

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF ST. CLAIR**



**“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you’re  
welcome and loved here”**

**300 Adams Street, St. Clair, MI 48079  
810-329-4142**

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# WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

March 23, 2025

Third Sunday In Lent

† Those who are able, please stand.

**CHIMES**

*There Is A Balm In Gilead*

†**GATHERING HYMN:**

*Open The Eyes Of My Heart*

**WELCOME**

Pastor: Welcome to First Congregational Church of Saint Clair, United Church of Christ where, **People: no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you're welcome and loved here.**

† **OPENING PRAYER**

Nancy Rice

Leader: Divine creator of sustaining water, we come here to worship you to give you thanks and praise. You are our God, and source of life.

**People: Help us to let go of all that is in our way of connecting to you in this time of worship, that we are able to be filled and pour forth upon our leaving here this day.**

Leader: Oh Holy One, may we be able to quench within us the thirst that only you can fill. Thank you Oh Lord our God for Loving us and leading us to You, our sustainer and strength.

**ALL: Amen.**

†**HYMN**

*Jesus, Keep Me Near The Cross*  
*NC197 Verses 1,2,4*

**PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION & ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Pastor: Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we come before you acknowledging the longing in our hearts that only you can truly satisfy. Yet, in our searching, we often make choices that leave us unfulfilled, pursuing the fleeting comforts of this world that fail to quench our deep thirst. We confess that in moments of doubt, we turn away, believing you are not enough. We seek satisfaction in tangible things—what we can see, touch, or taste—because the mystery of your ways feels too distant or too difficult to follow. Forgive us, Lord, for placing other desires and priorities above you. In this silence, hear the unspoken

confessions of our hearts, as we surrender the things that have drawn us away from your grace and love...

Lord God, have mercy on us and the languishing paths we choose.

Thank you for your unending Grace and forgiveness that makes us new each day. Help us to take new steps that bring new life, by your power and Grace we pray. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Leader: Holy One, open our eyes that we may see you.

Open our ears so that we may hear you.

Open our minds so that we may understand your word.

Open our hearts that we may desire to live it out. Amen.

### **FIRST READING**

Psalm 63:1-8

Nancy Rice

### **MUSICAL MEDITATION**

*As The Deer*

### **FCC ROCK TIME**

*Young And Young At Heart Message*

*Introduction to Camp Talahi*

*Presented by Camp President: Stephanie Lange*

### **SECOND READING**

Isaiah 55:1-9

Pastor Julia DiFiore

### **SERMON:**

No Way To Know: Stay Thirsty

Pastor Julia DiFiore

### **†HYMN**

*Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us*  
*NC252 Verses 1,2,3*

### **JOYS, CONCERNS, AND INVITATION TO PRAY**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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 forever. Amen.**

## **OFFERTORY**

*please place your offering in the box at the back table at your convenience upon entering or leaving. Or use the QR code on the pew by the envelopes.*

## **PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR TITHES & OFFERINGS**

### **†HYMN**

*Beneath The Cross Of Jesus  
NC190 Verses 1,3*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Announcements are in the back of this bulletin)

### **†BENEDICTION**

Pastor: With the help of God may we...

**People: Go forth into the world in peace and be of good cheer, hold fast to that which is good, render to no person evil for evil.**

**Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak and help the afflicted.**

**Honor God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Pastor: May it be as you have said, in the name of the Holy Trinity-  
Amen.

### **†POSTLUDE**

*Just A Closer Walk With Thee*



One License #A720797

## **PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS...**

Jackie Keil, Joe Miller, David McCreary, Carol Carroll, Susan Couch, Bryce C. DeLand, Eric Fandrlick, Matthew Pennewell, Ann Whittaker.

Also, remember to pray for all who are serving in the military, first responders, medical personnel, and our elected officials.

**3/23/25 – WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

SUNDAY STEWARD: Kathy Cilluffo

SOUND AND LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, Kathy Cilluffo

MUSIC: Denise Gregg

USHERS: Tim Galvin, Karen Galvin

READER: Nancy Rice

POWER POINT: Pat O'Connor

**3/30/25 – WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

SUNDAY STEWARD: Kathy Cilluffo

SOUND AND LIVESTREAM: Tim Galvin, Kathy Cilluffo

MUSIC: Denise Gregg

USHERS: Dave Scheel, Jacie Sanders

READER: Jovanna DiFiore

POWER POINT: Jody Skonieczny

COFFEE HOUR: Adam & Krysta Rybarczyk

READER 4/6/25 – Kathy Cilluffo

**OPEN AND AFFIRMING INCLUSIVE CHURCH COVENANT**

The members of the First Congregational Church of St. Clair, United Church of Christ, declare that we are a fully inclusive, Open and Affirming Congregation. We affirm the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and believe that all people are children of God. As such, we welcome to the community of faith all people of diverse race, physical and mental abilities, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, and socio-economic status. We covenant to provide to all a safe, loving, nurturing and compassionate community.

**~CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS~**

**CURIOUS ABOUT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?**

Please let Pastor Julia know([pastorjuliad@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjuliad@gmail.com)) and she will set up a time to chat. Your questions about the United Church of Christ and this church specifically will be answered.

## **LENT SERVICE**

There will be a Lent Service Wednesdays in March, 6:30 p.m., in the sanctuary.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

Bible study Wednesdays, at 6 p.m., in Friendship Hall. No Bible Study during Lent.

## **CHOIR**

Choir practice Thursdays, at 7:30 p.m.

## **TAIZ'E**

Taiz'e March 29th, at 6:30 p.m., in the lounge. Please enter Adams Street door.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday school will be held the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month unless otherwise noted.

## **MISSIONS**

We will begin gathering supplies for the BWARM (Blue Water Area Rescue Mission). They are a nonprofit organization that serves as an overnight warming shelter for homeless men in St. Clair County.

They need:

- 3-in-one body wash
- Handwarmers
- Small travel Kleenex
- Knit gloves
- Soft Granola Bars
- Canned Diced tomatoes
- Chicken or beef stock
- Bike locks
- Fitted white twin sheets

We'll start collecting these items beginning on March 1st and through the month. You can leave your donations on the shelves labeled BWARM in the Elevator Room.

Thanks in advance from the Mission Team for your donations!

## **HEALTH CARE MINISTRIES**

The Healthcare Ministry Team will resume blood pressure checks during coffee hour following worship on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

## **THE LITTLE RED FOOD PANTRY**

This small pantry is a community outreach program sponsored by The Mission Team of this church. It is stocked twice weekly with non-perishable food. Donation requests may change but the need to feed does not.

MARCH is filled with  
More than one thing.  
The beginning of Lent  
And the beginning of spring.

The sky will be blue.  
The grass will be green.  
And hunger will be  
Part of the scene.

MARCH food pantry needs:

CEREAL

Canned Chicken

Tuna

Corn

Fruit

Pasta (with or with out meat)

Potato Pouches

Spaghetti Sauce (only canned, please)

Please leave food donations in the elevator room on one of the shelves labeled LITTLE RED FOOD PANTRY.

And please check the expiration date on each food item before leaving it for the pantry.

For questions, please contact Nancy Kennedy (810)329-3790.

### **COFFEE HOUR**

There are several Sundays available to host coffee hour. Please be sure to check out the sign-up sheet on the back table of the sanctuary.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Do you have something you would like shared to our social media platforms? For any news, events, or stories you'd like to share with our community, please reach out to our Social Media Minister Karl Heilman in person, message our Facebook page or email him at [kheilman84@yahoo.com](mailto:kheilman84@yahoo.com). Let's continue to spread God's love together! Feel free to like, share, and engage with our content as we strive to connect and uplift one another through the power of social media. Check out our Facebook page at [@First Congregational Church UCC of St. Clair](#) and our Instagram page at [@firstcong.churchofst.clair](#).