



113 West Central Ave | Van Wert, OH 45891 | 419-238-0631 | vanwertfirst.net



Renewed in Mercy

MARCH 8TH 2026

Third Sunday in Lent

10:30 AM

Whatever your circumstances and no matter where you have been, you matter to God and to us. *You belong here!* We pray your experience in our Worship today will be one that blesses you and uplifts your relationship with Jesus Christ.

Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, and Lead Courageously



ORDER *of* WORSHIP

Romans 5:8
(NRSV)

*“God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners
Christ died for us.”*

PLEASE FILL OUT THE ATTENDANCE PAD AND PASS IT TO YOUR NEIGHBOR
+ THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE RISE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Jana Thompson

HANDBELL PRELUDE Scott Turner, Clarinet

Just a Closer Walk With Thee | arr. Bruce Greer

+ CALL TO WORSHIP Jana Thompson

Leader: Come, let us worship God!

People: Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Leader: Come, let us worship our Shepherd!

People: We are the sheep of God's pasture, and we follow where God leads us.

Leader: Come, let us open our hearts!

People: We receive God's love poured into our hearts through the Spirit.

Leader: Come, let us worship God, the rock of our salvation!

People: Let us worship God, whose mercy guides and sustains us on the path of new life!

+ OPENING PRAYER Jana Thompson

Gracious God, we thank you for the living hope you give through Jesus Christ.

Renew our hearts and awaken our faith. Awaken us, O God, when our faith grows weary.

Help us lay aside all that draws us from you and clothe us instead with your grace and

salvation. Make our faith alive and active in love. We pray for those who have lost hope

and for the needs we carry in our hearts. Be our help and our salvation, and lead us into

your abundant life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ HYMN #57 *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* | UMH

SONG *Goodness of God*

HONORING JASON KREISCHER

You can find more information on
events and Church Info on the Bulletin
board in the Kitchenette off Krout.

TIME OF GREETING

CHAT WITH THE CHILDREN Julie Burenga

Children are dismissed to AWE – Preschool thru 5th Grade

CHORAL ANTHEM Chancel Choir

Come, Christians, Join to Sing | arr. Don Busarow

Romans 5: 1 – 11



Companion for the Journey

+ SCRIPTURE

SERIES

MESSAGE

Pastor Christian

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jana Thompson

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Pastor Christian

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor Christian

OFFERTORY

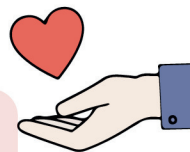
The Power of Your Love | by Darlene Zschech

+ DOXOLOGY #99

My Tribute | UMH

+ SPOKEN BENEDICTION

Place offerings in the wooden plates coming through the Pews, during the Offering song.



POSTLUDE

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling | arr. Jane Holstein

You are invited to be seated and enjoy the Postlude or leave quietly in peace.

Thank you for worshipping with us, and for your continued generosity and support.



PRAY FOR THE CHILDREN OF OUR CHURCH

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



"Heavenly Father, I bring (name) before you and pray for joy and happiness in their lives. I pray (name) will bring joy to others, find happiness in difficult situations, and marvel at your goodness. As (name) embraces the lenten season, may the resounding song in their soul be "I've got the joy of the Lord". In your everlasting name I pray, Amen"

LEADERS OF TODAY'S WORSHIP

ANNOUNCER

JANA THOMPSON
CHILDREN'S CHAT
JULIE BURENGA

VIDEOGRAPHER

KURT MASSILLO
PROJECTIONIST

USHERS

NEIL SHAFFER
DAVE LICHTLE, ASST.
SCREEN CREATORS
MARY ANN FALK
JEREMY LAUKHUF
MELODY TAYLOR

PASTOR

CHRISTIAN TAYLOR
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
SCOTT TURNER
WORSHIP LEADER
JEREMY LAUKHUF

ACOLYTES
HENRY SCHAFFNER
ETTA SCHAFFNER

SOUND ENGINEER
NOAH KRITES
KYLE WENDEL

Companion for the Journey

ICE-BREAKERS

- 1** If you were going on a long road trip or hike, who would you want as your companion, and what would make them a good travel partner?
- 2** Paul discusses how difficult experiences can foster perseverance, character, and hope. Think about a challenge you've faced in life (big or small). What is something positive or meaningful that eventually came from that experience?

SERMON BASED

- 1** The opening story described a moment when a group remembered they were still “walking the trail together,” even as they disagreed about the path. When have you experienced a disagreement where remembering the relationship changed the tone of the conversation? How might remembering that Christ walks with us shape the way we handle difficult conversations?
- 2** **Romans 5** reminds us that through Christ we have peace with God, hope in suffering, and reconciliation with one another. Which of these speaks most deeply to your life right now, and why?

BEYOND THE TEXT

- 1** The early church in **Acts 15** faced a serious disagreement about Scripture and tradition, yet they chose to gather, listen, pray, and seek unity in Christ. What practices could help our church community handle disagreements in ways that reflect the love and mercy of Christ?
- 2** We are unified by the blood of Christ before we are divided by other issues. What might it look like for our congregation to actively live out that unity when we encounter difficult topics or tensions in our community?