

June 2025

Rev. Jeff Bandy
937-372-7601 office@fcum.org www.fcum.org.
9:00am- Sunday School
10:00am-Hospitality Time-Narthex
10:30am-Worship-Sanctuary
We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Attendance

Date	Worship	Sunday School
May 4	101	26
May 11	107	24
May 18	104	29

From the Pastor

As I am writing this article for June, I am preparing to go to the 2025 West Ohio Conference. This will be the first Annual Conference led by our new bishop Hee-Soo Jung. At this conference we will be voting on 4 Amendments to the Constitutions of the United Methodist Church that were passed by the General Conference in 2024. All amendments must be ratified by 2/3 vote in the aggregate across all annual conferences. The results will be tallied and reported sometime in the fall. Two amendments are associated with changing language that addresses inclusiveness and racial justice. One is an update to clergy educational requirements that provide for contextual adjustments across the globe. And the most impactful on the UMC's organization is an amendment to create regions to decentralize the structure which is currently centered on the United States. If ratified, this amendment on "Regionalization" would create 9 equal regions with the United States being one of the regions. Each region will have the capability to adapt limited sections of the Book of Discipline to their context without affecting other regions. All regions will remain connected by our core beliefs and doctrinal statements of faith and our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In addition to the General Conference amendment ratifications, the West Ohio Conference will be voting on the usual recommendations related to the annual budget, clergy benefits, and clergy compensation minimums, as well as three additional recom-

mendations. Of the three additional recommendations, the first is in support of establishing guidelines for energy efficiency for new construction, building remodels, and encouragement to upgrade current facilities to improve long-term sustainability. Second, a recommendation to create an LGBTQ+ task force to assist the conference any way they can to help support churches with being in ministry with and for the LGBTQ+ community. And third, a recommendation for seeking the formation of an Ohio site of the Immigration Law & Justice Network to assist anyone in need of support in Ohio. The work of the Annual Conference keeps us all accountable to each other and to the Book of Discipline to empower the local church to be viable mission stations that reach out to all people extending the love of Christ and seek justice for all.

May we continue to be a safe space for exploring faith and building community.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Jeff

Meet Julie Wickline

This wife, mother of three and grandmother of four is a very busy lady. You will often find her, along with her husband, Doug, greeting members and visitors at the entrance of the church on Sunday mornings. She is a member of the Open Doors Sunday school class and also plays in the handbells choir. In addition to her many other responsibilities, she spent ten years organizing the support provided to the Faith Community UMC students.

Julie is a native of Greene County, growing up in the Cedarville area. When she was younger, she often attended 4-H events at Camp Clifton and that is where she first met Doug.

Following graduation from Cedarville High School, she graduated from the Ohio State University School of Nursing. Doug (the love of her life) was attending OSU at the same time where they began dating and later were married.

Julie taught Sunday school, kindergarten through 5 years old for several years and currently serves on the Administrative Board at Faith Community.

Following graduation, she worked for a few years at the James Cancer Center in Columbus and later accepted a position with Ohio Hospice where she is the Director of Education and Staff Management. This is the parent company of Hospice of Dayton.

Julie has spent the majority of her career helping others. She shared an experience from some time ago when she got an urgent call late at night that one of the patients wanted to see a nurse. She got into her car and drove to the home in spite of the dark, cold, snowy night. When she arrived, the patient was pleased to see her and they talked for a while. Julie asked if the lady was afraid to die and she was assured, "Of course not, my eternal life began when I was born. I always have faith." Julie stayed a few more minutes and on the way home, thanked God for the opportunity to meet and talk with the patient and all the way back on that dark, snowy night, thanked God that she has the job she does and is grateful for the opportunity to help others.

Doug, who often serves as an usher at church, spent about twenty years with the Wickline Garden Center before the business closed. Currently, he is teaching through the Greene County Career Center at Greeneview High School, where students are learning about flowers and landscaping.

Faith Community is fortunate to have this active family.

—Joan Baxter

Mary & Martha Gathering

Please join us Monday, June 9 for a very SPECIAL gathering. We will meet in Faith Community parking lot at 5:30 to car pool to Spring Valley Global Methodist church where the ladies of the church will host us for a potluck dinner. Bring a dish to pass; the theme is still "picnic foods". After dinner we will walk behind the church to Pastor Dar Hensley's barn to see the two donkeys she uses for her outreach mission of healing, love and freedom. She will talk to us about her journey of starting the Donkey Assisted Discipleship called *Broken & Beloved*. We will return to Faith Community at 8 pm. Questions, call Laurie Krakowiak at 937-694-8114 or church office 937-372-7601.

Stephen Ministry

Ann Ledbetter, one of those who was involved in and supported Stephen Ministry since it was introduced at Faith, died since our last issue of Faith Links was published. We are indebted to Ann's commitment and leadership over the years and want to acknowledge her dedication and encouragement. Even when she

was no longer able to serve as a Stephen Minister, her heart was always with it. If you'd asked Ann about Stephen Ministry and how it was introduced at Faith, this is probably what she would have shared with you: Stephen Ministry offers one-to-one, confidential care to those in our congregation and community who are struggling with a special need. Each individual is paired with a trained Stephen Minister; women work with women and men with men. Stephen Ministers offer Christian support and care, **not** advice and counsel.

Stephen Ministry was founded in St. Louis by Kenneth Haugk, a Lutheran pastor and trained clinical psychologist, who called on nine of his laypeople to help as Christian caregivers. This ministry was named after Stephen, the first lay person the Apostles asked to care for the needs of the early congregation described in Acts 6. What began with nine in 1975 has grown to more than 600,000 men and women who have trained and served as Stephen Ministers. Currently, there are more than 13,000 Stephen Ministry congregations representing 190 Christian denominations in the U.S. and Canada and 30 other countries. More than one-and-a-half million people have had a Stephen Minister to walk with them providing Christian care during tough times.

Faith Community has been a Stephen Ministry congregation since the early 1990's. Four individuals learned about Stephen Ministry and saw the possibilities for our church. Bob and Dorothy Montgomery, Cliff McKee, and Ann paved the way by being the first to train to become Stephen trainers and Stephen leaders. Many others have served in subsequent years.

Nothing would please Ann more than to know that our commitment to Stephen Ministry continues. This Christ-centered ministry is not a casual ministry. It involves prayer, thought, consideration, study flexibility, and commitment. We challenge you to prayerfully consider joining our next training class. Being a Stephen Minister is not only helpful to others, it's one of the most fulfilling and joyful experience you'll ever have.

Stephen Leaders, Lynn and Mike Engle, Judy Mahan, or Becky Cultice, will be glad to answer any questions or provide additional information about what's been a life-changing experience for each of them.

United Methodist Women

Women United Circle will meet on Monday, June 16 at 1:00 P.M. in the parlor. All women are invited to attend.

Dorcas Circle will meet on Tuesday, June 17 at 1:00 P.M. in FH-15 A-B

United Methodist Men of Faith – Exciting Updates for 2025! Southwest Ohio Christian Book Fair – June 7, 3-5pm, will take place in the Community Center. Mark your calendars! Come meet **more than 15 Christian authors** and get signed books for children, youth, and adults. It's a wonderful opportunity to discover clean, faith-filled stories for the whole family, and a great way to support Award Winning Christian writers in our region.

***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 two to **till, weed, or harvest** can make a big difference. Land has been cleared, and tomatoes, peppers, beans, and squash have already been planted. **Last year our garden produced over a ton of vegetables** for the community!

***Help is needed for Men of Faith Garage Sale.** The men of Faith are selling items year round for the garage sale on Facebook Marketplace. Bob Whipp is searching for help to put items on Marketplace and field calls from potential buyers. For more information please contact Bob at (937) 956-6002 or Robert.Whipp@yahoo.com.

***Men of Faith Monthly Meeting – June 16.** Join us Monday, June 16, 6 pm in Room 16A&B of the Community Center. All men are welcome for: ***A delicious grilled meal** ***Fellowship and meaningful connections** ***Important Discussion** regarding our **Spring Financial Donations** ***An inspiring Bible devotional** to nourish your spirit. Look for more details in your email soon. We look forward to seeing you there!

A Voice for Environmental Stewardship
June 2025

The Endangered Species Act

Climate change and global warming are massive changes that have effected changes in many of Earth's ecosystems. They have caused the rapid decline of hundreds of species with families of animals and plants on Earth. Another way to describe the loss is to say that these animals and plants are being threatened with extinction because of environmental changes in their habitats. Habitats are also lost because of the expansion of housing and businesses, including agriculture. As the Earth's human population continues to grow, now at 8.2 billion, more natural habitats will disappear. Our government, with great bipartisan support, has wisely passed the Endangered Species Act in 1973. It seeks to protect our endangered species. In the U.S. many notable animals have been saved from extinction including: the California condor, the bald eagle, the grizzly bear, the humpback whale, and many species of birds have been saved from extinction. In fact, some 46 species of endangered animals have recovered under the Endangered Species Act. Many countries that have unique animals within their borders also have conservation laws that are protecting their unique animals. Gorillas, amazing African elephants and various species of the rhinoceros are also endangered. Poachers kill rhinos for their horns which are sold and used in traditional Chinese medicine.

God has given us this amazing planet teeming with life of all kinds. IN FACT, ALL ANIMALS AND PLANTS WERE THRIVING ON EARTH LONG BEFORE HOMO SAPIENS CAME ON THE SCENE. The least that we can do is CHERISH and PROTECT THE CREATURES THAT SHARE OUR PLANET WITH US.

Rev. Alan Barone, B.A. in science education, M.Div., Ohio
Certified Volunteer Naturalist

Church Hawaiian Meal

Sandy Pramer's brother-in-law, Hank Okuma, is going to bless our ENTIRE church family with a fun and delicious Hawaiian Meal on **Saturday, June 28, 4:30-6:30pm in FH 15 A-C**. The meal will include Kalua Pork, Teriyaki Chicken, Lomi Lomi Salmon, Pineapple Slaw, U-Hing Pineapple, Steamed White Rice, Veggies wth Noodles and Tropical Punch. If you would like to attend, please sign up in the narthex or call the church office at (937) 372-7601.

The meal is a gift to us, but donations will be accepted to help him cover his costs.

Thanks

*Dear Faith Community & Pastor Jeff,
We are incredibly grateful for your generosity in allowing us to use your space to host the Superhero 5K event. Your support played a crucial role in making the event a success, and we couldn't have done it without your hospitality.*

—Heather Culbreath, Violence Free Futures

+++++

Dear choir members,

Thank you so much for the prettiest little flower bouquet and unique vase! I appreciate you keeping my health issues in your continued prayers. I can't wait to drive myself in the next few weeks. I miss you all!

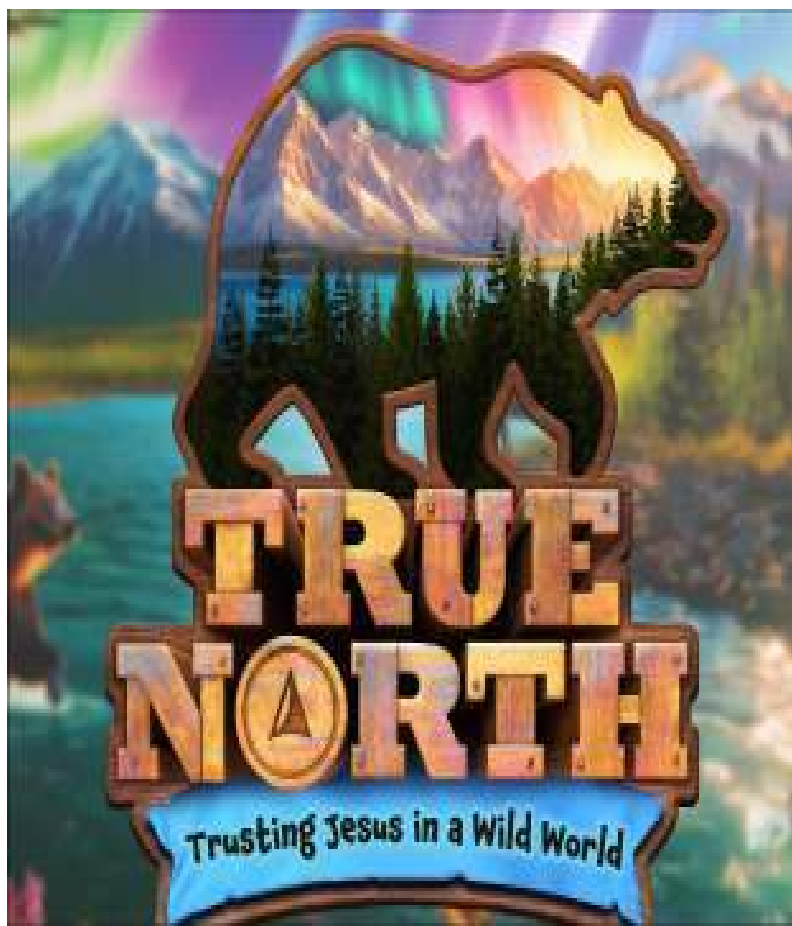
Cheryl Whitan

FCUM

April 20245 Financials

Monthly Income	\$25,024		YTD Income	\$111,017	
Monthly Expenses	\$29,687		YTD Expenses	\$120,659	
Difference	\$ (4,663)	-18.64%	Difference	\$ (9,642)	-8.69%

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES FOR JULY
FAITH LINKS: JUNE 16**



FIND YOUR TRUE NORTH! Vacation Bible School is coming **July 14-18, 9:30am-12:00pm** for children 4 years to entering 6th grade. Come be a part of this year's **ADVENTURE WITH GOD**. There are many areas needing help: Decorating on Thursday, July 10 and Friday, July 11; Classroom Teachers and Assistants; people to help with crafts and games; and people to bake cupcakes and cookies. If you are able to help in any way, please contact Betsy Murray at gmama975@aol.com or (937) 768-1143 or Joyce Smith at Jes1129@aol.com or (937) 372-6576.

June 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9-10am-Sunday School-CC 16A, Rm. 8, 11, Parlor. 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship Service-Sanctuary 11:45-Scholarship Interview-Parlor	2 6:45-8pm-Special Olympics-FCC 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-FH-15-A&B 7-8:45pm-Stephen Ministry-Library	3 10-11:30am- Bible Study-Parlor 6:30-8:30pm-Trustees-Parlor	4	5 11am-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 12-2:30-pm-Women's Club of Xenia Luncheon-FH	6	7 10am-5pm-Private Event
8 9-10am-Sunday School-CC 16A, Rm. 8, 11, Parlor 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	9 6pm-8pm-Mary & Martha-FCC 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-FH-AB	10 10-11:30am- Bible Study-Parlor	11	12 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	13	14 FLAG DAY
15 FATHER'S DAY 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am- Worship Services-Sanc..	16 1-3pm-Women United-Parlor 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-FH 15A-B	17 10-11:30 Bible Study-Parlor 1-3pm- Dorcas Circle-15- A-B 3:30-4:30pm-Mission Outreach-Parlor	18	19 JUNETEENTH 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	20 SUMMER SOLSTICE	21
22 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Worship Services-Sanc.	23 6-8:30pm-Men of Faith- 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-15AB 7-8:30pm-SPRC-Library	24 10-11:30 Bible Study-Parlor	25	26 11-12pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	27	28 5-7pm-Luau Dinner-FH
29 9-10am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Hospitality Time-Narthex 10:30-11:30am-Sanctuary	30 7-8:30pm-Boy Scouts-15C 7-8pm-Cub Scouts-15AB 7-8:30pm-SPRC Meeting library					