



April

2026 Newsletter

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The Pastor's Report

My daughter and I begin a long journey across country on April 16. After twelve years in Washington, D.C., she is heading to Washington State to continue her career with the Seattle Art Museum. She will be packed and ready to travel along with podcasts, Spotify music, and dear old dad to keep each other on the westward way.

Our Lenten journey concludes this weekend with the Easter celebrations. Lent always feels like a long season as we make our way through the unpredictable weather of late February and March. This season was especially bizarre with the high winds, warm temperatures then 40 or 50 degree changes less than 24 hours later. As I look ahead to Easter weekend, it looks like some rainy days...or maybe not.

We are however in an even longer season of disturbance that is far more serious than just the weather. Wars persist, the economy fluctuates, food and gas prices escalate, the stock market and investments have decreased in value, retirement funds are obliterated, human rights are violated and ignored, and we are anxious about the future our grandchildren and children face. Those are wearisome roads to travel.

I am not going to say, "Have faith and trust in God. It is all going to be ok." You have experienced too many detours, wrong turns, and even fatal crashes in life for me to simplify the complexities of life with platitudes and promises. So, what do faithful people do in times like this? Well, we can turn to the stories of salvation. Those are the Exodus story, the Holy Week memories, or perhaps your own family history. These journey stories are filled with fears, despair, denials, and heartache. And these stories are profound and prophetic because they teach us to have courage. They allow us to express our disgust and disappointment, "My God, my God, why have you left me?" Our inner compass is haywire. We can't seem to find our way to that place of life and healing. A return or resurrection to a good life is unfathomable.

What's it like after you lose a job? What fears do we have when our marriage ends in divorce? The children are on their own and mired in addictions? Or when we face life threatening illness? The human experience is relentlessly filled with long journeys. We look for creative solutions. We learn to look for assistance along the way. And surprises pop up along the way. Blessings and hope are part of the journey of faith. They will arrive – often just in time when we most need the rerouting to start up. That is Easter faith. Amen. Alleluia.

Pastor Dan

Upcoming Events

Holy Week Services

There are several opportunities to gather in the spirit of prayer and faithfulness at First Church during Holy Week.

On **Wednesday, April 1**, we will hold a special noon time prayer service celebrating our 8th anniversary as an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation.

On **Maundy Thursday**, we hold our 7 PM worship with the choir. The service is not online. It is always a beautiful and solemn occasion as we remember the evening of the Last Supper.

Good Friday will be a three hour time of worship, study, and prayer beginning at noon. The study time will be our continuation of the “Living the Questions” series that we have been using during the season of Lent. The prayer time will be an opportunity in the sanctuary with quiet reflection.

Saturday will be a church cleanup day and final preparation for Easter. Volunteers will be in the garden from nine to noon. Others will be in the sanctuary getting it ready with the flowers that are delivered.

Our **Easter Sunrise** service will be at 7:00 a.m., in-person only. The **Easter worship** will be at 10:15 a.m., available both in-person and via Facebook Live (facebook.com/firstucccincy) – both the chancel and handbell choirs will perform at this later service.

Easter is time to reconnect with friends, family, and meet new friends as we celebrate God’s promise of new life and resurrection.

Men to Meet

Maybe we will discuss Faith, Fitness, and Finances. Maybe we will discuss Richard Rohr, Thomas Merton, The Monastic Way, or some new article we’ve read. Maybe we will just say, “How about ‘dem Reds?” Not sure what the Spirit will present us, but I do know that on Sunday, April 12, following worship, I will meet with any male of the church interested in seeing where the Spirit might be calling in this time and place. All are welcome. We will likely meet in the Parlor. This may or may not be an on-going group. Curious? Come and listen, come and talk, come and have a snack or coffee. Again, April 12 in the parlor following our church service.

What's the Buzz? – Church Music, Media, and Faith Formation

April is starting strong in 2026 with Holy Week. Holy Week is undoubtedly the busiest week of the church calendar. We had a wonderful gathering on Palm Sunday, and I look forward to the week ahead. Some important gatherings to note: a prayer service at noon on Wednesday; Maundy Thursday service at 7:00 p.m.; Good Friday service at noon with a “Living the Questions” session to follow; Easter sunrise service at 7:00 a.m.; and Easter worship at 10:15 a.m. with an egg hunt to follow. Only the 10:15 service Easter morning will be available on Facebook Live; all the rest are in-person only. A busy week indeed!

Wednesday's prayer service is a special celebration of our ONA anniversary. We voted to become an Open and Affirming congregation eight years ago, in 2018. We have been actively living out our ONA covenant in many ways for many years, but now I am grateful to see us more present in Cincinnati (at Pride nights, Cincy Pride Festival, and hosting the Interfaith service) and throughout the country (singing at the national gathering in Cincinnati, Brad and I traveling to Kansas City for it last year, and me now being on the national planning committee). What are ways you'd like to see the church be more present in living out our ONA covenant? When is the last time you read the covenant in its entirety? It's worth the reread.

Musically, the handbell and chancel choirs are bringing us a lot of gifts this month. Don't they always?! The handbells are performing two pieces Easter morning at the later service – “Hope Abides” and “Easter Rejoicing.” The choir anthem that morning is “Crown Him Lord This Easter Day!” The baritones in the choir take a break on April 12, as the sopranos and altos sing “Canon of Praise,” which uses the melody of Pachelbel's *Canon in D*. On April 19th, the choir will sing “A Gospel Alleluia,” and will close out the month with “What a Friend” on the 26th.

As you may have heard (or because of this issue, maybe you didn't hear...), after nearly 31 years of service, the sanctuary sound system has died. While I have dealt with microphones dying and connectivity issues over my five years (did you notice the choir loft went from 5 mics to 3?), this speaker issue is beyond me. The Bose speakers throughout the sanctuary, narthex, and carport were

mid-grade when purchased new in 1995. They have done the best they could but are now giving out and causing an annoying hum – I have couple videos if you would like to hear it! I have been in communication with two different companies to have our sound system fully upgraded as well as installing permanent projectors on the back wall of the sanctuary, thus allowing us to project two images of the PowerPoint instead of just the one. While I don't have official bids yet, I have been given estimates of around \$80,000. The capital campaign is well underway for this upgrade, and I want to thank everyone who has contributed so far. Once I have official numbers (hopefully the week after Holy Week), I will present them and we can move forward in upgrading a very outdated system. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Have a great month!
Jimmy

Holy Week with Joan Chittister – The Monastic Way

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1: Money is not an end, it is a means. But a means to what? It depends on whether you set out to get money for the sake of sufficiency or in order to gain affluence.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2: It is the way we measure our riches that will determine the quality of our lives.

FRIDAY, APRIL 3: To be really happy in life there must be something we do that is more important to us than making money.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4: The ability to be happy with “enough” rather than “the best,” or “the most,” or “the latest,” or “the biggest,” is the sign of a truly well-developed person.

SUNDAY, APRIL 5: The greatest economic question is what else of value would be left in your life if you found yourself down an economic level or two? Anything?

Finance Committee News, April 2026

At the March Board meeting, the Finance Committee recommended to the Board that the \$11,738 left from funding the Family Center be moved from designated funds to the Capital Campaign Fund. This recommendation was approved. This money is currently in the Church's General Fund and will be moved to an online Goldman Sachs account created for the Capital Campaign. To ease the impact to the General Fund checking account, the money will be transferred over three months: \$4000 in April and May, and the remainder in June.

It appears that fate has tipped our hand; the Finance Committee will recommend to the Board in April that the AV upgrade becomes the first Capital Campaign project. Members of the congregation have been voting with their words and their wallets; \$11,250 has already been donated for the AV upgrade. Jimmy Wiederhold is currently getting the required bids for the Board, and we will move on this action item as soon as possible. Additional donations are welcome!

The Rummage Sale Keeps on Giving and Giving

I just wanted to let our church family know what good the rummage sale does in various communities. We know many people benefit from the bag sale and many of our treasures. This is just a list of items that helped many neighborhoods that I know of. I am sure there are many other neighborhoods that were helped as well. Thanks for all the Guild and our church does to help others. - Sue Bilz

Dater High School: Pants, shirts, shorts (Price Hill)

Taft High School: Green, tan, yellow, white shirts, khaki pants, shorts (West End)

Gamble High School: Board games (Westwood)

Western Hills: Hangers for Grandma's Kitchen pantry (West Price Hill)

Carson Elementary: Chalk and crayons (West Price Hill)

Model Group/Wesley Chappel Fishing trip in Indiana: Fishing poles ((Over the Rhine)

Transformations CDC: Huge box & bags of pillows, sheets, and blankets (Price Hill)

Bathing Suits: Price Hill immigrant population

Please Keep in Prayer

Amanda and family (daughter of Hilda Faulkner)
Barry & Judy Jamison (members)
Beverly & Mike Rose (dear friends of Suwana Kirkman)
Blake Webb (friend of Jackie Smith)
Bill Mayer (member)
Brian Kirkman (son of Ron Kirkman)
Carol Ann White (member)
Carolyn Bruckmann (friend of the church)
Charlene Jones (sister of Jackie Smith)
Charlie (friend of Herb Brookbank)
Chelsea and Sophia (friends of Pam, Hilda Faulkner's friend)
Christi Simmons (friend of Michelle Richards)
Christine White (friend of Jackie Smith)
Cindy & Mark Wolf (friends of the Colding's)
Daisy (friend of Hannah Steinhard)
Darryl P. and Mickey P. (cousins of Bev Bosse)
David Krebs (member)
Diane Ripley (friend of the Kirkman's)
Dorothy (aunt of Suwana Kirkman)
Elaine Lewis (Jackie Smith's granddaughter)
Elsie & Bob Biddle (aunt and uncle of the Krebs Family)
Eric Stacy (friend of the Steinhard's and Sehlhorst's)
Family and friends of Jackie Smith
Family of Anna Jean Shock (aunt of Ron Kirkman)
Family of Don Fricke (member)
Family of Gary Smith (husband of Sandy; stepfather of Patty Baldwin)
Family of George Frazer (neighbor and friend of the Kirkman Family)
Family of Jack Parsons (father of Patty Baldwin)
Family of Terrence Stern-Enzi, "Tt" (co-worker of Gina Kern)
Family of William Kirkman (uncle of Ron Kirkman)
Friends from Clovernook (of Carol Ann White)
Haley (friend of the Copenhaver's)
Jessica (friend of Carol Ann White)
Joan Schmidt (daughter of the late Ollie Helm)

Jody Eversole (friend of Suwanna Kirkman)
Joe (uncle of Suwanna Kirkman)
Joey Miller (grandson of Ron Kirkman)
Katie and family (daughter of Bernice and Terry Morgan, friends of the church)
Kelly Ann Pennington (sister-in-law of Suwanna Kirkman)
Kesha and Family (friends of Ron Kirkman)
Kimberly Morgan (cousin of Ron Kirkman)
Laura Hauck (member)
Lea Pirro (daughter of Lucille Isaacs)
Lucille Isaacs (member)
Lynne (friend of the church)
Marvin Stamper (employee at C.M. Meyer & Assoc.)
MaryJo O'Brien (friend of Michelle Richards)
Michelle M. (cousin of Bev Bosse)
Michelle Richards (dear friend of the Senior Social)
Mike Ogden (husband of Kim Ogden)
Pam and family (friends of Hilda Faulkner)
Pat Froehle (member)
Ramon (grandson of Hilda Faulkner)
Ron Kirkman (member)
Ron Cummins (dear friend of Amanda Faulkner)
Sandy Echols (member)
Sharon Kazee (prayer asked from Sandy Echols)
Su H. (friend of Bev Bosse)
Thomas (nephew of Hilda's friend, Pam)
Tiffany Nelson (friend of Ron Kirkman)
Tina Maxwell (Sue Bilz' best friend)
Vicki Thorner (Sue Bilz' cousin)
Whiting Family (cousins of the Krebs Family)

Birthdays

Birthdays

04/05 – Jennifer Runck
04/06 – Ralph Mueller (93rd)
04/06 – Erin Toolis
04/07 – Teri Lynn Stackhouse
04/11 – Diane Banker
04/13 – Madeline Krebs
04/16 – Catie Sehlhorst
04/21 – Jacob Runck
04/22 – Gail Bauknecht
04/22 – Jacob Bray
04/26 – Deb Gnau
04/27 – Jay Jung

FYI

Reminder that Pizza with the Pastor is usually the first Sunday of the month. Except for April 5th, which is Easter Sunday! Dan and Amy will host on May 3rd. First-timers always have a seat at the table – simply contact the church office or Pastor Dan or Amy to reserve a spot. Usually there's room for 13, but they can always make room for more.

First UCC Church Board Meeting Minutes

FEBRUARY 9, 2026 (In-Person & Zoom)

In attendance: Tom Shelton, June Bronnert, Milt Hauck, Bruce Steinhard, Jean Krebs, Gail Bauknecht, Ed Bosse, Sammi Hayes, Brad Kramer, Bev Smith
Treasurer: Christy Meyer (Treasurer)

Pastor: Dan Weyand-Geise

Excused: Bill Henrich

- I. **Call to Order** -- Tom called the meeting to order.
- II. **We then did the Treasurer's Report...**
- III. **Devotion** -- Pastor Dan -- Since this was the first time the new members were with us, we were asked to share 4 things 1 – Name, 2 – favorite Chili, 3 – High School and 4 – Favorite Ice Cream flavor. Pastor Dan also shared an article from Brooks – “Loss of Faith”
- IV. **Treasurer's Report (Christy):** The January reports were accepted, and approval was given to pay February expenses.
Motion: Milt Second: Bruce Accepted: All in favor
Bills:
Motion: Gail Second: Jean Accepted: All in favor

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026 ---

President – Tom	Motion – Jean	Second – Gail	Accepted: All
Rec. Sec. – Bruce	Motion – Gail	Second – Bev	Accepted: All
Co-V.P. - Milt	Motion – Jean	Second – Bev	Accepted: All
	June Motion – Gail	Second – Brad	Accepted: All
Fin. Sec. - Jean	Motion – Bruce	Second – Gail	Accepted: All

- V. **Recording Secretary's Report (Bruce)** – The January report was accepted with 1 correction.
Motion: Milt Second: Bev Accepted: All in favor
- VI. **Financial Secretary's Report (Jean)** – see her report. Jean also submitted a “Financial and Control Policies Statement” for consideration. It

will be made available to the Congregation for their consideration. The new policy is for New Capital Projects and/or Budgeted Projects. Receipts will need to be submitted to the Treasurer with: Who bought the item, What it is for, Where is it to be used, Why it is needed. Motion to RECEIVE the “Financial and Control Policies” recommendation.

Motion: June Second: Sammi Accepted: All in favor

VII. **Pastor’s Report** – Pastor Dan submitted his report to the Church Board Meeting, which included the following updates and reflections:

- January was very tiring
- Tensions with Federal Authorities, Faith leaders trying to remain faithful to God’s call for peace
- Thursday night meeting for helping immigrants at Truth and Destiny 7 pm
- Linda Neumaier – has put together things for Lent for members who want to learn more about the Christians who have added meaning to the church and devotional life.
- 2/11 Meeting at Community Action Agency
- 2/17 Interfaith Coalition Meeting at 11:30 - Sammi will do local follow-up M.U.S.E. - here in Sanctuary 2/20 from 6 – 8
- Rummage Sale - We need to find out what Camp Washington UCC needs and through Bruce’s sister-in-law Monna, what people in the Eastern areas of Kentucky in the Appalachian areas need.
- **FOUND HOUSE** – 4 weeks in 2026, \$400 per week, \$500 in Kroger Gift Cards and provide 3 meals per week for the house in Western Hills.
- **Fishes & Loaves** – nothing to report
- **Annette’s Cafe** – nothing to report

Motion to approve Pastor Dan’s Report -

Move: Jean Second: Bev Accepted: All

VIII. **Committee Reports**

Finance Committee

Jean reported on the work being done.

Facilities

- Ed shared that several meetings were cancelled due to the weather
- Snow removal – Snow was by the Dumpsters due to a new driver plowing

- We received a notice from Duke Energy that Trees with power lines through them will be trimmed by Duke's crews.
- The cracks in the parking lot were brought up again, and Jean again told the Board that there is no money for this project unless it is taken from the Endowment Fund, which was approved at a previous meeting on **October 13, 2025.**
- Bud will get the Facilities members together and talk about things that need to be done.

Garden Committee

- Sammi volunteered to be the liaison to the Garden Comm. And will take the info about the trimming to Amy.

Archives

All the items relating to the history of the church and historical records have been moved to the 2nd room on the 1st Floor.

- **Music (Jean)** – nothing to report
- **Budget (Jean)** – nothing to report
- **Endowment (Bill)** – Ed reported

IX. Old Business

- **None**
- **By-Laws (Bruce and Pastor Dan)** – The Constitution & By-Laws are available by contacting the office, Bruce Steinhard, or Pastor Dan

IX. New Business

- Dan, Tom, Milt and June will meet to work on who will be the liaison to committees and who will be on all committees.
- Bruce brought up the CWS Disaster Kits brochure from the Conference meeting and will bring it to the Mission Committee at their meeting.
- Capital Campaign was brought up and will be worked on by the Finance Committee and other members as needed.

XI. Adjournment

Moved: Gail **Seconded:** Milt **Accepted:** All in Favor

XII. Lord's Prayer

Submitted by: J. Bruce Steinhard, Recording Secretary

Open & Affirming (ONA) Covenant of First United Church of Christ

We, the members of First United Church of Christ, welcome you...

- ♥ If you are Asian, Black, Brown, Hispanic, Native American, or White;
- ♥ If you are male, female, transgender, or gender non-conforming;
- ♥ If you are 3 years old, 33 years old, or 103 years old;
- ♥ If you are from just down the street, from across the country, or from another part of the globe;
- ♥ If you grew up at Hoffner Church, were confirmed in the Catholic Church, got married in a non-denominational church, worshipped in a synagogue or mosque, or have never attended a religious service;
- ♥ If you are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated, or partnered;
- ♥ If you are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or unsure of your sexuality;
- ♥ If you are a Democrat, Independent or Republican, affiliated with another political party or no party at all;
- ♥ If you have, or have had, addictions, phobias, or a criminal record;
- ♥ If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless;
- ♥ If you were baptized at First UCC, or are worshipping here for the first time;
- ♥ If you attend services every week, once a month, or once a year;
- ♥ If you have typical or atypical skills, no matter your abilities or disabilities;

However, the rest of the world describes you, and however you describe yourself: You are a beloved child of God and are welcome at First UCC. Being fully welcome in our community here at First United Church of Christ means that as we keep the love of Christ at the center of all we do, our congregation will:

- ♥ Always seek to affirm the person that you are with loving hearts and open minds.
- ♥ Follow the way of Christ Jesus with you in loving and being loved by both God and neighbor, with the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
- ♥ Support and encourage you in your ongoing spiritual and religious journey.
- ♥ Love you for the person you are by living out our denomination's promise that

“No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at First United Church of Christ.”

First United Church of Christ

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Tom Shelton, *President*

Milt Hauck, *Co-Vice President*

June Bronnert, *Co-Vice President*

Bruce Steinhard, *Recording Secretary*

Jean Krebs, *Financial Secretary*

Christy Meyer, *Church Treasurer*

Sammi Asplan

Brad Kramer

Gail Bauknecht

Ed Bosse

Bill Henrich

Beverly Smith



“God is still speaking.”