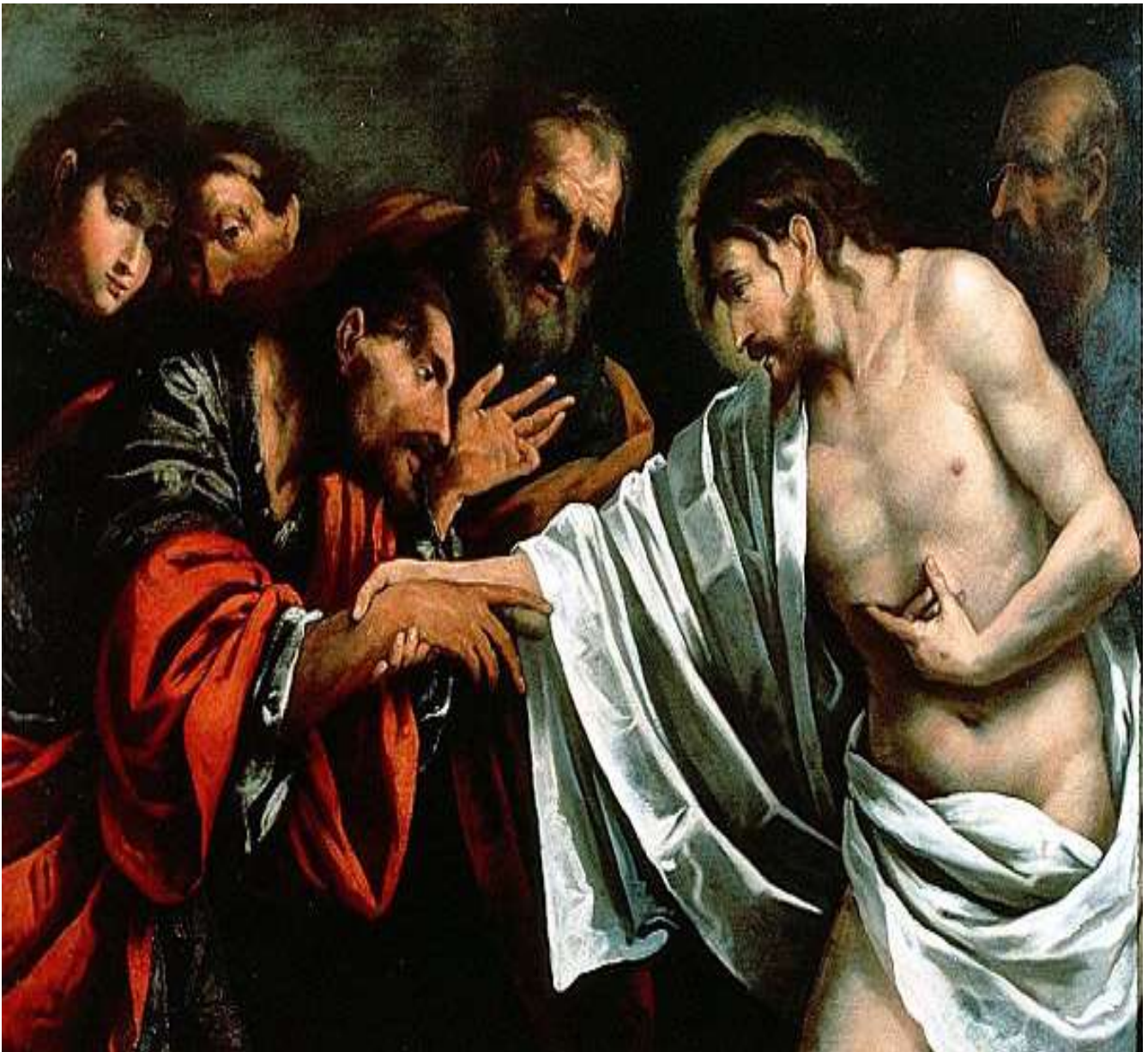


# ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

April 16th, 2023

Second Sunday of Easter

A Service of the Word



## *The Incredulity of St. Thomas*

*Oil on canvas, c. 1670*

*by Petro della Vecchia (1602/03 – 1678)*

*location: Palazzo Thiene is a 15th-16th-century palace in Vicenza, northern Italy*

*Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>*



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

April 16th, 2023

Second Sunday of Easter

A Service of the Word

**"Doubt discovers difficulties which it never solves; Believe is the word which speaks life."**

**- Charles Spurgeon**

## WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

*\*please stand as you are able*

### Welcome and Announcements:

**Prelude- Betty Funk**

### **\*Call to Worship**

One: Thomas said,

"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were,  
and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

We are in a liminal space, confused between brokenness and new opportunities.

**Many: Dear God, fill us with the power of Resurrection to embrace newness.**

One: We are hiding like the disciples behind closed doors with fear and doubts,  
waiting for your appearance.

**Many: Come into our midst now, enter into our closed hearts bringing your peace.**

One: Refresh us, O God, and empower us.

**Many: As we worship today, blow into us your gentle spirit.**

### **\*Invocation**

God of the risen Jesus,  
we praise you  
for the great love  
that you have shown  
to redeem us by sending your Child Jesus.  
Help us today to embrace  
the New Life

that the resurrected Christ  
is giving us.  
A Life beyond our doubts,  
Faith over fear, Courage over confusion,  
Belief over disbelief,  
and trust to follow your guidance.  
As we worship today,  
Help us to feel the presence  
of resurrected Jesus in our midst,  
reminding  
us of your love and our purpose.  
Amen.

**\*Hymn - NCH 241 – Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day**

**Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day**

Source: Latin, c. 5 th century

Translator: John Mason Neale, 1851; alt.

Tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR L.M.

Adapter: Michael Praetorius, 1609

Source: German carol, 15th century

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**1 Joy dawned again on Easter Day,  
the sun shone out with bright array;  
For when the Apostles hid in fear,  
the Risen Christ to them appeared.**

**2 O Jesus, Savior, Gentle One,  
come take our hearts to be your own,  
That we may give you all our days  
the willing tribute of our praise.**

**3 O Sovereign One, with us abide  
in this our joyful Easter-tide;  
From every weapon death can wield,  
your own redeemed forever shield.**

**A READING OF THE WORD**

**First Reading: Act 2:14a, 22-32**

*The first selection for the Revised Common Lectionary for the season of Easter comes from the book of Acts. In this portion of Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost, Peter boldly declared that the work of the Holy Spirit was among the disciples. In this selection, Peter explained the purpose of Jesus's death—though crucified by human hands, Peter believed this was part of God's plan to free Jesus and all of humanity from death. Peter quoted from the Psalms, presuming the author to be David, and interpreted the life and words of David as foreshadowing and prophesying about Jesus, of whom Peter, the disciples, and everyone present on that day of Pentecost were witnesses.*

**2** 14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd: “Women and men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem! Listen to what I have to say!

22 “People of Israel, hear this: Jesus of Nazareth was sent to you with miracles, portents and signs as his credentials—which God performed through him in your midst, as you well know. 23 Jesus was delivered up by the set purpose and plan of God; you even made use of godless people to crucify and kill him. 24 God freed him from death’s bitter pangs, however, and raised him up again, for it was impossible that death could keep its hold on him. 25 David says,

‘I have set our God ever before me;  
God is at my right hand, and I will not be disturbed.  
26 My heart has been glad, my tongue has rejoiced,  
my body will live on in hope,  
27 for you will not abandon my soul to Hades,  
nor will you let your faithful one undergo decay.  
28 You have shown me the paths of Life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

29 “Sisters and brothers, I can speak confidently to you about our ancestor David. He died and was buried, and his grave is with us to this day. 30 But he was a prophet, and he knew that God had promised him with an oath that one of his descendants would sit upon his throne. 31 So what he was foreseeing and talking about was the resurrection of the Messiah: the one not abandoned to the underworld, whose body didn’t decay. 32 God raised Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses to that.

**Psalm Response: Psalm 16 (Responsively)**

*Psalm 16 is a prayer for help and assurance that God is the one true God. The psalmist asks God for deliverance because they have remained faithful to God, choosing no other gods. The psalmist refuses to participate in the worship of other gods, but blesses, rejoices, and give thanks to God who has provided for them. God has not abandoned them to death, but instead, God has instructed them in the way of life, and there are always blessings for those who remain faithful to God.*

1 O God, keep me safe—  
you are my refuge!

**2 I said to God, “You are my God;  
there is nothing good for me apart from you.”**

3 The holy people of my land are wonderful!  
My greatest pleasure is to be with them.

**4 But those who rush after other gods  
will bring many troubles upon themselves.  
I will not take part in their sacrifices;  
I won’t even speak the names of their gods.**

5 You, God, are all that I have,  
you are my food and drink. My life is safe in your hands.

**6 Within the boundaries you set for me  
there are nothing but pleasant places!**

## **What a delightful inheritance I have!**

7 I praise God, who guides me;  
even at night my heart teaches me.

**8 I'm always aware of your presence;  
you are right by my side,  
and nothing can shake me.**

9 My heart is happy and my tongue sings for joy;  
I feel completely safe with you,

**10 because you won't abandon me to the Grave;  
you won't let your loved one see decay.**

11 You show me the path to Life;  
your presence fills me with joy,  
and by your side I find enduring pleasure.

## **Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9**

*The Epistle readings for this season of Easter are from 1 Peter. In these verses of chapter 1, the writer speaks of the new hope given to us through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. At the time of the writing of 1 Peter, Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension had occurred a few generations before, and believers were weary in waiting for Christ's return. The writer assured the believers that in faithfulness, God would reveal all. The faithful were struggling and suffering in that time and needed assurance. In their genuineness of faith and trust in Jesus, the author wrote that they would come to know unspeakable joy. They may rejoice in their salvation because Jesus was raised from the dead.*

**1** 3 Praised be the Abba God of our Savior Jesus Christ, who with great mercy gave us new birth: a birth into hope, which draws its life from the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; 4 a birth to an imperishable inheritance incapable of fading or defilement, which is kept in heaven for you 5 who are guarded with God's power through faith; a birth to a salvation which stands ready to be revealed in the last days.

6 There is cause for rejoicing here. You may, for a time, have to suffer the distress of many trials. 7 But this is so that your faith, which is more precious than the passing splendor of fire-tried gold, may by its genuineness lead to praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ appears. 8 Although you have never seen Christ, you love Christ; and without seeing, you still believe, and you rejoice with inexpressible joy touched with glory, 9 because you are achieving faith's goal—your salvation.

## **Gospel Reading: John 20:19-31**

*These verses in John 20 continue the story of Easter Sunday, with the appearance of Jesus to the disciples the same evening Mary found him in the garden. However, Thomas was not with them. Jesus said, "Peace be with you," to the disciples as he showed them his hands and his side, and he breathed on them, sharing with them the Holy Spirit. Since Thomas was not with them, when they told Thomas what happened, he said he wouldn't believe unless he also saw Jesus's hands and side. The next week, Thomas was with them, and even though the doors were shut (just like the last week)*

*Jesus appeared to them, and showed Thomas his hands and side, and told him not to doubt but believe. When Thomas finally declared that this was Jesus who appeared to him, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." When one follows the story of Thomas through John's Gospel account, one sees a follower who goes from great zeal "Let us also go that we may die with him" (11:16), to "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (14:5) to scattering with the other disciples after Jesus's betrayal, to missing out on the first appearance of Jesus to the disciples. Thomas thought he knew who Jesus was and what Jesus' movement was about. When he realized he didn't know, doubt entered in. But the faith of his friends brought him back to the room where it happened.*

**20** 19 In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were locked in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Temple authorities.

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 20 Having said this, the savior showed them the marks of crucifixion.

The disciples were filled with joy when they saw Jesus, 21 who said to them again, "Peace be with you. As Abba God sent me, so I'm sending you."

22 After saying this, Jesus breathed on them and said,

"Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven.

If you retain anyone's sins, they are retained."

24 It happened that one of the Twelve, Thomas—nicknamed Didymus, or "Twin"—was absent when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples kept telling him,

"We've seen Jesus!"

Thomas' answer was, "I'll never believe it without putting my finger in the nail marks and my hand into the spear wound."

26 On the eighth day, the disciples were once more in the room, and this time Thomas was with them. Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood before them, saying, "Peace be with you."

27 Then, to Thomas, Jesus said, "Take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Don't persist in your unbelief, but believe!"

28 Thomas said in response, "My Savior and my God!"

29 Jesus then said, "You've become a believer  
because you saw me.

Blessed are those who have not seen  
and yet have believed."

30 Jesus performed many other signs as well—signs not recorded here—in the presence of the disciples. 31 But these have been recorded to help you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Only Begotten, so that by believing you may have life in Jesus' Name.

## Choral Response – His Name is Wonderful

*Music by Audrey Mieir, 1959*  
*Choir: Keith Konet, Bob Bucklew and Barbara Rossington*  
*Accompanist: Betty Funk*

## Reflection --The Rev. Scott Rosenstein

### WE RESPOND

#### \*Prayer of Response

God of Resurrection,  
help us to acknowledge  
the signs of new life all around us.  
Help us to find hope  
and joy and gratitude.  
These are signs that encourage us  
on the journey of faith.  
Open our vision to take notice  
of all the good things  
you are doing in the world  
and in our lives.  
Open our hearts  
to a deeper understanding  
of your grace and peace.  
For your love is written not only  
in the words of Scripture,  
but in the sap rising in  
the trees, the green blades of grass,  
the turning of seasons,  
the calm after the storm,  
the lofty clouds and blue skies  
and the rain.  
We give thanks to you,  
Risen One, in all the signs of life.  
Amen.

#### \*Hymn – NCH 238 - Now the Green Blade Rises

##### Now the Green Blade Rises

Text: John M. C. Crum, 1928; alt.  
Tune: NOËL NOUVELET 11.10.10.11.  
Harmonizer: Martin F. Shaw

Text & Music: © 1928 Oxford University Press  
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**1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
Wheat that in the dark earth for many years has lain;  
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
Love is come again, like wheat that rises green.**

**2 In the grave they laid their Love whom hate had slain,  
Thinking that their Love would never wake again,  
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:  
Love is come again, like wheat that rises green.**

**3 Christ came forth at Easter, like the risen grain,  
Jesus, who for three days in the grave had lain,  
Quick from the dead the risen One is seen:  
Love is come again, like wheat that rises green.**

**4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life again,  
Fields of our hearts, that dead and bare have been:  
Love is come again, like wheat that rises green.**

#### **Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings**

Easter teaches us that generous love is at the heart of God's work.  
Joyfully we are able to give  
knowing that our gifts will help others  
to see the blessed miracle of God's creative joy.

#### **The Offertory - *Betty Funk***

##### **\*Presentation of Offerings - Doxology**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

##### **\*Blessing of the Gifts**

**Loving God,  
can a generous prayer  
be lifted up to you this Eastertide?  
Can these gifts, given with love,  
be further transformed like echoes of grace,  
delighting all who receive their blessings?  
May it be so, through the surprising power of your Holy Spirit,  
and may our lives speak of a loving God,  
full of Easter surprises.  
Amen.**



## Choral Hymn

### Prayers of the People

**The Lord's Prayer** – using “debts” and “debtors”

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## GOING FORTH

**\*Parting Hymn – NCH 451 – Be Now My Vision vv. 1, 2, & 4**

### **Be Now My Vision**

Versifier: Eleanor H. Hull, 1912; adapt.

Translator: Mary E. Byrne, 1905

Ancient Irish text, c. 8th century

Word alterations © 1992 The Pilgrim Press

Tune: SLANE 10.10.9.10.

Harmonizer: David Evans, 1927

Harmonization © 1927 Oxford University Press. From THE REVISED CHURCH HYMNARY, 1927.

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**1 Be now my vision, O God of my heart;  
Nothing surpasses the love you impart -  
You my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Your presence my light.**

**2 Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;  
Ever within me, my soul is assured;  
Mother and Father, You are both to me,  
Now and forever, Your child I will be.**

**4 Sovereign of heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach heavens' joys, O bright heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

### **\*Commissioning and Benediction**

One: Go forth in the love of God.

**Many: We will take this love into unlovely parts of our lives.**

One: Go forth in the grace of Jesus Christ.

**Many: We will look for him in the faces of every person we meet.**

One: Go forth in the peace of the Spirit.

**Many: We will share this hope with the brokenness all around us. Amen.**

### **\*Postlude - Betty Funk**

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Credits**

- (1) The Invocation, and Call to Worship, are adapted from *Peace Be with You: Service Prayers for Second Sunday of Easter* written by The Rev Dr. Vinod Wesley Pastor of Chicago Tamil Church (CTC) Copyright 2023 Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 1300 E. 9th Street, Suite 1100, Cleveland, Ohio 44114. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved. *Would you like to see what a South Asian church in America looks like? Visit CTC at <http://tamilucc.com> or [www.youtube.com/c/chicagotamilchurch](http://www.youtube.com/c/chicagotamilchurch)*
- (2) Invitation to Share our Tithes and Offerings and the Blessing of the Gifts are adapted for UCC.Org, Easter 2-April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, posted April 2, 2019, by Rev Susan A. Blair Minister for Worship and Gospel Arts, Faith Info Ministry Team, United Church of Christ., 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.
- (3) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *Worship Resources for April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023*, written by Rev. Mindi Welton-Thomas, and posted April 7th, 2023, on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>.
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Ministers, *All of Us*  
Scott Rosenstein, *Pastor*  
Betty Funk, *Pianist and Music Director*  
Keith Konet, *Council President*  
Beverly Wurm, *Administrative Assistant*



## **NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **God is Still Speaking...**

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

**Tithes and Offerings** - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and placed in the offering basket or mailed to:

**Zion United Church of Christ  
c/o Keith Konet  
1039 Bridlewood Drive  
Copley, OH 44321**

Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

### **Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm**

Beverly began a part-time position with us. She is keeping some limited Office Hours at church ( 2700 W.14<sup>th</sup>) /home. The days and hours are:

Monday – 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: [zionchurchtremont@gmail.com](mailto:zionchurchtremont@gmail.com) or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile).

### **Please Remember in Prayer**

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.
- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption.
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Turkey and Syria: more than 50,000 people have died following two devastating earthquakes. Hopes of finding people alive have dimmed and experts fear the toll could rise

sharply. Turkish authorities say some 13.5 million people have been affected in an area spanning roughly 280 miles from Adana in the west to Diyarbakir in the east, and 186 miles from Malatya in the north to Hatay in the south. At least 44,374 deaths have been reported in Turkey, while 5,800 951 people have died in Syria. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of loved ones, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.

- The people of California profoundly impacted by the atmospheric rivers, flooding rains and winter storms and snow. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of loved ones, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.
- Prayers for healing process for the surviving children, faculty, parents, and extended families of the Covenant School, a Christian school for pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in Nashville, Tennessee. A mass shooting there left three students and three adults dead.
- Prayers for the healing process for the survivors and staff of Old National Bank of Louisville, Kentucky and their extended families. A mass shooting there left 5 dead and several injured including a responding police officer with critical injuries.
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 147 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of April 12th, 2023. In 2022 a total of 648 mass shootings. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incident occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.
- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant and various variant surges: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- Those on our church prayer list:
  - Patti Augustine and family
  - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is at Mapleridge Senior Living Willoughby, Oh.
  - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*) receiving care in a medical rehab unit.
  - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
  - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara Reed, Nancy Moore's sister has passed away.
  - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet - *prayers for recovery.*
  - Keith Konet and his brother who suffered a broken humerus from an injury caused by a fallen branch - has recovered and returning to everyday activities.

- Marcia Leslie *friend – health concerns*)
- The family and loved ones of Elaine Lukacs.
- Linda and James Mortach (*Elaine Lukacs' sister & brother-in-law*) & Linda's daughter and James' son.
- Patricia Matheny (*prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray*). Prayers for her family at the loss of her brother Keith Matheny who grew up in the Zion Church. Also the loss of a dear friend, Craig Lucas.
- Barbara Rossington (*move to a new senior housing community*)
- Henry Senyak (*resident community leader – cancer*)
- Debbie Webb (*Debbie has fallen a couple of times – in one fall she suffered a broken femur – and in a second recent fall, she broke a bone in her arm. She is recovering*)
- Beverly Wurm and family

### Emergency Appeal for Turkey and Syria

Thousands have been killed in Turkey and Syria by a massive earthquake that struck Monday morning before dawn on the border of the two countries. The magnitude 7.8 quake, centered in a heavily populated area of southeastern Turkey but felt as far away as Israel and Cyprus, collapsed buildings and buried scores of people in the rubble.



Donate online with the link: <https://support.ucc.org/donate-now>

or text UCCDISASTER to 41444.

Donations may be sent by check made payable to the United Church of Christ, PO BOX 71957 Cleveland, OH 44194. Please note "Turkey and Syria" on the memo line.

Read more: <https://www.ucc.org/deadly-earthquake-strikes-turkey-syria-border-ucc-delegation-in-europe-connects-with-partners-to-respond/>

# In Celebration OF CREATION

## A Season of Taking the Sanctuary to the Soil

Saturday, April 29  
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

### **SPEAK WITH THE EARTH AND IT WILL TEACH YOU**

In this workshop by author Pastor Daniel Cooperrider will speak about his book Speak with the Earth and It Will Listen, and offer spiritual practices that move us from head to heart, and allow time to reflect together about where and how we attend to the expressions of God in nature.  
**Federated Church of Chagrin Falls • 76 Bell St, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022**

Sunday, April 30  
4. p.m.

### **POP-UP "WILD CHURCH" GATHERING**

In this gathering led by Pastor Daniel Cooperrider experiment and play with an emergent outdoor church model, where we join our worship with the wind in the trees, the birdsong, the clouds, and the many other partners in the sacred conversation between Creator and Creation.  
**Sulfur Springs Picnic Area • South Chagrin Reservation • Sulphur Springs Dr, Bentleyville, OH 44022**

Tuesday, May 9  
4:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

### **LOW POWER, HAPPY HOUR WITH MICHAEL HOWARD**

Join this engaging discussion with Rev. Michael Anthony Howard about how collaborative community partnerships further our spiritual calling to care for the places we inhabit. As part of the Community Life Collaborative's 2023 Our Nature series, the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park has invited Michael to host a discussion with numerous public and private organizations about projects in and around the Cascade Valley Neighborhood.  
*Conservancy Members: Free | General Admission: \$10 | Purchase online at [Eventbrite](#)*  
**Happy Days Lodge • 500 West Streetsboro St, Peninsula, OH 44264**

Saturday, May 20  
9:30 a.m. – 12. a.m.

### **VOLUNTEER DAY AT ELIZABETH PARK**

Join us for a day of service getting our hands dirty in the soil, caring for the Community Food Forest and keeping our public places beautiful.  
**Elizabeth Park • 40 E Lods St, Akron, OH 44304**

