

First United Church of Christ  
5808 Glenview Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45224  
513-541-7302

# April 2025 Newsletter

## The Pastor's Report

Pastor Dan Weyand-Geise

A couple of quotes from our Sunrise Salutation on March 26th strike me as perfect to reflect upon as we head into April. They are from two of our 20th century spiritual mystics:

*"God's first language is Silence. Everything else is a translation."* –

*Thomas Keating*

*"In Silence God ceases to be an object and becomes an experience"* –

*Thomas Merton*

As Jimmy notes in "What's the Buzz" the first quarter at First UCC was hopping with blessed ministries, sacramental services, and, of course, our holy week of rummage. I am thrilled with the energy, hopes, and vision that are taking place here. But something quite counter-cultural is about to happen in April. We are invited to experience the quietest week of the year. Yes, the quietest week of the year begins on April 13. You might ask, "Why is it the quietest week of the year?" Read on...

Imagine you are one of Jesus' disciples. For years you have been active in life, in ministry, in fellowship and in hopes of what this man from Galilee is about. There is always activity and excitement when J comes to town. The blind can see, the poor are lifted-up, the sick are made well, even death is not an enemy. Then, it all goes off the rails. Jesus preaches against the State, challenges the religious leaders; he is apprehended, tried, and killed by the State. The disciples are devastated. Their grief is inconsolable. The nights are filled with fear and anxiety. What is next? They sit in silence. They grieve. They doubt. They quietly go back to their lives. They try to make sense of the empty tomb. What does life mean sitting with the pain and agony and death of their friend? They escape into the silence and wait.

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## The Pastor's Report (cont.)

Back to Keating and Merton: God's first language is Silence... In Silence God becomes an experience. This connects most especially as we begin these final days of Lent. This year has brought many blessings to First UCC and many fears and anxieties. In the past 12 months several blessed souls like Patsy Koch, Bruce Banker, Judy Henderson, Ginny Krebs, and other wonderful people of the church have passed away. Their absence is terribly felt and my heart aches. Just this week, I learned that a second mother to me growing up was diagnosed with a terminal disease. We sit in the silence with news that we know will change life as we have known it.

Holy Week most clearly invites us to contemplate the complexities of the world we live in. The news feeds that leave us angry, confused, and disgusted. As grief counselors teach, sometimes it is good to stay busy, but often we simply need to sit with the feelings and the heartache. Healing comes when we pay attention to the suffering and hurt. We discover what we need in the silence of the night, in the stillness of the morning. Holy Week invites us into the question of faith. We will not receive easy answers. In fact, the deeper we go into silence, the more profound the experience. For some time, we may even struggle with the pain and sorrow. Then, in the silence, at the core of our being, we come to learn and experience a peace that surpasses our understanding. There will be a love that is everlasting.

April 13 begins Holy Week with Palm Sunday. We wait for inspiration. We wait for a conclusion to the story. We wait for friends to tell us something good. We wait for God's response. We wait for the world to change like Jesus promised. Come experience a week of silence, prayer, remembrance, hope, and ultimately resurrection. The tomb is empty...

Thanks be to God. – Pastor Dan

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## Congregational Meeting

Our Congregational meeting will take place after service on April 27. Please have any information (that needs to go in the packets) into the office by the Wednesday before (April 23). Thank you!



## What's the Buzz?

### Updates on Music, Media, and Faith Formation

The first quarter of 2025 is behind us. In just those three months, we've hosted IHN families four times, held an MLK service for all of College Hill, performed two weddings, two funerals, and a baptism, executed a record-breaking rummage sale, served hundreds of meals during Fishes and Loaves and at Phil's Place, started renovation on the nurturing/family center and maintenance office, began the reflective season of Lent, continued to regularly meet as the Senior Social and Guild, rehearsed weekly in both choirs... and, oh, did I mention we have service every Sunday morning? What a blessing it is to look back on the busy life of the church and remember all that we do to BE THE CHURCH each and every day. To follow up with our recent conversations during worship, I'd like to reemphasize that no matter where your interests lie, you'll find doing something you love in the life of the church. If you missed the Church Curiosity session on March 30, just talk with Dan or me about the ways to get involved.

So, what does the month of April have in store for First UCC? Musically, we are treated to two handbell choir performances plus weekly entertainment from the chancel choir. On April 6, the handbell choir will perform "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love" and the chancel choir, "The One Who Bears My Shame," featuring Bryce Kessler on cello. On Palm Sunday, April 13, the choir will perform, "Hosanna, Loud, Hosanna." At the 10:15 service Easter morning, the handbell choir returns with a performance of "Prelude for a Celebration," and the chancel choir will sing "Crown Him Lord of All!" We are ending the month with a moving, soulful choir anthem titled, "River in Judea," on April 27.

As we near the completion of the nurturing/family center, I am very excited to not only begin using that space during worship, but to also begin transforming the old choir room downstairs to the new youth lounge with the young adults! These two spaces will create new opportunities for caring for and enriching the lives of our youngest members and friends. I imagine Godly Play and Kids' Korner activities upstairs; I imagine craft and movie nights, as well as coffee hangs and mission planning, downstairs. Speaking of youth events, the Easter egg hunt will take place following the 10:15 service Easter morning; weather-permitting, the hunt will be outside, but we are prepared to hold it inside if needed.

Last summer, I filled the church social media accounts with church history. I loved taking this dive into the church's past and sharing it with everyone. This summer, I want to look at the present church and share that with the community. Starting in May, I'll be looking for volunteers to interview with one single question: "What does First UCC mean to you?" It is a question 100% yours to interpret and answer as you wish. I look forward to the variety of answers to come. :)

Have a great month! - Jimmy



**Jimmy Wiederhold**  
Director of Music, Media,  
and Faith Formation



# Birthdays

04/05 – Jennifer Runck (50th)

04/06 – Ralph Mueller (92nd)

04/06 – Erin Toolis

04/11 – Diane Banker

04/13 – Madeline Krebs

04/16 – Catie Sehlhorst (50th + 20th)

04/21 – Jacob Runck

04/22 – Gail Bauknecht

04/26 – Deb Gnau

04/27 – Jay Jung



## ~ Please Keep in Prayer ~

Family of Patsy Koch (member); Cindy Moeller (friend of Bruce & Kathie Steinhard); Family of Bruce Banker (member); Family of Judy Henderson (dear friend of the Senior Social); Pope Francis; Diana Gross (friend of the Senior Social); Hannah Steinhard (daughter of Bruce & Kathie Steinhard); Family of Barb Shaw (Suwanna Kirkman's aunt); Family of Christina Smith (Little Dutch Bakery); Family of Eileen Wiederhold (Jimmy's grandmother); Vinnie Carivetti (friend of Paul Kluesener); Christie Kenton (former member); Kimberly Morgan (cousin of Ron Kirkman); Brian Kirkman (son of Ron Kirkman); Family of Ginny Krebs; Family of Bob Lewis (brother-in-law of Kay Young); Family of Jim Knepper (family friend of the Kern's); prayers for Jeremy Richards (son of Michelle Richards); All About Kids Daycare Center (staff and students); Family of Charles Wiederhold (Jimmy's grandfather); Tiffany Nelson (friend of Ron Kirkman); Ramon (grandson of Hilda Faulkner); Dale Merz (cousin of Michelle Richards); Kathie Steinhard (member); Beth Luken (sister of Dan Luken; friend of the Krebs' family); Irina (church friend); Family of Carolyn Schanz (daughter of the late Les & Ida Schmerr); Joyce Napier (friend of the Krebs' family); Pam and family (friend of Hilda Faulkner); Amanda and family (daughter of Hilda Faulkner); Mickey Heiob (member); Sherry (friend of Carol Ann White and the Senior Social); Kelly Ann Pennington (sister-in-law of Suwanna Kirkman); Family and friends of Jackie Smith; Vicki Thorner (Sue Bilz' cousin); Tina Maxwell (Sue Bilz' best friend); Kay Gutenson (aunt of Kathie Steinhard); Ali Adams (friend of Christine Guillory); Bill & Margie Spatz and family; Beverly & Mike Rose (dear friends of Suwanna Kirkman); Faith & Dave Martin (friends of Linda Krebs); Jack Parsons (father of Patti Baldwin); Michelle M. (cousin of Bev Bosse); Thomas (nephew of Hilda's friend, Pam); Heather Nichols (niece of Susan Ley); Mark (friend of Sharon, friend of the Senior Social); Kesha and Family (friends of Ron Kirkman); Charlie (friend of Herb Brookbank); Stas Dharikov (Ukrainian friend of Christina Henderson).



# Life of the Church

## Memorials

### **Gift to the Youth Fund in Memory of Eileen Wiederhold**

from the First UCC Choirs

### **Gifts to the General Fund in Memory of Bruce Banker**

from Linda Woods

Janet Copenhaver

### **Gift to the Music Fund in Memory of Bruce Banker**

from Lynn and Paul Kluesener

Carol and Jim Bitzenhofer

### **Gift to the Music Fund in Memory of Patsy Koch**

from Janet Copenhaver

## Patsy Koch's Passing

Sympathy to the family of our dear Patsy Koch, who died on Friday, March 21st. Her service was here at First Church on Friday, March 28th. Patsy was always active in the church. A sweet soul – she will be missed.

## Sympathy

We also lost 2 other dear souls of the church this past month – Bruce Banker, and Judy Henderson. Our prayers are with all their families.

## Garden Work

Starting last month, every Saturday morning from 9 – noon, we work in the church gardens. This will continue through June. Any and all help is appreciated. You will be amazed how much can get done when others join. See Amy W-G for details.

(continued on next page)



## Life of the Church (cont.)

### Found House Roundup

First UCC's response as a host site for Found House (Interfaith Housing Network) is always faithful and hospitable. This year really has stretched us in that we were asked to host four weeks in the first three months. Winter weather was brutal each week we hosted. It began with the shutdown of the city that first week in January and continued with our March "Spring" break with cold, rain, and gloomy days. Through all of it, the spirit of our churches was amazing. This past week, one of the moms called me into the hallway. I wasn't sure what she was going to say. She had been in the program since February. With a sheepish grin that burst into a full-on smile, she proudly said, "I don't want to get the kids hopes up yet, but it looks like we are going to get an apartment by the end of the week! I had to tell someone!"

Every time we host, First UCC is blessed. As I always remind new volunteers and even our longtime volunteers, we don't do this to get praised or even thanked. We do it because it is something this church can offer. We have the opportunity, and we have the space and the volunteers. Our other churches are amazing. In our 15 years+ of hosting, we have never had a church not show up to provide the meal when asked. I was thunder-struck when I read these words from Mother Teresa: "Your true character is most accurately measured by how you treat those who can do 'Nothing' for you"

Our Found House friends and co-hosts are quite strong and amazing in character!! Thank you. May we continue in our varied ways to address the issues of homelessness and affordable housing.  
– Pastor Dan

### Pizza with the Pastor

Come join Pastor Dan and Amy at their home the first Sunday of each month for a lunchtime delight of pizza, nicoise salad, and great conversation. As one person said recently, "I had no idea how wonderful this was. I thought I was getting a Dominos or LaRosa's pizza. This is way better!!" April 6 still has some openings. They keep to a biblical principle of 12 around the table.



## Life of the Church (cont.)

### Holy Week Gatherings

As noted in Pastor Dan's letter, Maundy Thursday is one of the opportunities to be at peace with the silence of the week. This service is held at 7 p.m. on April 17. Other opportunities for quiet, blessed gatherings are the Good Friday prayers at noon and the Sunrise Service on Easter morning. Of course, our Sunrise Salutation airs on Facebook live on Wednesdays at 7 a.m.

### Lifeline Screenings

We will have Lifeline Screenings here at First Church on April 18 (Good Friday). They will be here throughout the day. Special pricing of \$159 for the 5 tests. You can sign up by calling 888-814-0466/promo code HSCA001; visit [LLSA.SOCIAL/HSCA](http://LLSA.SOCIAL/HSCA), or text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607.

### Phil's Place

Each Monday at CAIN there is a light dinner that different groups provide. The dinner event is called Phil's Place (named in honor of St. Phillips Episcopal Church which was in Northside until it closed in the mid-2000s). The meals are takeout and served from 3:30 – 5 p.m. in CAIN's parking lot on Hamilton Avenue in Northside. Pastor Dan coordinates the groups who serve the dinners. There is plenty of volunteer help in passing out the dinners, but we have several Mondays that are available for a group to provide the meal. If you belong to civic group or are part of a church group that would like to organize and provide a meal for about 125, please contact Pastor Dan. It actually is a lot easier than you might expect. Our Fishes and Loaves crew as well as Susie Cairns provide these throughout the year. In fact, Susie is planning, as we are printing this newsletter, the meal for Monday, March 31st.





## Life of the Church (cont.)

### Church Conversations and Curiosity

Over three Sundays in March, we held conversations during the service around church life. The conversations were entitled “Mission Meaningful,” “Building Leadership,” and “Future Fellowship in Faith.” They were meant to inform, to update, and to spark ideas about our church life together. We welcome all to join. Last year in the Spring, we were blessed by more than 20 new folks to the congregation as friends and members. This year, we already have more than 10 new people wanting to become members of the church along with a few others who will be introduced to the congregation. We will officially welcome and introduce all to the congregation on Palm Sunday, April 13. – Pastor Dan

### Let Me Introduce...

Great news to share with all, Emma and Drew Schroeder welcomed Dennis Isaac to their family! Dennis was born on Sunday, March 23rd while we were in worship. He weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces. Mom and child are home and doing well. Brother Lukas is happy, too. We also welcome today as part of our church membership, Ben Williams. Ben is a chaplain for Children’s Hospital. He has denominational standing now with the United Church of Christ and is in the process of becoming a Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor. He and his wife Hannah are parents to Oliver. Ben grew up in the Nazarene Church.

### A Spatz Salute

On Sunday, April 6, please join us in-person as we bless and give thanks for Bill and Margie Spatz. They are moving on April 9 to their daughter’s home in the state of Washington. We will have some special moments to share during the service. Afterward, there is a reception and thanks.

February 2025

# Board Meeting Minutes

## First UCC Church Board Meeting Minutes February 10, 2025 (In-Person & Zoom)

**In attendance:** Milt Hauck, Tom Shelton, Bruce Steinhard, Gail Bauknecht, Ed Bosse, Jean Krebs, Bev Smith, Christy Meyer (Treasurer), Pastor Dan Weyand-Geise

**Excused:** Darrell Copenhaver, Bill Henrich

I. **Call to Order** -- Milt called the meeting to order.

II. **Devotion** -- Pastor Dan

III. **Recording Secretary's Report (Bruce)** – The January report was accepted with one correction.

Motion: Tom                      Second: Jean                      Accepted: All in favor

IV. **Treasurer's Report (Christy)**

Motion: Bruce                      Second: Jean                      Accepted: All in favor

**Bills** – Motion: Tom                      Second: Jean                      Accepted: All in Favor

V. **Special Update** – Paul Kluesener

Paul gave an update on the Kitchen equipment and told us the new grease trap is requirement under the law and the dishwasher requires new piping in the drain area.

Motion for \$6,500: Jean                      Second: Tom                      Accepted: Majority in Favor, 1 Abstain

VI. **Financial Secretary's Report (Jean)** – Jean reported the giving for the month

Motion: Bruce                      Second: Tom                      Accepted: All in favor

- **Pastor's Report** – Pastor Dan submitted his report to the Church Board (see separate report)

February 2025

# Board Meeting Minutes (cont.)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### VII. Finance Committee (Jean)

Jean reported the committee is working on a Balanced Budget and will be getting together with the full committee during the next month.

### Health Committee (hopefully Lisa Shelton)

### Facilities Committee (Ed)

They are hoping to get the whole group together before the next Church Board meeting. They are working on the new Family Nurturing Room, sound insulation in the walls to the drop ceiling. The Maintenance Room on the First Floor is in need of a new box, as water is still coming in the electric line and phone line. New conduit is a possibility. They are talking to JACCO water solutions.

### Endowment Committee (Bill)

Ed reported the Endowment Fund

### Garden (Amy)

Dan reported the workers will start working on the Garden area in March.

### Music Committee -

### VIII. Old Business

Committee Member names to the office as soon as possible.

- **By-Laws (Bruce) – (REMINDER)** the Board agreed that a preview of the proposed revisions to the Constitution & By-Laws will be presented at the April 27 Congregational Meeting. The committee's work will continue for changing the budget year to a Calendar Year Budget.

### X. New Business –

Jean Krebs reported that she has been working on a preliminary budget. It will be a Balanced Budget. Mission giving might need to be decreased. She is getting figures into the budget.

March Meeting – Dan and Tom cannot meet on March 10, so the board will meet on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Milt – After looking at things in the office and the problems of the last few years when needing building / contract information. He is suggesting a Central Depository of ALL Important Documents in the office area. He will be working on this with Kim and Pastor Dan.

### XI. Adjournment

Motion: Tom      Second: Jean      Accepted: All in Favor

### XII. Lord's Prayer

*Submitted by: Bruce Steinhard, Recording Secretary*

# Our Covenant

We, the members of First UCC, 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 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 United Church of Christ.** Being fully welcome in our community here at First UCC 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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## Pastoral Team:

### Dan Weyand-Geise

Pastor, Ext. 17

### Jimmy Wiederhold

Director of Music, Media, and Faith Formation, Ext. 11

### Kim Ogden

Pastoral Administrator, Ext. 10

## Church Board:

Milt Hauck, President

Tom Shelton, Vice President

Darrell Copenhaver, Co-Vice President

Bruce Steinhard, Recording Secretary

Jean Krebs, Financial Secretary

Gail Bauknecht

Ed Bosse

Bill Henrich

Beverly Smith (non-voting member)

June Bronnert (past president)

Christy Meyer, Church Treasurer

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*Keeping the love of Christ at the center of everything we do so that all members will be empowered to become spirit-led servant leaders.*



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