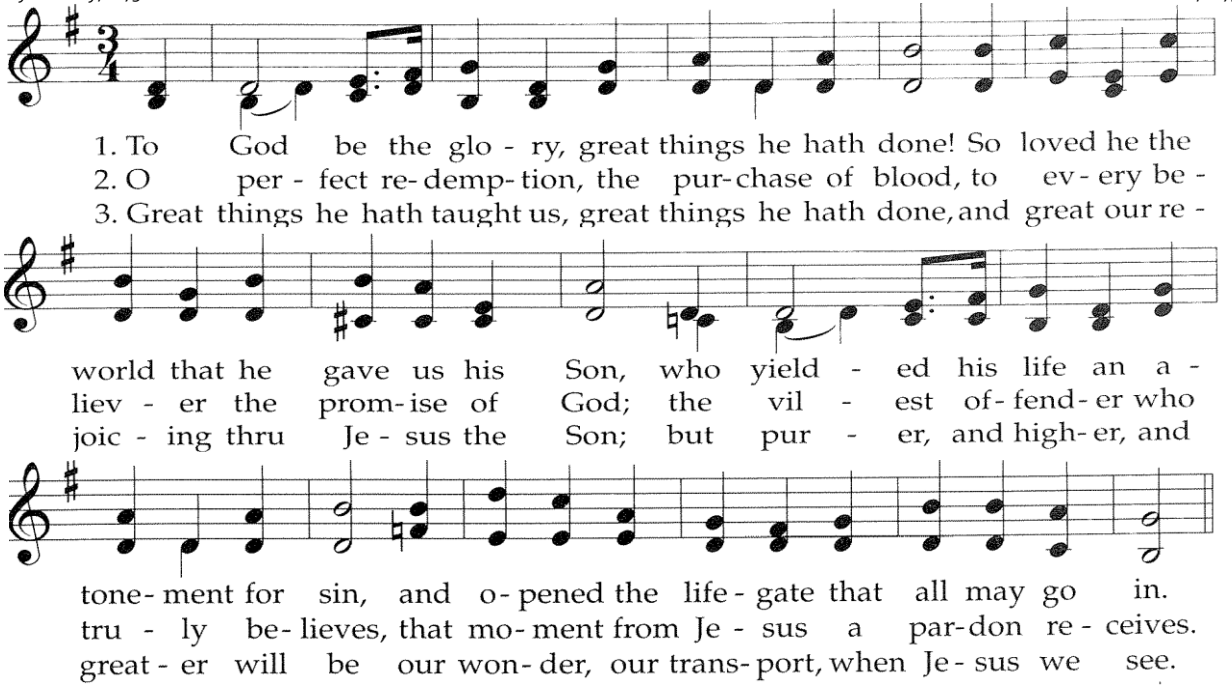
WELCOME

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (NCH #824, Trinity UCC, Chicago)

Beautiful are the works of God!
Beautiful also are the skins of God's people!
Beautiful is the mind of God!
Beautiful also are the hopes of God's people!
Beautiful is the heart of God!
Beautiful also are the souls of God's people!
God made the heavens and the earth!
To God be the glory for the things God has done!

***OPENING HYMN** **"To God Be the Glory" vs. 1 & 3** TO GOD BE THE GLORY 11.11.11.11. w/ refrain

Fanny J. Crosby, 1875 *William H. Doane, 1875*



***DAILY PRAYER** (NCH #826)

Come, O Creator, O Immensity of Love, O Eternity of Mercy. Come, and be with us and in us and beside us and over us. Be as hands upon us, and fashion us for shining. Be as warmth within us, and fire us for caring. Be as strength beside us, and shape our lives for healing. Abide in our prayers, the spoken and the unspoken; and make your word come true in our flesh; through Jesus Christ our redeemer. Amen.

SCRIPTURE Exodus 12:1-14 *(O.T. pg. 56)* Kimberly Gallagher, Liturgist
Psalm 149 *(O.T. pg. 550)*
Romans 13:8-14 *(N.T. pg. 152)*
Matthew 18:15-20 *(N.T. pg. 19)*

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE **"O Word of God Incarnate"** MUNICH 7.6.7.6.D.

William W. How, 1867; alt. Neuvermehrtes Gesangbuch, *Meiningen, 1693; harm, Felix Mendelssohn, 1847*

MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY OF GOD Stacie Yates

The Lord's Prayer

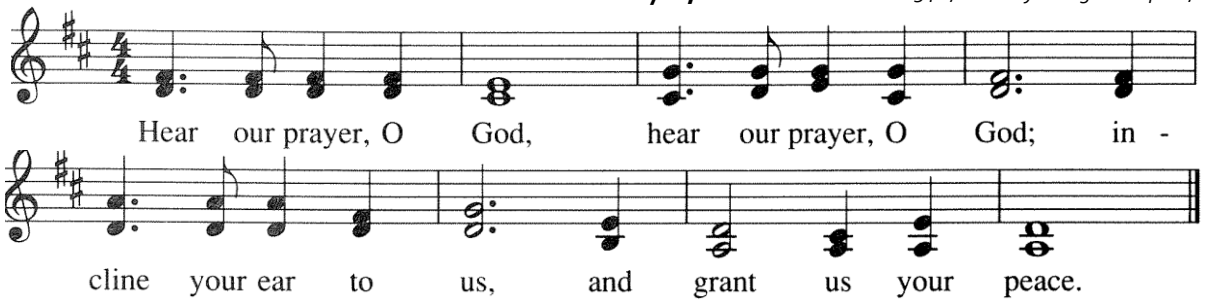
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

PRAYER RESPONSE **"Hear Our Prayer, O God"** *Ps. 134:1; Music by George Whelpton, 1897*



SERMON "Context is Everything" The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

SPECIAL MUSIC "Come Share the Lord" by Brian Jeffrey Leech/arr. Roland Tabell Jerry Mason, solo

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

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. All bread served is gluten free.

Invitation to the Table (prayer from NCH #847)

We gather around Christ's table, reminding ourselves once again of the amazing grace of the Trinity. Let us pray:

Eternal One, Silence from whom my words come;
Questioner from whom my questions arise;
Lover from whom all my loves are hints;
Disturber in whom alone I find my rest;
Mystery in whose depths I find healing and myself;
Enfold us now in your presence,
Restore us to your peace,
Renew us through your table,
And ground us in your grace. Amen.

The Words of Institution

Distribution of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving (NCH #848)

Gracious and loving God, You have made us one in the body of Christ, and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink. Now send us forth to be your people in the world. Grant us strength to persevere in resisting evil and to proclaim in all we say and do your Good News in Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.

***SENDING SONG** **"Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor"** BENJAMIN 11.10.11.10.

Brian Wren, 1973; rev, 1994; © 1994 by Hope Publishing Company *Jonathan McNair, 1994*

***ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***BENEDICTION** (NCH #875)

Jesus said, "You ought always to pray and not to faint."
Do not pray for easy lives;
Pray to be stronger people.
Do not pray for tasks equal to your power.
But power equal to our tasks.
Then, the doing of your work will be no miracle,
we will be the miracle!
Everyday you will wonder at yourself and the richness of life
Which has come to us by the grace of God. 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** "Postlude in D Major" – J. Lemmens/ed. J.D. Hazen Cathy Fafrak, organ

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****Coffee Hour will begin next Sunday.*
If you'd like to host in the coming weeks, sign-ups are posted in the East Room hallway.

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ONA Statement

"We, the congregation of Medina United Church of Christ, Congregational seek to be followers of Jesus Christ, taking as our own his example of extravagant welcome and love of all people. As an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, we welcome into our fellowship persons of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, abilities or disabilities, genders, gender identities or expression, sexual orientations, age, socioeconomic status, marital status or family structure, religious background, physical health, mental health, or any other life circumstance. All are invited to participate in the full life, ministry, leadership, worship, fellowship, and rites and sacraments of the church. In the living of these values, we hope to more fully follow Christ's commandment to love our neighbor and to create a safe space where love abounds."

Approved by unanimous congregational vote May 19, 2024

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER
SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

"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 6 thru September 13, 2026
WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun	8:15 am	Chapel Worship
	9:00 am	Gathering Worship
	10:00 am	Children's Choir
	10:30 am	Sanctuary Worship
Mon	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
	8:00 am	Men's Breakfast at Buehler's
Tues	**7:00 pm**	**Bible for Normal People**
	7:00 pm	**Property & Grounds Team**
	7:00 pm	**Worship Team**
Wed	10:30 am	Quilters
	6:00 pm	Bell Choir
	7:00 pm	Gathering Band
	7:00 pm	DELTS
	7:15 pm	Choir rehearsal
Thurs	6:30 pm	Bible Study
Fri		
Sat		
Sun	8:15 am	Chapel Worship
	9:00 am	Gathering Worship
	9:45 am	Choir Warm up
	10:00 am	Children's Choir rehearsal
	10:30 am	Sanctuary Worship
	10:30 am	Teen church
	10:30 am	Jesus Vibes
	11:45 am	Mission Team
	3:30 pm	Confirmation Kick-off

PLEASE NOTE:
THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The men's breakfast group will meet on Labor Day, September 7th @ 8 a.m. at Buehler's River Styx. All men are welcome!

Worship Highlights: 8:15, 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Scripture: Exodus 12:1–14, Psalm 149, Romans 13:8–14, Matthew 18:15–20
Sermon: "Context is Everything"

Communion Table: The flowers on the communion table are given by Shirley & Gene Krcmar in memory of their 70th anniversary.

FAITH FORMATION: SEPTEMBER

This fall, we're diving into some thought-provoking conversations about faith, Scripture, and theology.

September: The Bible for Normal People
Join Pastor Luke for a guided discussion on *The Bible for Normal People* videos at 7 p.m. in the Library:

- **Tuesday, 9/8:** Multivocality
- **Tuesday, 9/15:** Reading the Bible Like Adults
- **Tuesday, 9/22:** History of Interpretation
- **Tuesday, 9/29:** Anti-Apologetics

Special Event
On **Thursday, September 17th at 7:00 p.m.**, we'll gather for a discussion of John Fugelsang's bestselling book: *Separation of Church and Hate*.

HOBBY HORSE BEGINS CLASSES

Our Hobby Horse Preschool will begin classes on Thursday, September 10th. This means there will be extra traffic in our parking lot during drop-off and pick-up time. If you're coming to the church between 8:45-9:15, 11:10-11:40, 12:20-12:40 (T/Th only), or 2:45-3:15, please remember that traffic is ONE WAY entering on Liberty and exiting on Broadway during those times. Thanks for helping keep our little ones safe as they start a new school year!

SEPTEMBER DONATION

Please consider donating to help families with small children in Medina! The preschool is asking for boys and girls underwear (size 4T to 7/8), small bottles of laundry soap, bars of soap, toilet paper, and shampoo.
Place your donations in the bin across from the elevator, at the bottom of the stairs. Thank you for your generosity!

TREKKING THROUGH AUTUMN

Get out and explore your Medina County Parks with your church friends! Hike 8 trails this fall to receive an award from the Park District (backpack for first timers, pin for veterans). Hikes leave at 2:00 PM on Sundays. All hikes under 2 miles. Award sheets will be available at the first few hikes and in the church office. No RSVP, come to any you can. Rain or shine except if storming. Look for Pastor Luke or Kate Lindon. Email Kate at katewlindon@gmail.com to be added to the email reminder list.

9/13: Plum Creek South, 2500 Plum Creek Parkway, Brunswick, 1.5 miles
9/20: Allardale Park, 141 Remsen Rd., Medina (Lodge Entrance, park in horse trailer lot), Medina, 1.8 miles
9/27: Letha House Park West, 5800 Richman Rd., Spencer, 1.4 miles
10/4: Liverpool Meadows, 6601 West Law Rd., Valley City, 1 mile
10/11: Schleman Nature Preserve, 6701 Wedgewood Rd., Medina, 1.5 miles
10/18: Litchfield Wetlands, 3005 Avon Lake Rd., Litchfield, 1.7 miles
10/25: Shotwell Gardens, 4581 Foote Rd, Medina, 1-1.4 miles
11/1: Alderfer-Chatfield Sanctuary, 6100 Ridge Rd, Wadsworth, 1.5 miles (no pets, turn in award sheet here)

HOST A COFFEE HOUR

Please consider signing up to host a coffee hour. There are still open dates through November. If you have any questions, you can contact someone on the Hospitality Team or call the church office. Signups are in the East Room Hallway.

MISSION OPPORTUNITY
Step up to Prevent Suicide Walk

Save the Date!

The walk will take place on Sunday, **September 27th** at Medina Public Square. Every year, it is incredibly meaningful to see our community come together to support suicide prevention awareness, honor loved ones and remind others that they are not alone. As a WISE congregation (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged regarding mental health and neurodivergence) we are a proud sponsor of the Walk. Use this link to sign up: www.alternativepaths.org/events/step-up-to-prevent-suicide-community-walk-96nkf

FALL FEST 2026

On Saturday, September 26th our church will once again have a table with a craft for the children attending Fall Fest. The Community Engagement Team needs some help with this. We need volunteers to help with setting up at 8:00 that morning. Also volunteers to help the children from 10:00 a.m. till Noon. No experience necessary for the craft. The volunteers on the first shift will explain the craft. If you are able to help please sign up at **https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0949A5A72FABF5CF8-65427383-fall**

NEW YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

MUCC Youth Group
Open to all students in 3rd to 12th grade, an inclusive space to hang out, serve others, and have fun.
1st & 3rd Sundays from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Teen Church
A time for high school students to gather, refill our hearts for the week, and discuss the themes and scriptures from Sunday morning worship.
2nd & 4th Sundays @ 10:30 a.m.

Just Wondering
A new discussion group for high school students to talk about God, the universe, and everything.
Wednesday nights at 6:00 p.m.

Coffee and Chat
At Cool Beans with Pastor Meghan. You bring the topic, I'll buy the coffee!
1st & 3rd Thursdays at 3:00 p.m.

EMERGENCY CLEAN UP BUCKETS

The Heartland Conference of the UCC is requesting more Emergency Cleanup Buckets in response to severe flooding across the I-70 Beltway in Ohio. The buckets are distributed by Church World Services in places that are affected by natural disasters. I think we can make 20 buckets for the cause! Please sign up to donate supplies, and bring your donations to fellowship hall on Sunday, September 20th, then, come to Fellowship Hall after church to assemble a bucket!
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFA628ABFB6-65402817-emergency#/

DONATIONS REQUESTED

In an effort to support the parents of our youngest churchgoers, please consider donating some diapers or wipes to stock the changing tables in the upstairs men's and women's church bathrooms. Please sign up to donate from the list of requested items by scanning the QR code. You may also click this link for the list: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4CAFA728A0F8CF8-65352154-delt Thank you!

JESUS VIBES SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS SEPTEMBER 13TH

Starting on September 13th we will be kicking off another year of "Jesus Vibes" Sunday School! During the 10:30 service, youth can head downstairs after the Children's Sermon to learn, play and grow! We are excited to begin year two of our custom Sunday school curriculum, which follows along with the current sermon series in a way that is engaging, fun and age-appropriate. First, stop by the Sign In table to receive youth name tags and pick-up tags. Adults will pick up their children from these classrooms following the service:

PreK - K - Dino Den Room (Hobby Horse Preschool wing)
1st - 2nd grade - Busy Bee Room (Hobby Horse Preschool wing)
3rd - 5th graders - Maker Space/Room 9/10
6th - 8th graders - Room 7

Age 2 yrs and under - You are invited to the Prayground! In the south ⅓ of the East Room, adults with children 2 and under are welcome to utilize the comfortable seating, quiet toys and books to entertain your little ones, while still being a part of the 10:30 service.

ACTION! VIBES VIDEO CREW IS BACK STARTING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH!

The Vibes Video Crew is for kids 2nd grade and up who are interested in writing, acting, filming and editing awesome videos that explore scripture in a new and creative way! Want to join the fun? We meet at the church on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 3:30-4:30pm (right before youth group.) Contact Miss Stacie with any questions!

ENDOWMENT FUND APPLICATIONS

The Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that applications are available to apply for funding for special projects and improvements for operating year 2027. Last fall we received a record number of applications and were able to help fund two mission trips, add additional funds to three Mission accounts as well as sponsor two Pastor Lunches just to name a few. Maybe the Endowment Fund can help fund your next special project or event. Applications are available in the rack outside the office or can be emailed if necessary, by contacting the office. Deadline for submission is Friday, November 20th to the Endowment mailbox in the office or emailed to: charnleykmf@gmail.com. Questions? Contact Kelly Charnley 330-421-3313 or Matt Yates 330-321-9679.

MEDINA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL
217 E. Liberty St.
Medina, OH 44256
330-725-4559

Church Office Hours: 9 am – 3 pm Monday Thru Thursday;
9 am – 12 pm Friday

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - luke@uccmedina.org
Rev. Meghan Malone, Associate Pastor of Youth & Mission - meghan@uccmedina.org
Karen Brocco-Kish, Visitation Pastor – karenb7777@aol.com

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - office@uccmedina.org
Pete Metzloff, Finance Director - pete@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education – stacie@uccmedina.org
Tracy Gabrielsen, Director of Music – tracy@uccmedina.org
Cathy Fafrak, Organist & Office Assistant – cathy@uccmedina.org
Jennifer Vilimonovic, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool and Children's Choir – jen@uccmedina.org
Jack Sharpe, Maintenance & Custodian

Give online at www.uccmedina.org/give
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