

Gentiles Temple **Grace** Jesus Sprituity
Welcome Acts 15 Table
Porneia Marriage Kingdom
Kingdom **Covenant** James
Ethics *Sacred* **Dignity** Belonging
Kingdom Table Community Love
James *Kingdom* Holy Spirit *Degnity*

Don't Make it
Difficult

4th Sunday in Lent
March 15, 2026

Prelude

Ave Maris Stella, verse 1

Titelouze

Greetings

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

Centering Words:

God has drawn the church into covenant, calling us to be a faithful people who walk in the ways of Christ. Do you sense changes happening deep inside you? Feel the new life flowing among us.

Call to worship:

In the early church, the apostles asked how to welcome those who were turning to God.

They chose grace over burden and welcome over fear.

James said, "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God."

We will not make it difficult for those who are turning to God.

We are called to leave behind idolatry, exploitation, and every way of using people.

We are called to lives of holiness, dignity, and faithfulness.

We are called to make room for those whom others have kept at a distance.

We will widen the table in the spirit of Jesus.

We are called to become a community shaped by grace and truth.

We will walk together in covenant love.

This is our prayer and our calling.

Lord Jesus, form us into your church.

*Opening Hymn

Open My Eyes, That I May See

♯ UMH # 454

1.

**Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key, that shall unclasp and set me free.**

**Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;
open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

2.

**Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.**

**Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;
open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

3.

**Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare love with Thy children thus to share.**

**Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;
open my mouth, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 454

Words Clara H. Scott, 1895

Music: Clara H. Scott, 1895

Call to Confession

Silent Prayers of Confession

Words of assurance

Special Music

First Methodist Brass

Old Testament Lesson: **Genesis 12:1-3**

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

Anthem

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Arr. Drennan

New Testament Lesson: **Acts 15:10-19**

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

© 1972 Maranatha! Music

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Message

“Don’t Make it Difficult”

Musical Response

First Methodist Brass

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

First Methodist Brass

*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:

Receive these gifts, O God, as signs of our desire to walk in your ways, to live as your people, and to shine with the goodness, justice, and truth that reflect your image. Let our giving be more than ritual; let it be an act of trust, a response to your faithfulness, and a testimony of your light at work in us. In Christ's holy name, we pray, Amen.

Announcements

*Closing Hymn

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

♯ UMH # 206

1.

**I want to walk as a child of the light; I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world;
The star of my life is Jesus.**

Refrain:

**In him there is no darkness at all; The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God;
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.**

2.

**I want to see the brightness of God; I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
And show me the way to the Father.**

Refrain

3.

**I'm looking for the coming of Christ; I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
We shall know the joy of Jesus.**

Refrain

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 206
Words: Kathleen Thomerson, 1966
Music: HOUSTON; Kathleen Thomerson, 1966
© 1970, 1975 Celebration.
Used by permission CCLI 673591

Benediction

Postlude

Ave Maris Stella, verse 4

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. Karson Collins

Liturgist: Sheila André de la Porte

Media Specialists: Denise Smith and David Wilm

Musicians: Kingsley Wood, Jack Roberts and the Chancel Choir

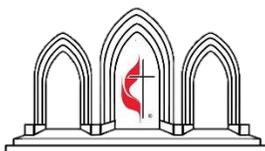
Sound: Neal Hubbard

Ushers and Greeters: John Borer, Roger and Janice McFrederick, 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 Barb Church in loving memory of JoAnn Demchak's March 15th earthly birthday.

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

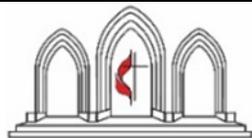
312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035 440.322.6622

www.elyriafirstumc.org

An equal opportunity provider

Ave Maris Stella, verse 1 by Jehan Titelouze. ***O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*** Writer: Hans Leo Hassler, arranged by Patti Drennan.
Ave Maris Stella, verse 4 by Jehan Titelouze. All songs are performed under license # 673591.

Third Street Review



March Mission focus:

March 15, 2026

First United Methodist Church

312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035

Phone: 440.322.6622

Email: church@elyriafirstumc.org

UMCOR Sunday March 15th

UMCOR Sunday matters because it sustains the foundation of trained staff, reliable systems, and the ability to act quickly and compassionately. By covering UMCOR's administrative costs, this Special Sunday makes sure the Church is equipped to respond whenever and wherever help is needed—without delay. 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!

Fellowship Time

Come, enjoy goodies and wonderful fellowship in the **Parlor** after worship today, **Sunday, March 15th**. 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.

Season of Lent

Lent calls us not only to give something up, but to give more of ourselves - our attention, our compassion, our Christ-like love. When we choose to lift someone's spirit, carry someone's burden or simply show up for a person who feels forgotten, we live out the heart of Jesus' sacrifice.

After the protestant reformation, many protestant denominations rejected Lenten practices as a rejection of the Catholic church. However, many early non-catholic denominations and churches still observed Lent and continue to do so today. Make time to pray, fast, and prepare your heart for Easter!

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!

Community Breakfast

Still thinking about joining a breakfast team? The 1st and 4th Sunday teams can really benefit with your help! ***Prayerfully consider joining a breakfast team this year***, then call Julie Joy in the church office (440.322.6622) to volunteer!

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**

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, Deodorant, and Razors**

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 once again. Please place items in the box on the main level. Thank you! The store will be open to the community next **Saturday, March 28th** **10 am-12 pm.**

Open Sponsorship Dates

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

March 29, April 19

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

March 22 and 29

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

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.

Scripture readings for the week:

Sunday, March 15: **1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41**

Monday, March 16: **Psalm 146; Isaiah 59:9-19; Acts 9:1-20**

Tuesday, March 17: **Psalm 146; Isaiah 42:14-21; Colossians 1:9-14**

Wednesday, March 18: **Psalm 146; Isaiah 60:17-22; Matthew 9:27-34**

Thursday, March 19: **Psalm 130; Ezekiel 1:1-3, 2:8-3:3; Revelation 10:1-11**

Friday, March 20: **Psalm 130; Ezekiel 33:10-16; Revelation 11:15-19**

Saturday, March 21: **Psalm 130; Ezekiel 36:8-15; Luke 24:44-53**

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



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 7th between 9 AM and 3 PM.**

First United Methodist Church

312 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio 44035 Phone: 440.322.6622