



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



Renewed in Mercy

MARCH 22ND 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

10:30AM

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

Isaiah 43:19
(NRSV)

*"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."*

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Jordan Dettrow

+ CALL TO WORSHIP Jordan Dettrow

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

People: We gather to travel God's redemption road together.

Leader: Some of us come to worship today, dry and thirsty, longing for relief and peace from the troubles that surround us.

People: We gather to travel God's redemption road together.

Leader: Some of us come to worship today with stories to tell of little resurrections, moments of new life that sprang up when we least expected them.

People: We gather to travel God's redemption road together.

Leader: Beloved, whatever we bring with us to worship today, God welcomes us and calls us to work together as we travel God's redemption road together.

People: We gather to be truth-tellers and life-bringers as we travel God's redemption road together. Amen.

PRELUDE *Out of the Depths/Cry to You* | arr. Max Reger (1873 – 1916)

+ OPENING PRAYER Jordan Dettrow

God of mercy, we come to you dry and lifeless, seeking your breath of life.

Lead us to the place where our hopes lie buried and call us out from the tombs of despair. Call forth our faith that, with Martha, we may know you to be the resurrection and the life, in this world and the world to come. Amen.

HYMN #529 vs. 1, 2, 3 *How Firm a Foundation* | UMH

You can find more info on Church events on the Bulletin board in the Kitchenette.

TIME OF GREETING

CHAT WITH THE CHILDREN Ruth Ann Dowler

Children are dismissed to AWE – Preschool thru 5th Grade

CHORAL ANTHEM Linda Mechling, Piano

Dry Bones | arr. Mark Hayes



JOIN US FOR AN
INTERGENERATIONAL
MISSION TRIP TO

WOODBIDGE VIRGINIA
JUNE 14 - 19, 2026

Spots Available!
Contact Teresa Shaffer

**+ SCRIPTURE
SERIES
MESSAGE**

Ezekiel 37: 1 – 14

Redemption Road



Pastor Christian

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jordan Dettrow

Out of the depths of despair, we cry to you, O God. We are lost in a world of pain and suffering. When we put our trust in weapons of war, we find no peace. When we put our faith in our own resources, we feel the ache of our true needs. When we put our hope in the health of our bodies, we suffer pain and find no healing. Come to us, O God. Forgive our doubts and fears. Heal our brokenness, that we may rejoice in your steadfast love. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Pastor Christian

+ SONG

Break Every Chain

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor Christian

OFFERING SONG

I Surrender All

+ DOXOLOGY #95

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow | UMH



+ SPOKEN BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Ricercare on St. Anne | arr. Gordon Young

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

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.**

LEADERS OF TODAY'S WORSHIP

ANNOUNCER JORDAN DETTROW	PASTOR CHRISTIAN TAYLOR
CHILDREN'S CHAT RUTH ANN DOWLER	DIRECTOR OF MUSIC SCOTT TURNER
ACOLYTES ANNA STOLLER HEATHER KEEN	WORSHIP LEADER JEREMY LAUKHUF
VIDEOGRAPHER KURT MASSILLO	USHERS NEIL SHAFFER
PROJECTIONIST NAOMI WHITE	DAVE LICHTLE, ASST.
SOUND ENGINEER ERIK FALK	SCREEN CREATORS MARY ANN FALK JEREMY LAUKHUF MELODY TAYLOR

**EASTER
SPECIAL OFFERING**



The Goal: Kitchen Upgrades - specifically Stove Replacements

The Impact: From weekly fellowships to community outreach, our kitchen serves countless plates and creates a place for all.

The Ask: Please prayerfully consider a gift this Easter.

Redemption Road

ICE-BREAKERS

- 1** If you were Ezekiel standing in a valley full of bones, what's the first thing you'd say or do — run, pray, or just stand there confused?
- 2** God brings the bones back to life step-by-step—if your week were like that process, what stage would you be in right now: “still bones,” “rattling chaos,” or “almost alive but needs coffee”?

SERMON BASED

- 1** God asks Ezekiel, “Can these bones live?” Where in your life do you feel like you are standing in a “valley of dry bones,” and how are you responding to God's question of faith in that situation?
- 2** Ezekiel was called to speak before anything changed. What is one “dead place” in your life or community where God may be calling you to speak hope, even before you see any evidence of change?

BEYOND THE TEXT

- 1** The early church trusted in Christ's lordship despite overwhelming opposition from Rome. In what ways might we be placing more trust in visible systems of power (money, security, influence) than in the unseen power of God's Spirit?
- 2** The sermon reminds us that true life comes only from God's Spirit, not from human effort or structure. Where might we be settling for “put-together bones” (appearance, activity, control) instead of depending fully on God to breathe real life into our faith, our church, and our world?

