

St. John's
Welcome
Home

Volume 57
Issue 3



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Pastor's Desk

Pray With Our Feet (Amos 5:10-15, 21-24)

Toddlers can have some big feelings! It's hard being a tiny human. They want things. They don't want things. However, they can't fully express their thoughts. There are times, when things do not go their way. They get mad. They get sad. They get frustrated. They get scared. Their world can become overwhelming, and they don't know what to do, but throw all their food on the floor. Or lay down and cry. Toddlers can have some big feelings!

As grown-ups, we never outgrow our "big feelings." We too, get mad. Get sad. Get frustrated. Get scared. There are times, when our world can become overwhelming and we don't know what to do, particularly when we see things happening on the news and in our community. Like a tiny human, we got big feelings and don't know what to do but lay down and cry.

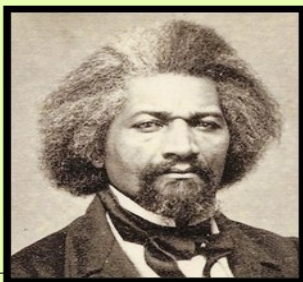
Often, my response to hate in our world and hate in our community is to just pray because we don't know what else to do. However, when our neighbor is in trouble, just praying can be incomplete. Like the old African proverb goes, "when you pray, you need to move your feet." **American abolitionist Frederick Douglass**, once said, **"I prayed for freedom for twenty years, but received no answer until I prayed with my legs."** Sometimes, our prayers require us to move our feet. Polish Rabbi Heschel was once asked, why he came to Selma, Alabama, to walk with Dr. King, and he said when I marched in Selma, my feet were praying.

In the Book of Amos, we see that God rebukes the people for how they are treating their neighbor, the fellow humans in their community. The poor and "the least among them" were being mistreated and oppressed. Yet those with privilege ignored it. God offers a rebuke to the religious folk, saying "I hate, I despise your religious gatherings. They stink to me. Even though you bring me all these things, these offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring your flashy and attractive offerings, I will have no regard for them. Your songs are just noise! I will not listen to your sweet-sounding music. But, let justice roll down like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"

In the book of Amos, God was calling the people to justice—to action. It is not enough that the people have religious gatherings. It is not enough that they do rituals, like offerings, prayers, and music. **But God is calling the people to more!**

Growing up, I had heard Amos 5:24: **"Let justice roll down like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream,"** and I really could not make sense of it. Until this week, when I thought about...rocks. Rocks may be sharp. Rocks may be hard and seen indestructible, like nothing will move them. Rocks may seem like they will last forever. But! Rocks can be destroyed by little drops of water. Water may not seem like much. But, if water rolls down the rock, over time, the collective effort will eventually affect it. The rock will change. The rock will erode. The rock will crack, and the sharp edges will become smooth. Justice is like water rolling over rocks. Our small drops of kindness—our small actions—may not seem like

much, but our collective effort does make a difference.



**St. John's
United Church of Christ**
409 North Wooster Avenue
Dover, OH 44622

Rev. Dr. Cassandra Granados
Senior Minister

Natalie Peterman
Director of Christian Education

Karen McIlvaine
Administrative Assistant

Sunday Morning Schedule
10:30 AM Worship

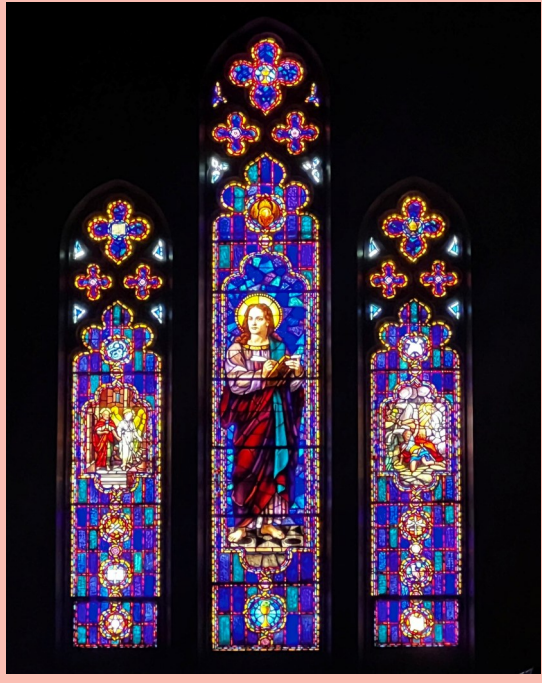
Church Office Hours
Monday through Friday
9 AM - 3 PM

Telephone answers
24 hours a day
330-364-4458

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The Pastor's Desk continued

From time to time, things happen in our world that we do not understand. We see hate in the headlines. We scroll on our phone. We stare at our TV, and we don't know what to do. We just feel hopeless, and we get those "big feelings." When this happens, let us pray to God. Then, let us pray with our feet, like my toddler who runs around the house with her endless energy.

**Church, we pray with our feet,
when we go on mission's trips and help our neighbor in-person.**
we pray with our feet,
when we pick up extra food for our Blessing Box.
We pray with our feet,
when we collect supplies for our homeless shelter in New Phila.
We pray with our feet,
when our kids, make valentines for our homebound members.
We pray with our feet,
when we volunteer at the food pantry.
We pray with our feet,
when we let our voice be heard, and we speak truth to power.
We pray with our feet,
when we recognize our privilege, and we use it to help others.

In our community and world, may justice roll down like water,
and may we love our neighbor through our collective action.

Pastor Cassandra



BIRTHDAYS

1
Emily Gump
2
Kathy Irwin
Rick Moss
3
Keith Shanklin
4
Jon Harding
5
Berit McMillan
Sean Baumberger
Derek Chumney
7
Bradley Rausch
Maryruth Warther
8
Terry Menges
9
Ryan Lengler
10
Shirley Corder
Ashton Hall
11
Karen Gartrell
Rachel Patt
13
Jodi Davis
Dale Miller
14
Anthony Mason
Cora Dotts

BIRTHDAY

15
Debbie Cook
Corey Hall
Rikki Metcalf
Marybeth Smith
16
Mitchell Siegenthaler
17
Tom Koontz
Ronald Smith
18
Joyce Beitzel
19
Bridget McCrate
Jaxson McIlvaine
James Fesi III
20
Gregory Dryden
Kayleigh Bair
Joseph Gingrich
21
Graem Wallick
Jessica Zeigler
23
Jennifer Conkle
Austn Gump
24
Jill Lengler
Emily Showers
Ian Showers

BIRTHDAYS

25
(Thomas) Jamie Schupbach
Julianna Arbogast
27
Devon McGlothlin
29
Barbara Domer
Robert Gibbs
Sally McCombs
Elizabeth Mathews
Aidan Mushrush
30
Jason Hall
Wyatt Wallick
31
Gary Craig
Susan Steiner
Robert Graham
Robert Clinton

ANNIVERSARIES

17
Jean & Thomas Paddock
18
JoAnn & David Schaar
19
Kathy & Keith Marburger

St. Johns United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Dave Gingrich opened the meeting and Reverend Cassandra Granados gave the opening prayer. There were 15 members present

Minutes of Last Meeting: Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Holly Gonter reported:

Month of JANUARY 2026

General fund income for the month of \$12,444

Expenses for the month of \$35,119

M/S/C by Dan Dummermuth and Rob Gump

Senior Minister's Report

Reverend Cassandra's report stated

PAST EVENTS:

Due to the inclement weather on January 25th, Cassandra offered a special online service called "Cozy Worship Online", which included a sermon, prayers, and liturgy.

For February 1st, Cassandra made a special bulletin design for "Love Your Neighbor" Fellowship Sunday with a homemade liturgy.

On February 1st, Cassandra taught the Confirmation class on the United Church of Christ history, doctrine, and polity (structure of the church). We had a special "Quiz for Prizes", in which the youth tested their knowledge from their previous session.

Cassandra taught the St. John's Pre-school (4- and 5-year-olds) on February 4th. The children learned about sharing through the story of the boy who shared his lunch with Jesus (John 6:1-14).

On February 8th, Cassandra made a special bulletin design for Scouts Sunday.

PASTORAL CARE:

Church members: 3 phone call check-ins; 2 nursing home visits, 1 office visit, 1 text check-in.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 18th:

Ashes-To-Go! Fourth & Faith, 7 to 10 a.m.

Ash Wednesday service at 7 p.m.

February 24th: Teaching the Pre-school on January 26th.

March 1: New Member's Class after church.

March 8: Teaching Confirmation Class re: worship and sacrament.

Plan a Confirmation trip to the Guardwara in Richfield.

Director of CE Report: Natalie Peterman reported:

MONTHLY THEME: Love Your Neighbor

Follow Me: Follow Me youth are learning about loving all of God's creatures. They are learning about the Tuscarawas Humane Society and creating Valentine cards to be delivered to the shelter this week.

Youth Group: We met last week to start our *Meant for More Series* (helping students discover that God's plan for their lives exceeds what they could ever imagine) and we prepared for Homeless Awareness event.

Homeless Awareness: Homeless Awareness takes place this weekend, with 11 youth registered. Donations are being collected throughout February to support Friends of the Homeless of Tuscarawas County.

Looking Ahead:

March Theme: Journey to the Cross

Follow Me: Lessons on welcoming Jesus, following Jesus and choosing Jesus

Youth Group: Continuing the *Meant for More Series*, preparing for Youth Sunday.

Youth Sunday and Confirmation:

Youth Sunday: April 12th (moved from May 3rd)

Confirmation Sunday: May 3rd

Other Items:

New Youth on Council – Tori Griesen, confirmand, 8th grade

Parish Visitors: TBA

Bible Study: Meeting 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at Fourth and Faith at 11:30 a.m.

Confirmation: 15 confirmands: No confirmation class this weekend due to Homeless Awareness; Next confirmation class February 22nd.

Reports of the Boards

Elders/Dan Hurst reported:

* Upcoming schedules:

- February 18th: Ashes-to-Go 7 a.m. – 10 a.m.; Ash Wednesday services at 7 p.m.
- February 22nd: Confirmation Class #3
- March 8th: Confirmation class #4
- March 29th: Palm/Passion Sunday
- April 5th: Easter
- April 12th: Youth Services

* RE: Confirmation Sunday, confirmand stoles will be presented rather than worn from the beginning.

* Jean Wherley and Vicki Rufener will no longer be Elders; Tony Bailey is a new Elder.

Trustees

Dan Dummermuth reported:

Spouting off 4th St: another section fell off; will be repaired.

Salt spreader for the Cub Cadet has been purchased so salt can be handled by the church. Big thank you to Rob Gump and Rudy Tschantz for spending several hours in very cold weather hooking this up and ensuring it worked!

Update of Last Months request by Jeanne Baker re: removal of 1st pew to allow room for both choir and bell choir – trustees think it will work find; discussing taking the carpet from the bottom of steps to where 1st pew will be and possibly install tile and up steps on side and around the church. Possible handrail. Trustees looking for estimates and will talk with Sanctuary Committee and others.

Deacons

Bev Smith reported:

Ushers and communion servers are filled March.

Usher and communion server training was held after worship service on February 8th using new *guidelines for ushers*.

It was discussed that if it is known that if children will be in the nursery, Jen or Bev will be happy to find volunteers; just let them know.

Reports of Committees

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: Dave Gingrich reported:

Nominations annual meeting this Sunday following worship service.

SEARCH COMMITTEE:

Dave Gingrich reported the New Associate Pastor Search Committee in working on profile of needs.

Bev Smith reported that the chairs at Fourth & Faith need cleaned; Trustees will follow-up.

Congregational Activities

Card Party at Fourth & Faith – Feb 11 (2nd Wed monthly) – *benefit Cancer Bags*

Family Sunday – 1st Sunday each month with seasonal theme

Youth Homeless Awareness Lockout: February 14th

Confirmation Classes – Jan – May

Adult Contemporary Sunday School – Sundays at 9am

Bad Girls Book Club – 2nd Monday monthly

Chair Yoga – Mon & Thurs at Fourth & Faith

Unfinished Business

Dave Gingrich reported

Karen McIlvaine is filling in as Temporary Administrative Position for Emaly's maternity leave. Thank you Karen!

New Business: Recognition of outgoing council members to thank them for their service; they are: Jean Wherley, Vicki Rufener, Ed Rufener, Chad McLaughlin, Nolan Peterman, Holly Gonter, and Brenda Wherley.

Comments for the Good of St Johns: Bev Smith reported a cancer bag was provided to a 3 year old cancer patient.


Closing with the Lord's Prayer

Bible Study Group

Join us for Bible study the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 11:30 AM at Fourth & Faith. This study is for beginners and those wanting to dive deeper, with content designed for all levels. We'll study in monthly units, so you're welcome to attend regularly or simply join when you're able.

Reach out to Natalie or the church office for more information!

All are welcome!



Fellowship Sundays are a chance for our church family to come together, connect and enjoy one another's company before worship.

Everyone is welcome to stop by the Fellowship Center for light breakfast snacks and refreshments, along with time to visit and catch up!

Join us on **March 1, April 12 (Youth Sunday), and May 3 (Confirmation Sunday)**.

Whether you come every time or just once in a while, we hope you'll come early, grab a bite and share in this time of fellowship.

FELLOWSHIP SUNDAYS



January Financial Report

Actual Income	\$12,444
Actual Expenses	\$\$35,119
Average Worship Attendance	: 90

Family Members in Nursing Homes

Park Village - Linda Schilling
Park Village Independent Living - Jim Cotton
Park Village New Phila - Don Page
Park Village New Phila - Carol Sue Keener
Inn at Northwood - Norma Haglock
New Dawn Assisted Living - Clara Struhar
Canton Christian Home - Dotty Hartzell

To better serve our congregation, we provide the contact information for the **Elder of the Month.**

This gives you an extra person to reach out to, alongside Rev. Cassandra, if you ever have a personal or family emergency.

March Elder of he Month:
Sue Ferbrache
330-340-5736

SO MANY ACTIVITIES IN WHICH TO BE INVOLVED...TAKE YOUYR CHOICE.....

What's the deal at Fourth & Faith on the 2nd Wednesday of the month?

It's a **CARD PARTY**
1—4 p.m.

Needles & Hookers
Mondays at 2 PM at the church!
Contact Kay Whitlach for any questions!

Chancel Choir
Wednesdays at 7 PM
at the church!
Contact Jeanne Baker for any questions!

The Bad Girls book for March is The House on the Cerulean Sea by T. J. Klune.

Join he Bad Girls on Monday, March 9th a 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room to discover the impact when unusual circumstances create unlikely families.

Adult Contemporary Sunday School
9 AM at the church!
Contact Sue Ferbrache for any questions!

Bible Study 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 11:30 AM at Fourth & Faith!
Contact Natalie Peterman for any questions!

Chair Yoga
Mondays & Thursdays at 10 AM at Fourth & Faith!
Contact Rod Showers for any questions!

There are always great Dover and New Philly high school sports and activities to support and enjoy all spring long.

Handbell Choir
Sundays at 11:30 AM at the church!
Contact Nancy Smith for any questions!

MARCH...onward Christian soldiers...

March onward in the footsteps of impressive Christian women who have had and continue to have an impact on our lives and on our world...celebrate them on March 8th, International Women's Day.

These are the days of our lives, and they're gonna get longer... daylight savings time begins on March 8th.

Don your green for the day and celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17th.

If winter comes can spring be far behind? Put a big sunny smile on your face as spring returns on March 20th!

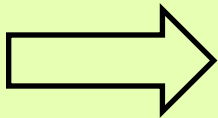
Get in step with good people around the world as we mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21st.

Come on Christian soldiers...make the most of March 2026.

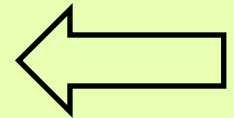


Have you ordered your Easter flowers yet? Get your order and payment to Karen in the office by March 12th so the memory of your loved ones can help make our sanctuary even more beautiful than it already is. Order forms are available in the office

...with the cross of Jesus going on before.



**Congratulations to St. John's newest Elder:
Tony Bailey**



March holds significant weight in Christian history, largely centered on March 25th, traditionally observed as the Annunciation (conception of Jesus and, in early tradition, the date of Creation and Crucifixion). It is a month marked by early martyr commemorations, the arrival of spring, and, in modern times, the "March for Jesus" movement for global unity.

**Palm Passion Sunday is
March 29th**

On Sunday, March 29, St. John's will celebrate with a combined Palm Sunday and Good Friday service at our regular 10:30 a.m. time. There will not be a separate Good Friday service.

Need a Place to Celebrate?

For parties, dinners, celebrations of all kinds...St. John's offers three great facilities. The Social Hall, the Fellowship Center, and Fourth & Faith. Call the church office for details and costs.

"On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way."
Book of Common Prayer

**ARE YOU A CARD? SURE YOU ARE! COME HAVE FUN AT THE MARCH CARD PARTY,
MARCH 11TH FROM 1 TO 4 AT FOURTH & FAITH**



PICTURE THIS...ST. JOHN'S YOUTH TAKE A STAND...

YOUTH ACTIVITIES



Follow Me



Homeless Awareness 2026



Hope is Ahead

As we step into March, we also step into the season of Lent, a time of reflection, renewal and preparation. Our theme this month is **The Path to the Cross**, and we will be spending time in the Gospel of Matthew as we walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem.

In Matthew's telling of the journey, Jesus turns His face toward the cross with intention and love. He teaches, heals, challenges and invites. He reminds His disciples that following Him is not always easy, yet it is always meaningful. The path to the cross is not simply about suffering, it is about surrender, trust and the deep love of God poured out for the world.

Lent invites us to ask:

Where is God calling me to follow more closely?

What do I need to lay down so I can walk more faithfully?

How can I love more boldly?

Last month, during our Homeless Awareness event, we saw what it looks like to walk part of that path together. Our youth and church family stepped outside their comfort zones to raise awareness, collect donations and pray for those without shelter in our community. That, too, is part of the journey toward the cross, choosing compassion, opening our eyes and loving our neighbors in tangible ways. The path to the cross ultimately leads us to hope. It leads us to resurrection. And it reminds us that no act of kindness, no prayer, no faithful step is ever wasted in God's kingdom.

There is much to look forward to in the coming weeks. Easter is on the horizon, a celebration of new life and resurrection joy. Our Youth Sunday is also approaching, and we are excited to see our young people lead us in worship with confidence and faith. What a gift it is to watch them grow and claim their place in the life of the church.

Our next Fellowship Sunday will be March 1. Fellowship Sundays are a time for everyone in our church to take a few moments, once a month, to come together as a church family. We invite you to join us in the Fellowship Center prior to worship for light breakfast snacks and refreshments.

Blessings,
Natalie Peterman

MARCH 2026

<u>Sun</u>	<u>Mon</u>	<u>Tue</u>	<u>Wed</u>	<u>Thu</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Sat</u>
1 Family Sunday 9:00 Adult Contemporary Class 10 AM Fellowship Sunday 10:30 Worship / Communion 11:30 Hand Bells 11:30 Confirmation Class 4-7 PM Youth Group	2 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers 7 PM Boy Scouts 7 PM Al-Anon & Alateen	3 11:30 AM Bible Study @ F & F 6:30 PM Cub Scouts/Webelos	4 7 PM Choir	5 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F	6	7
8 10:30 Worship 11:30 Hand Bells	9 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers 6:30 PM Bad Girls Book Club 7 PM Boy Scouts 7 PM Al-Anon & Alateen	10 6:30 PM Cub Scouts/Webelos 6:30 PM Elders / Trustees / Deacons—7:30 PM Council Mtg	11 1-4 PM Card Party @ F&F 7 PM Choir	12 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F	13	14
15 Sunday 10:30 Worship	16 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers 7 PM Boy Scouts 7 PM Al-Anon & Alateen	17 11:30 AM Bible Study @ F&F 6:30 PM Cub Scouts/Webelos	18	19 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F	20	21
22 9:00 Adult Contemporary Class 10:30 Worship 11:30 Hand Bells 11:30 Confirmation Class	23 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F 2 PM Needles & Hookers 7 PM Boy Scouts 7 PM Al-Anon & Alateen	24 6:30 PM Cub Scouts/Webelos	25 7 PM Choir	26 10 AM Chair Yoga @ F&F	27	28
29 Palm Passion Sunday	30	31				