

April 2023

Rev. Jeff Bandy

937-372-7601 office@fcum.org www.fcum.org.

Sunday Worship

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Contemporary Worship

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Attendance

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Sunday School</u>
February 19	98	20
February 26	100	33
March 5	97	28
March 12	100	32
March 19	86	24

From the Pastor

A new month is upon us and this month begins as we are headed into Holy Week. Holy Week is considered to be the most sacred week observed by the Christian Church. It is a time when Christ's followers are invited to put themselves in the crowd following the events of the Passion of Jesus Christ. Unlike the Christmas season, Holy Week and Easter aren't as culturally appealing, so it's common for many Christians to treat Holy Week just as any other week. Palm Sunday and Easter worship celebrations are observed for the most part, but the journey that Jesus took after the palm parade that gave us the opportunity to celebrate the empty tomb is often overlooked. If Holy Week is supposed to be the most sacred week of the Christian year, then what are we willing to set aside and or take part in to express our devotion to our Lord and Savior?

I encourage you to take some time during Holy Week to read each of the gospel accounts visualizing all that took place. (Suggested Readings: Matthew 26-28, Mark 11-16,

Luke 19-24, and John 12:12-21). Read one gospel account a day and before reading, invite the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to the fullness of God's love that is Jesus Christ. Also, on Thursday, April 6th, I invite you to join us for our Maundy Thursday service at 7pm in the sanctuary. The name-sake for the service comes from the Latin word Maundy which means "command", and it was during the Last Supper on Thursday of Holy Week that Jesus gave his disciples the commandment to "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34, NIV). On Good Friday, reread the crucifixion story with a sense of deep gratitude for the sacrifice that Jesus made for all humanity taking on the sin of the world.

On April 9th Suzanne and I look forward to the Easter Celebration with you all including a light breakfast in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00am-10:00am, Easter egg hunt at 10:00am and worship at 10:30am. When we take the time to journey with Jesus all the way from the Mount of Olives in the palm parade to the empty tomb, we experience the joy of Easter celebration at the depth of our hearts.

Joy and Peace
Pastor Jeff

A Voice for Environmental Stewardship

April 2023

Tree Seedlings

Sunday, April 23 is tree seedling distribution day. It is also the day after EARTH DAY. In this article I will share with you the names of the tree species and a brief description of each species and the number of each species that will be available, FREE. Remember, if you take a seedling or more, you have to plant it. Each seedling will come with planting instructions for best results. Enjoy watching your seedling grow into a BEAUTIFUL TREE. PLANTING TREES IS THE BEST WAY INDIVIDUALS CAN FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE.

Norway Spruce (10): A fast growing evergreen with short dark green needles and can reach 40-60 feet in height. This tree makes an excellent wind break and Christmas tree.

White Oak (3): A slow to medium growing oak that can reach 50-80 feet in height. This tree prefers slightly acidic to neutral, deep, moist and well-drained soils. While it does produce acorns it also has beautiful color and can live for centuries.

Tulip Tree (3): A large-sized, straight growing tree that can reach 100 feet in height. The leaves are the shape of a tulip or a red maple leaf. It produces a greenish white flower in mid-June. The tree is commonly found in established forests throughout Ohio.

White Dogwood (3): This is a slow-growing species that grows to a mature height of 25 feet. It has excellent white flowers in the spring and red berries in September and October, which birds love to eat. It likes well-drained acidic soils. Be sure to plant it in a protected area without much wind.

Redbud (3): A medium growing tree which is found native in established forests across Ohio. The tree grows 20-30 feet in height and is one of the first trees to flower in the spring with beautiful edible red to purple flowers. It has dark green leaves throughout the summer.

Wildflower seed packets (4): Each packet will have about $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of native wildflowers in it. Plant them by broadcast and cover them with about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of rich soil. Keep them moist until they germinate and have roots and are well-established. They flower at different times during the growing season. Plant them after the last frost. Wildflowers attract pollinators like butterflies, moths, bumble bees. They are especially helpful if you plant them close to a vegetable garden that has flowers that produce fruit, like tomatoes, melons and green beans. ENJOY! ~~Rev. Alan Barone, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

Stephen Ministry

Pulling Weeds: Bitterness

Before we know it, it will be time to work in our flower beds and vegetable gardens. I don't know about you, but so far I haven't mastered the art of staying ahead of weeds. Consequently, when I saw a recent Day Spring devotion with this title, I was intrigued and read it. Now I am sharing some of the thoughts taken from an excerpt from *Playing in the Dirt: 90 Devotions for Crazy Plant Ladies*.

The author uses an analogy comparing bitterness to a weed. While I don't know anyone who enjoys weeds or weeding, the author suggests that weeds of bitterness are easier to get rid of than other types. They are often the result of jealousy, anger, resentment, or unresolved issues. They can be relentless and seem to pop up just when we think our weeding is finished, but there is a solution for destroying bitter weeds. By radiating gratitude, we can scorch weeds of bitterness.

How long has it been since you were truly grateful and intentionally expressed gratitude? If you are like most of us, it may have been quite a while. A life of gratitude takes conscious effort, and it's often more difficult than it seems it should be.

Continuing the analogy, the author suggests that when we intentionally cultivate a practice of gratitude, turning over "hardened soil" in our hearts over and over, we discover the fertile ground for the growing new thing—gratefulness, appreciation, contentment, and gladness. Weeds of bitterness have nowhere to grow in a grateful heart.

What's blocking your heart from finding gratitude? To overcome bitterness, we must first own it. We may not be responsible for what has caused the bitterness, but we are responsible for what we choose to do with it. We have to be truthful with ourselves and make a conscious decision to change. Once we identify what stands in the way of change,

we can begin the process. It starts with being still and reflecting on what hasn't been working.

With God's help, all things are possible. He has set us free by the completed work of the cross, but He is always looking for our participation. He wants us to experience the abundant life Christ paid for us. I challenge all of us to begin by working on releasing our bitterness. If you haven't tried keeping a gratitude journal, that may be a place to start. It can be as simple as listing three things each day that you are grateful for. Sometimes changing the focus to what's positive in the midst of difficult times makes all the difference.

Our Stephen Ministers are available to walk alongside anyone facing life's challenges offering confidential, one-on-one support for as long as needed. To learn more, contact Becky Cultice @937-376-5747 or culticer@sbcglobal.net.

United Methodist Women

Women United Circle (formerly Women of Faith) will meet on April 17 at 1:00 P.M. in the Parlor. Any woman is welcome to attend.

Dorcas Circle will meet Tuesday, April 19, 1-3:00PM in the Parlor.

Men of Faith

United Methodist Men of Faith will meet on Monday, April 17 at 6 PM in room 16A&B (Community Center.) All men are invited to join us. Each person may bring their own meal and beverage. We will have a social time during the meal. A short business meeting will be conducted at 6:30 PM followed by a meeting discussing the garden and garage sale projects and other activities. All men, especially those who may be participating in upcoming projects, are urged to attend. This is a good time to be thinking about your donations to the garage sale. You can find more information in our Men of Faith pamphlet in the Narthex.

Community Blood Drive

There will be a blood drive in the Community Center on Monday, April 3, 2:00pm to 6:00pm. You can make a reservation for your preferred appointment time to donate by going to www.donortime.com or (937)461-3220. Remember that your donation can save as many as THREE lives!

Jackson Area Ministries

Spring is arriving soon! It's time to think about helping J.A.M. with their seed project again. The "J.A.M." program provides garden plants and seeds for the residents in need so they can provide veggies and fruit for their families. Please consider making a donation, (mark checks J.A.M. project) and place in the offering plate or drop seed packets into the basket in the narthex through Easter Sunday, April 9.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry is expanding and we need your help. Besides the prayer shawls and lap blankets, we are now also making chemo hats for those suffering hair loss due to chemo treatments. Please let the office know if you are aware of anyone who would find comfort in these hats, prayer shawls, or lap blankets given for those who are going through serious injuries, surgeries, illnesses or grief of death, divorce, job loss, depression or loneliness. We will see that they receive our gift.

We are also asking for more volunteers who knit or crochet to join our Thursday group (11-12:30) or would like to do projects at home. We very much would appreciate those who can teach these skills or can help problem-shoot for new members wanting to learn these skills. Please call Judy Mahan at (937)-372-5711 or (937)416-4015.

Lenten Offering for VBS

During the season of Lent through Easter Sunday, April 9, the church will be collecting a special offering to support Vacation Bible School. Your gift will help provide for children participating in this year's program. The cost is approximately \$30 per child and our goal is to raise \$3,000. VBS Offering Envelopes will be available on the table in the narthex or in the office. Please mark your check VBS. Thank you for your prayers and support as we prepare to explore God's goodness.

Save the Date V.B.S. 2023

Vacation Bible School is set for July 17-21. If you would like to volunteer with our crew, please contact Betsy Murray @ 937-768-1143 or Joyce Smith @ 937-609-3907.

More information to follow.

Educational Assistance Applications

Guidelines and application forms for FCUMC's Educational Assistance are still available in the narthex and church office. This year assistance will be offered to graduating high school seniors who are contemplating entering a college or technical school in the fall of 2023 as well as to upper classmen currently enrolled in college. These forms must be completed and returned to the church office by the April 16, 2023 deadline.

Passings

Faith Community church family extends condolences to Carol Stewart and family on the death of her sister Bonnie Wagoner, and to Suzanne Bandy on the death of her aunt, Barbara Meade.

Thank You

Many thanks for your prayers and kind, very important cards and messages as Dick has been undergoing treatments. Yours are all true blessings! God Bless You!

Tammy & Dick Byers

Nancy Roberts ((Tammy's Mother)

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Glen and I want to thank our church family for all the thoughts and prayers for my most recent health challenge. The surgery went well and recovery is going great. We are so fortunate to be surrounded by such caring people.

Blessings,

Carol and Glen Shaw

## Manley Proverbs

Goodness is about character – integrity, honesty, kindness, generosity, moral courage and the like. More than any of these, it is all about how we treat other people.

(Submitted by Charles Manley)

### FCUM

#### February 2023 Financials

|                  |          |        |              |           |        |
|------------------|----------|--------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| Monthly Income   | \$30,457 |        | YTD Income   | \$ 75,744 |        |
| Monthly Expenses | \$23,828 |        | YTD Expenses | \$ 54,004 |        |
| Difference       | \$ 6,629 | 21.77% | Difference   | \$ 21,740 | 28.70% |

**Deadline for May Faith Links: April 17**





## MOTHER'S DAY CARNATIONS

It is time to order carnations for Mother's Day. Place your order at the table in the Narthex before or after the church service on April 23, April 30, or May 7. The order form and payment must be in the office no later than noon on May 8. Please indicate how many red and white carnations you want to order. The cost per carnation is \$2.00. Make checks payable to Faith Community UMC and mark your check "Carnations" in the memo area. We need this form and payment in order to correctly place and record your order.

(#)\_\_\_\_\_red carnations (#)\_\_\_\_\_white carnations

Amt. paid\_\_\_\_\_check or cash (please circle)

Given by: (Your name)\_\_\_\_\_

Given in honor of (red carnation):\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Given in memory of (white carnation)\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you purchase flowers, you may pick them up immediately following the service on Mother's Day. Flowers not picked up on Mother's Day may be picked up during regular office hours Monday, May 15 through Friday, May 19. Thank you.

# April 2023

| SUNDAY                                                                                                                        | MONDAY                                                                                                                              | TUESDAY                                                                                                                                                                   | WEDNESDAY                                                             | THURSDAY                                                                                                                  | FRIDAY                                                   | SATURDAY                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                       |                                                                                                                           |                                                          | <b>1</b>                                       |
| <b>2 Palm Sunday</b><br>9:15-10:15-Sunday School-15C,Parlor, Room 11, 16A<br>10:30-11:30-Worship-Sanctuary                    | <b>3</b> 2-6pm-Blood Drive-FCC<br>6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A-B<br>7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C<br>7-9pm-Stephen Ministry-Library         | <b>4</b> 10-11:30-Lenten Bible Study-Parlor<br>5:30-7 pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC<br>6-8:15pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C,16 A-B<br>6:30-8:30pm-Trustees-Room 8<br>7-8:30pm-SPRC-Lib. | <b>5</b><br>No Bells or Choir practice                                | <b>6 Maundy Thursday</b><br>11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor<br>7:00pm-Maundy Thursday Service-Sanctuary<br>8pm-Choir Practice | <b>7 Good Friday</b><br>5:30-7pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC    | <b>8</b>                                       |
| <b>9 Easter</b><br>9-10:am-10am-Light Breakfast<br>10am-10:30-Egg Hunt (No Sunday School)<br>10:30-11:30-Worship-Sanctuary    | <b>10 Office Closed</b><br>6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B<br>7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C                                                 | <b>11</b><br>5:30-7pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC<br>6-8:45pm-Girl Scouts Leader Mtg.-FH 15A                                                                                     | <b>12</b><br>6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music room<br>7:30-9pm-Choir-Sanctuary | <b>13</b><br>11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor<br>2-4pm-Grief Support-Parlor<br>7-8:30pm-Christian Ed. Meeting-Room 8           | <b>14</b><br>5:30-7pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC               | <b>15</b>                                      |
| <b>16</b><br>9:15-10:15-Sunday School-15C,Parlor, Room 11, 16A<br>10:30-11:30-Worship-Sanctuary                               | <b>17</b> 1-3pm-Women United (new name) -Par. 6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B<br>6-8:30-Men of Faith-16A-B<br>7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C | <b>18</b> 1-3pm-Dorcas-15A-B<br>3:30-4:30pm-Mission Outreach Team Mtg.-Parlor<br>5:30-7 pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC<br>6-8:15pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C,16 A-B                    | <b>19</b><br>6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music room<br>7:30-9pm-Choir-Sanctuary | <b>20</b><br>11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor                                                                                  | <b>21 OFFICE CLOSED</b><br>5:30-7pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC | <b>22 Earth Day</b><br>6-8pm-Double I-15A/Kit. |
| <b>23</b> 9:15-10:15-Sunday School-15C,Parlor, Room 11, 16A<br>10:30-11:30- Worship                                           | <b>24</b><br>6:30-7:30pm-Cub Scouts-15 A-B<br>7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C                                                               | <b>25</b><br>5:30-7 pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC                                                                                                                               | <b>26</b><br>6:15-7:15pm-Bells-Music room<br>7:30-9pm-Choir-Sanctuary | <b>27</b><br>11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor                                                                                  | <b>28 OFFICE CLOSED</b><br>5:30-7pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC | <b>29</b>                                      |
| <b>30</b> 9:15-10:15-Sunday School-15C,Parlor, Room 11, 16A<br>10:30-11:30-Worship-Sanctuary<br>12-1pm-Edu. Asst. Inter-views |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                       |                                                                                                                           |                                                          |                                                |