

## March 2025

**Rev. Jeff Bandy**

**937-372-7601** [office@fcum.org](mailto:office@fcum.org) [www.fcum.org](http://www.fcum.org)

**Sunday Worship**

**9:00 Traditional Worship in Sanctuary**

**10:00 Sunday School**

**11:00 Contemporary Worship in Community Center**

**We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation**

## Attendance

Date	Worship	Sunday School
January 26	79	27
February 2	76	28
February 9	78	26
February 16	- Church closed due to inclement weather	

## From the Pastor

If you are a college basketball fan, then you know about March Madness. If you don't know about it, then March Madness is the end of the college basketball season tournament that takes place over three weeks. Sixty-eight teams compete until the last team standing raises the trophy. For fans it is a time of anticipation, disbelief, wonder, and in the end, celebration of the champion.

In the church in March through the early part of April, we don't have a tournament, but we do have the season of Lent, which is filled with anticipation, a wrestling of belief, the wonder of a Savior's passion, and in the end a celebration of victory of a risen Lord. This year we will be using Adam Hamilton's book, "The Message of Jesus: Words That Changed the World," as inspiration for our Lenten sermon series. Most Christians can speak of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection, primarily because of the big celebrations at Christmas and

Easter. Even though these events in Jesus' life are significant in our story of salvation, Hamilton's book reminds us of the importance of the message of Jesus which he shared during his ministry on earth. His message is one that speaks of the way to live a life as his disciples.

During Lent we will work through various scriptures containing Jesus' message which will help us be more like Jesus. In addition to the sermon series, our Sunday school classes will be using Hamilton's material to facilitate their discussions.

Make a commitment to come join us for study and worship as we travel through Lent from Ash Wednesday (March 5<sup>th</sup>) to the Easter Sunday Celebration (April 20<sup>th</sup>) I look forward to seeing you.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Jeff

## **Stephen Ministry**

### **Maintain a Strong Support System**

Whether you are a patient, family caregiver, or a concerned friend, navigating a health journey can be challenging. At times like this, having a support system that provides empathy, understanding and practical help is unbelievably important. That being said, this may be a time when it's extremely difficult to maintain these support systems due to medical needs, emotional roller coasters, and the demands of everyday life.

"Family" isn't limited to blood relatives. Often it's friends, coworkers, neighbors, or our church family who step up as well to provide emotional support, practical assistance, sources of information, and direct care.

### **Benefits of a Strong Support System:**

\*A support system may provide a place where emotions can be shared without judgment. Such an emotional outlet

can provide an opportunity for expressing and processing one's truest feelings.

\*The insights and experiences of individuals who have navigated similar situations can be extremely beneficial whether it's practical advice on managing treatment side effects or recommended coping strategies.

\*Knowing that there is a network of people to lean on can provide a psychological boost and a sense of shared strength, especially during long-term health challenges. As others offer time, empathy and maybe even a laugh or two, the sense of isolation that sometimes accompanies a serious illness may be alleviated.

Stephen Ministers are available to walk alongside you during difficult times as part of your support system. To learn more, contact Becky Cultice, 937-376-5747.

## Men of Faith

### Exciting Updates for 2025! Join the Garden Project!

We're excited to continue *The Garden Project* in 2025, with plans to expand the garden area! We invite all members, especially families, to lend a hand in this rewarding mission. Volunteering just an hour or so to till, weed, or harvest can make a big difference. Stay tuned for updates on how you can get involved and help us grow!

**Garage Sale Donations wanted** – Our garage sale fundraiser will continue with a focus on selling large items through Facebook Marketplace. If you have furniture or appliances to donate, please contact Bob Whipp at (937) 668-3137. Your contributions support our mission and make a real impact! Men of Faith monthly meeting is **Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm** in Room 16A and B of the Community Center. All men are welcome to join us for: **\*Delicious Dinner:** (*Watch announcements for menu*) **\*Fellowship** and meaningful connections.

**\*Brad Montgomery** will kick off a three-month series on planning. **\*Inspiring Bible Devotional** to nourish the spirit. Look for more details in your email soon. We can't wait to see you there!

**WE ARE COLLECTING LOVE PACKAGES:** Bibles, Reference Material, Books, Magazines, Daily Devotionals, Sunday School Materials, CDs, DVDs, BluRay, Bible games, and biblical puzzles – anything that helps teach the gospel, especially to children.

This past year Faith Community (you all) collected a total of 620 lbs. of Christian materials, including Bibles. These materials go to third world country pastors, many who don't even have a bible of their own to study. Love Packages founder and CEO shares the following in an email dated 1/17/25: "Today we received 375,000 New Testaments. We bought these with Bible drive money. They cost us only \$.33 each. Soon they will be going out on every load we ship. Also, 45,000 full Bibles are on their way here to be shipped throughout the world". He goes on to thank all who have donated. The people in third world countries are so hungry for the gospel, so if you are cleaning shelves and run across items listed above, bring them in and place them in the LOVE PACKAGES TUB located under the coat rack as you enter the education wing. Thanks for your help.

### **United Methodist Women**

**Women United** will meet on Monday March 17 at 1:00 pm in the parlor. All women are invited to attend.

**Dorcas** will meet on Tuesday March 18 at 1:00 pm in Room 15A&B.

## Mary & Martha

**REMEMBER: No Mary & Martha gathering in March. The Women's mini retreat will take its place on March 15.**

Come one, come all, for this extra special evening sponsored by the Mary & Martha gathering and jointly supported by the United Methodist Men of Faith. Our very own Xenia High School Jazz Ensemble has agreed, AGAIN, to share their musical talents for a toe-tapping, joy-inspiring evening of entertainment on Monday, April 7, pm in the Community Center. All women, men and children are welcome to join us for this open event. Potluck, as always, will be provided by the women – with a return of our signature church ham loaves!

Let's show our support for these talented young people in our neighborhood while reminding ourselves of the loving community here at FCUM!

Questions, call Laurie Krakowiak at 937-694-8114 or the church office at 937-372-7601.

## Meet the Handbell Choir Director

Jim McPeek was raised in a household full of music. His mother was an accomplished pianist and at an early age, Jim was singing in the church choir along with his parents.

During high school, he accompanied the men's and women's choirs and played for many special events. He played his trombone with the jazz band and concert band, as well as special events and also played with a big band in West Virginia while in high school. He attended Westminster Choir College where he worked with a variety of choirs and learned about conducting.

Jim graduated from Dennison University with a piano scholarship and of course, played with several of the bands and orchestras during this time. Professionally, he has played with dance bands, combos and even an Elvis Presley

tribute band where his sister was a backup singer and his brother played in the band.

One of the highlights of his career involved playing with a band in Atlantic City. The band was hired to play nearly non-stop in a parking lot there. The Beach Boys were performing nearby and Jim's group were privileged to view some of those performances.

In 1988, he accepted a position as choir director for a Presbyterian church in Newark where he remained for about ten years, directing both the vocal and handbell choirs. One of his greatest joys was when he played a nine-foot Steinway grand piano. For those who are not familiar with pianos, this is the grandest of the grands.

He taught choir and general music at Central Middle School from 1996 to 2005 when he retired from teaching. When asked how he happened to accept a job in Xenia, he told the following story: In August, the music teacher at Central Jr. High accepted a last minute position teaching in her home town, leaving Central without a music instructor. The Assistant Superintendent of Xenia Schools contacted Dennison University to see if the school could recommend someone for the position and the name of Jim McPeck was given. Jim was interviewed on Thursday, accepted on Friday, and school began for the year on the following Monday. Someone said that grade level was tough to teach, but he found it very rewarding and enjoyed the experience.

Jim is very complimentary of the members of the Faith UMC handbell choir, saying they are the BEST. Jim has played with the Greene County Concert Band for over 20 years, also with the Ray Foster Band, the Christmas Band and several more musical groups which keep him busy. Sometimes he plays bells with the choir in addition to directing.

—Joan Baxter

## **A Voice for Environmental Stewardship**

### **Marine Life**

I grew up in New Jersey not far from the Atlantic Ocean. Numerous times my family would go to the ocean for a retreat from small town inland life. Mainly I lived in Orange, a crowded suburb of Newark, and Verona about 6 miles to the west. I lived in New Jersey for the first 22 years of my life. I grew to love the Atlantic Ocean, especially Island Beach State Park. As a child, I remember getting excited when we came close to the ocean. I could smell the salty breeze coming off of the ocean and could hear the call of the seagulls and the crash of the waves on the beach. When I finally got on the beach I would see the horseshoe crabs and the tiny sand crabs digging in the sand. I would see the sea kelp that had washed up on the beach with the waves having been torn from the sea kelp forests off shore. The salty spray would get in our noses and when we would dive into the waves our bodies would become covered with sand and salty ocean water. What a delight!. This experience was a far cry from life as a landlubber.

The ocean has enriched my life so much that when I was a biology major at Montclair State College, I was considering becoming a biological oceanographer. Even though I have lived in Ohio since 1970, I still love the ocean and have been a member of Ocean Conservancy for years and have even taken a course in oceanography with The Great Courses.

Ocean Conservancy was founded in 1972 by scientists and ocean enthusiasts in order to protect the oceans worldwide from the pollution caused by plastics produced and discarded by humans, waste water released by cruise ships and fishing nets lost by fishing boats and ships. It is heartbreaking to see pictures of sea turtles snagged in lost fishing nets. Many sea creatures are endangered by ocean pollution. Even large marine mammals like manatees (also called sea cows) and whales of many sizes are endangered, injured or killed by boats and ships when they collide in the open ocean. The

Ocean Conservancy is partnering with stakeholders who use the oceans for their businesses in order to reduce and eliminate endangering sea creatures.

It is mindboggling to realize how many species of large animals there are that inhabit our Earth’s oceans and the air above them. Protecting that life is an important issue when we consider ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP. Respecting the life that God has put on this planet is a moral issue. Let us stand up for all life on this PRECIOUS PLANET EARTH. God is counting on us who were made in His image.

Rev. Alan Barone, B.A. in Science Education, M.Div.  
Ohio Certified Volunteer

### Sunday Nursery Worker Needed

Candidates must be 18 or older and must have a background check as well as receive Safe Sanctuary training. The nursery worker is expected to be available Sundays from 8:45-11:45am. If you are interested or have questions, please talk to Chad Mossing or Pastor Jeff or send an email to [pastorjeff@fcum.org](mailto:pastorjeff@fcum.org).

#### FCUM January 2025 Financials

Monthly Income	\$47,686		YTD Income	\$ 47,686	
Monthly Expenses	\$25,451		YTD Expenses	\$ 25,451	
Difference	\$22,236	46.63%	Difference	\$ 22,236	46.63%

#### Deadline for April Faith Links: March 17.

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave.”  
Ephesians 4:32

## March 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
<b>2</b> 9:00-10:00am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Nartherx 10:30-11:30am-Worship	<b>3</b> 7-8 pm-Cub Scouts-FH 15 A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15-C 7-8:45pm-Staph Ministry-Library 8:45-G.C.Spec. Olympic Basketball Prac-FCC	<b>4</b> 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 3:30-5:30-NHS Winter Guard-FCC 6-8:30pm-Girl Scouts-15A,B,C&16A,B 6-7:30pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC&C16A-B 6:30-8:30pm-Trustees-Parlor	<b>5 Ash Wednesday</b> 6:15-7:15pm-Bells Practice-Music Rm. 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary	<b>6</b> 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 2:3-4:5pm-Women's Club of Xenia-Parlor 6-7:30-Magic Volleyball-FCC	<b>7</b> 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC	<b>8</b>
<b>9 DST Begins</b> 9:00-10:00am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Nartherx 10:30-11:30am-Worship	<b>10</b> 8:45-G.C.Spec.Olympic Basketball Prac.-FCC 7-8 pm-Cub Scouts-FH 15 A-B 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C	<b>11</b> 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC 6-7:30pm-Girls Volleyball-FCC 8:15-8:45pm-G.S. Leader Meeting:15C	<b>12</b> 6:15-7:15-Bells Practice-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary	<b>13</b> 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 12:30-1:30pm-Membership Care-Parlor 6-7:30-Magic Volleyball-FCC 6:30-8:30pm-Scouting America Spycamore District-Tecumseh Council-FH	<b>14</b> 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC	<b>15</b> 9:30-3:30pm-Mary & Martha Women's Retreat-
<b>16</b> 9:00-10:00am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-10:30-11:30am-Worship	<b>17 St. Patrick's Day</b> 1-3pm-Women United-Parlor 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith-16A-B 8:45-G.C.Spec.Olympic Basketball Prac.-FCC 7-8:30-Boy Scouts-16C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-16A-B	<b>18</b> 10-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 1-3pm-Dorcas Circle-15A&B 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC 6-8:30pm-Girl Scouts 6-7:30pm-Magic Volleyball practice-FCC	<b>19</b> 6:15-7:15-Bells Practice-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary	<b>20</b> 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 6-7:30 pm-Volleyball Practice-FCC 6:30-8:30pm-Ad Board-FH 15C	<b>21</b> 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC	<b>22</b> 6-8pm-Double I-15A
<b>23</b> 9:00-10:00am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-10:30-11:30am-Worship <b>30</b> 9-10am-S. School 10-10:30-Hospitality 10:30-Worship	<b>24</b> 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts 15C 7-8:30pm-SPRC-Lib. 7-8pm-Boy Scouts-16A-B <b>31</b> 7-8pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-16A-B	<b>25</b> 10am-11:30am-Bible Study-Parlor 6-7:30 pm-Volleyball Practice-FCC 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC	<b>26</b> 6:15-7:15-Bells Practice-Music Room 7:30-9pm-Choir Practice Sanctuary	<b>27</b> 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 6-7:30 pm-Volleyball Practice-FCC	<b>28</b> 3:30-5:30-Winter Guard-FCC	<b>29</b>