

Important Signs



5th Sunday in Lent
March 22, 2026

Prelude

Ave Maris Stella, verse 3

Titelouze

Greetings

*The assembly responds or joins in unison when our text is **bold**.*

Centering Words:

The hand of God has brought us together in this place, in this moment of time. Look at ourselves and our church. How faithfully have we loved God and our neighbor?

Call to worship:

Some of us come to worship today, weary and worn, heavy with all the circumstances that are too much to bear alone.

We gather to travel God's redemption road together.

Celebrate this time of worship and remembrance.

We rejoice in the Spirit of God who dwells in us.

Give thanks to God, who is gracious and righteous; walk before God in the land of the living.

We bring our doubts and fears to this time of reflection and refreshment.

*Opening Hymn

Lord of the Dance

[♯] UMH # 261

**I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth:
At Bethlehem I had my birth.**

Refrain:

**Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.**

**I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
They came with me and the dance went on:**

Refrain

**I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame:
The holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me on high,
And they left me there on a cross to die:**

Refrain

**I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;
But I am the dance, and I still go on:**

Refrain

**They cut me down and I leapt up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die.
I'll live in you if you'll live in me:
I am the Lord of the dance, said he.**

Refrain

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 261

Words: Sydney Carter, 1963; Music: 19th cent. Shaker tune; adapt. by Sydney Carter, 1963; harm. by Gary Alan Smith, 1988
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Call to Confession

Silent Prayers of Confession

Words of assurance

First Lesson: **John 11:1-27**

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Anthem

He Leadeth Me

Grassi

Second Lesson: **John 11:28-45**

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Hymn of Preparation

Seek Ye First

UMH # 405

1.

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God And His righteousness;
And all these things shall be added unto you.**

Hallelu, Hallelujah!

2.

**Ask, and it shall be given unto you; Seek, and you shall find.
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.**

Hallelu, Hallelujah!

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 405

Words: Karen Lafferty, 1972; Music: Karen Lafferty, 1972

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Message

“Important Signs”

Hymn of Response

In The Garden

UMH # 314

1.

**I come to the garden alone, While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear, The Son of God discloses.**

Refrain:

**And He walks with me, and He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known.**

2.

**He speaks, and the sound of His voice Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me Within my heart is ringing.**

Refrain

3.

**I'd stay in the garden with Him Tho' the night around me be falling;
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe, His voice to me is calling.**

Refrain

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 314

Words: C. Austin Miles, 1913; Music: C. Austin Miles, 1913; adapt. by Charles H. Webb. 1987

Adapt. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; Used by permission CCLI 673591

Invitation to the Offering

*As you feel led, please place your offering and/or completed connection card
in the basket at the back of the chapel, or text your gift to 833-756-0325,
or Contribute Now on our website: www.elyriafirstumc.org.*

Offertory

Praeambulum ex F

Scheidemann.

*Doxology

**Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

♪ UMH # 95

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 95

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674

Music: OLD 100TH; Attr. to Louis Bourgeois, 1551

*Offertory Prayer:

**Life-Giving Spirit, you breathe hope into our valleys of despair and call forth
life where we saw only dry bones. We come today not out of habit, but out of
longing to be part of your work that restores, renews, and redeems. Take
these gifts and use them to roll away the stones that keep your people bound.
Let them be signs of trust, symbols of resurrection, and tools of
transformation in a weary world. May our offering, like our living, lean into
your Spirit and testify that life - abundant, eternal, and holy - is possible in
you. In Christ, who calls us out of the grave and into your grace, we pray.
Amen.**

Announcements

*Closing Hymn

Hymn of Promise

♪ UMH # 707

1.

**In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise; butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

2.

**There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

3.

**In our end is our beginning, in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 707
Words: Natalie Sleeth, 1986; Music: Natalie Sleeth, 1986
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Benediction

Postlude

Ave Maris Stella, verse 2

Titelouze

**Please stand as you are comfortable*

[♫]UMH ~ *United Methodist Hymnal* (hard cover hymnal)

[♫]FWS - *The Faith We Sing* (soft cover hymnal)

Worship Participants

Preaching: Rev. Marcus Atha

Liturgist: Kristen Jones

Media Specialists: Denise Smith and David Wilm

Musicians: Kingsley Wood, Jack Roberts and the Chancel Choir

Sound: Neal Hubbard

Ushers and Greeters: John Borer, Kris Long, and Mike Zahnke

This service is broadcast live on the radio station WOBL 1320 AM and 107.7 FM. Today's radio broadcast is sponsored with money given for our radio ministry. Thank you to those who donate which allows us to continue our radio ministry as we share God's love with the radio audience and the community.

The altar flowers are given by Kim Foster in loving memory of her brother Clyde H. "Jake" Allison, Jr. who was called home by the Lord on March 24, 2025.

If you are interested in joining our church family, or if you have any pastoral needs or prayer concerns, please call the church office at 440.322.6622.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

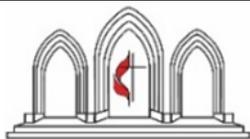
312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035 440.322.6622

www.elyriafirstumc.org

An equal opportunity provider

Ave Maris Stella, verse 3 by Jehan Titelouze. ***He Leadeth Me*** Writer: Thomas Grassi, © 2011 Alfred Music. ***Praeambulum ex F*** by Heinrich Scheidemann. ***Ave Maris Stella, verse 2*** by Jehan Titelouze. All songs are performed under license # 673591.

Third Street Review



March Mission focus:

March 22, 2026

First United Methodist Church

312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035

Phone: 440.322.6622

Email: church@elyriafirstumc.org

UMCOR Sunday

When we support UMCOR Sunday, we're not just reacting to emergencies. We're making it possible for the Church to be a consistent, trusted presence in moments of urgent need.

You may give on-line via our website: elyriafirstumc.org or submit a check to: *Elyria First United Methodist Church*, indicate **UMCOR** on the memo line. Making it possible for the Church to be a consistent, trusted presence in moments of urgent need. Thank you for your generosity!

New Church Plan

As we move forward with the New Church Plan, in April and May the preaching duties will be shared by Marcus Atha and Karson Collins.

After Easter Sunday, we will not have services on the first Sunday in our church but encourage our members to visit Karson in Lakewood. Marcus will lead services on the second, fourth, and fifth Sundays. Karson will lead the third Sunday worship service.

Season of Lent

Do you have to celebrate?

No you don't. Lent is not commanded in the Bible. This is not going to make you more loved or accepted in the eyes of God. There is nothing we can do to earn God's favor or grace because Jesus has accomplished it all. This is simply an opportunity to focus your heart and mind on the Lord and reflect on His sacrifice as you prepare to celebrate His glorious resurrection. There should be no guilt if you don't celebrate and no pride if you do. Just see it as an opportunity to spend intentional time drawing near to the Lord. Make time to pray, fast, and prepare your heart for Easter!

"O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones.

Let me find you again. Amen."

~ Henri Nouwen

312 Happy Hour

Happy Hour is a twice per month event held on the **2nd and 4th Tuesdays** at noon in **Fellowship Hall!**

Join us for a great meal, fun, and fellowship on **March 24th**

Fellowship Time

Come, enjoy goodies and wonderful fellowship in the **Parlor** after worship today, **Sunday, April 19th**. If you would like to bake or host this monthly time of fellowship in the future, please see Darlene Lewis or Carol Stomieroski, or call the church office.

Share Your Gifts/Talents

Volunteering once a month can make a significant difference in the life of our ministries, the community, and YOU!

Please contact the church office to cheerfully offer your gifts and talents to serve in these vital ministries in 2026!

Free Hygiene Store

We are grateful for your continued support of this much needed ministry. Being open to the community and filling in the gap for many families is a blessing!

Our needs for March include:

- **Baby Wash and Lotion**
- **Cleaning Supplies** (glass, bathroom, and toilet bowl cleaners)
- **Laundry & Dish Soap**
- **Shampoo & Conditioner** (dry shampoo too)
- **Women's and Men's Body Wash**

Please place these items in the box located on the main level. The store will be open on **Saturday, March 28th** from **10 am-12 pm!**

Free Clothing Store

We are accepting clothing, coats, blankets, and linens. Please place items in the box on the main level. The store will be open to the community next **Saturday, March 28th** **10 am-12 pm.**

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

~ Romans 12:12

Open Sponsorship Dates

Altar Flower dates: **Cost \$22**

April 19

Radio dates: **Cost \$300** (*includes advertising!*)

April 12, 19, and 26

Please call the church office at 440.322.6622 to reserve your special date!

Scripture readings for the week:

Sunday, March 22: **Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45**

Monday, March 23: **Psalm 143; 1 Kings 17:17-24; Acts 20:7-12**

Tuesday, March 24: **Psalm 143; 2 Kings 4:18-37; Ephesians 2:1-10**

Wednesday, March 25: **Psalm 143; Jeremiah 32:1-9, 36-41; Matthew 22:23-33**

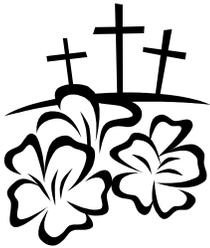
Wednesday, March 25: **Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 45; Psalm 40:5-10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38**

Thursday, March 26: **Psalm 31:9-16; 1 Samuel 16:11-13; Philippians 1:1-11**

Friday, March 27: **Psalm 31:9-16; Job 13:13-19; Philippians 1:21-30**

Saturday, March 28: **Psalm 31:9-16; Lamentations 3:55-66; Mark 10:32-34**

Sunday, March 29: **Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66; Matthew 27:11-54**



2026 EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM



DEADLINE FOR ORDERS IS: SUNDAY, MARCH 22ND

A separate check should be made payable to:

First United Methodist Church (indicate "Easter Flowers")

****Please do not include your tithe with the flower payment.***

FLOWERS	# ORDERED		\$ ENCLOSED
White Lilies	_____	x \$17	_____
Tulips (pink, red, or yellow) circle one	_____	x \$16	_____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE # _____

In Memory ~ Honor ~ Appreciation of: (please circle one)

_____ I will pick up. _____ Leave for Tuesday pick up _____ Plant in courtyard

**Plants may be picked up on Easter Sunday following the worship service,
or on Tuesday, April 6th between 9 AM and 3 PM.**

First United Methodist Church

312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035 Phone: 440.322.6622