

February 18, 2026

Dear College First family,

Today is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. Like many of you, I never observed Lent growing up. Our small, non-denominational church didn't talk about it except, perhaps, to say it was something "those Catholics" did.

I have grown to appreciate the Christian calendar, the colorful changes in the sanctuary, and the special services such as Maundy Thursday and Pentecost Sunday. There is more to the spiritual seasons than Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday.

Lent is a time to choose to enter the desert, so to speak, as Jesus did. He spent 40 days without food or friends being tested and prepared for what would follow. Growth and comfort cannot coexist. Spiritual maturity is not the result of mere desire. We must engage in spiritual disciplines/rhythms/habits. Pastor Craig Flack from our sister church, Celina Church of God, writes,

Ask the Lord what fasting will look like for you. Maybe it is a certain day of the week. Maybe it is a certain type of food. Our Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters essentially go vegan all of Lent, for example. Ask the Lord what self denial should look like for you. Maybe it is not commenting on any Facebook posts. Maybe it is ridding yourself of TV or social media altogether. Maybe it is only cold showers or no pillow. Ask the Lord how you should focus more on prayer. Maybe you will partner it with a fast and skip lunch for 40 days to spend that time in focused prayer. Ask the Lord how you should focus more on almsgiving. Maybe you will not go out to lunch for 40 days and instead pack your meals and save the money to give to the local food bank.

I am simply trying to prime the pump. The Lord will lead you if you seek Him. I do know this. The desert should feel like a desert. The first few days will feel exciting. The following 37 will feel like an act of discipline, obedience, and devotion if you hope to continue. The desert is not a vacation. It is hard. It was a test for our Lord. It will be for us too.

I encourage you to join us **tonight at 7 PM** for our annual **Ash Wednesday service**. It is important to follow Jesus into the desert, preparing for Good Friday and then the greatest day on the Christian calendar which we will celebrate together on April 5 at the Marathon Center.

On the journey with you,

Kirk



**Donald Dreisbach 2/16
Kirk Schneemann 2/17**

**Jim Harris 2/17
Larry Bame 2/20
Patrick Below 2/20
Luke Archer 2/22
David Hamlin 2/22
Hazel Bash 2/23
David Shuck 2/24
Susan Briggs 2/24
Janis Below 2/25
Connie Reeder 2/26**

Upcoming Events

2/18: Ash Wednesday Service, 7 PM
2/22: Young Adult Lunch, 11:30 AM
2/27: Finally Friday, 6 PM
2/27: Young Adult Movie Night, 6 PM

**TITHES/OFFERINGS....\$45,861.04
ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS....\$2,199.01
BUDGET....\$22,749.40**

You can give online via PayPal, in addition to giving on the church website. Please scan the QR Code provided. Any questions, please call the church office.



Time for an updated family photo?

Sign up for the College First pictorial directory today!

MARCH 24-28

1. Go to <https://ucdir.com/> or scan the QR code
2. Click on the red box labeled "Photography Session Sign Up"
3. Enter the following information:
Church Code: OH2944 **Password: photos2**
 4. Follow the prompts to choose your preferred date and time.
Free 8 x 10 photo included with session!

Online sign ups for the pictorial directory are available Monday through Friday by using the QR Code above or go to ucdir.com. Paper sign ups will be available following each worship service on Sunday morning.

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18 / 7:00 pm
Sanctuary

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and our journey to the cross of Christ. All are encouraged to come and share in this time of worship and confession. The imposition of ashes will be observed.

Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.
Ecclesiastes 3:20



- Mike August
- Linda Bratt
- Christine Cole
- Briella Fletcher
- Mary Jo Geise
- Jill Gordon
- Ledger Han
- Barbara Hovis
- Dan Kerlin
- Susan Martaus
- Grayce Meindardi
- Lee Osmun
- Cindy Sims-Perry
- Penny Prigge
- Doug Rosendale
- Karen Scheiderer
- Ron Tipton
- Heather Tussing
- Susan Williams

E-MAIL PRAYER GROUP - Praises and prayer concerns for the church body as a whole are sent out via e-mail by Connections Pastor Kimberly Reese. To submit a prayer request or to be added to the Prayer Chain recipient e-mail list please contact Pastor Kimberly at kreese@collegefirst.org.

Notes of Sympathy

Our sympathy and prayers to Pastor David and Anna Welker after the passing of David's sister, Mary, on February 15.

Our sympathy and prayers to Debbie and Jay Edel after the passing of Debbie's sister, Dauri Shank, on February 12.

Happy 100th!

Dave Hamlin turns 100 on February 22!

Let's shower Dave with birthday greetings as he celebrates this milestone birthday.

Cards may be mailed to:
Dave Hamlin
c/o Birchaven
15100 Birchaven Lane, D 57
Findlay, OH 45840

We Need More Smiling Faces!

Additional greeters are needed for the 10:00 and 11:00 AM services. Greeters typically serve once a month. As the first faces our members and guests see, greeters play a vital role in making everyone feel welcome from the moment they walk through the doors. We'd love to have you be a part of the team! To learn more, contact Pastor Kimberly at kreese@collegefirst.org.



Baby Bottle Fundraiser

The Baby Bottle Fundraiser for Women's Resource Center will come to a close at the end of February. Please make sure you turn in your bottles before Friday, February 27 to the church office. Thank you!

Senior Fun MARCH DINNER

**Tuesday, March 10
5:30 pm / Fellowship Hall**

Plan to gather with all your friends from Senior Fun as be part of our March Dinner. The dinner will feature delicious ham balls for the main course. Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Main course, drink and table serve will be provided.

Following the meal, Carla Benjamin, and Karen Wood will share exciting news about the "Welcome to a New Life" mentorship program that seeks to help adults achieve crime-free, drug-free, productive lives in the Findlay area.

Plan to bring a friend and share in a great time together. Sign up today.

Join Our Nursery Team!

Are you looking for a meaningful way to serve our families? We are looking for a dedicated Nursery Worker to help during our Wednesday night Encounter sessions (6:00–7:30 PM) on the 4th and 5th Wednesdays of each month (when there is a 5th Wednesday). This would be for children birth through toddlers. There would be approximately three children in the room.

By caring for our kiddos, you enable parents to be fed by God's Word in their own small group gathering that will be meeting in the church building. If you love working with children and want to share God's love through your service, we'd love to talk to you!

Requirements: 18+, background check required, and a heart for ministry.

Interested? Contact Pastor Kimberly Reese at kreese@collegefirst.org.

JOIN US FOR ENCOUNTER!



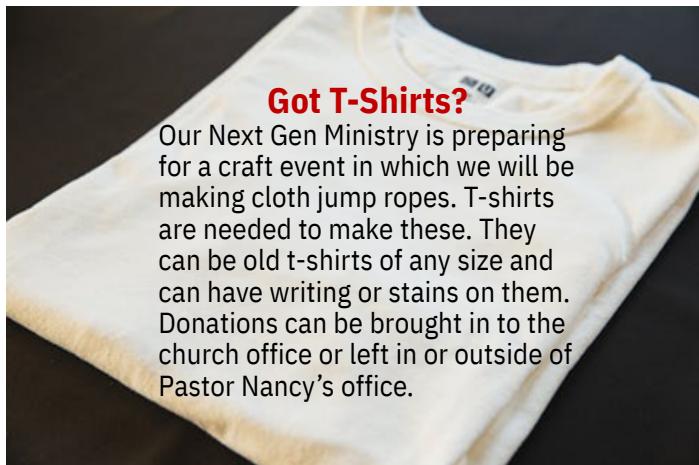
**EVERY WEDNESDAY 6PM–7:30
PRESCHOOL THROUGH 5TH GRADE**

CF KIDS: Finally Friday!

Kids grades K-5 from 6-8 PM in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, February 27, come join us in testing some of your knowledge with trivia, your past gaming with life size pac man, and your creativity with records!

**BLAST FROM THE PAST
FINALLY FRIDAY**

**FEBRUARY 27TH
6:00 - 8:00**



Donations Needed

Our church and community are in need of: a computer chair, a clothes rack, electric stove, and mattresses. If you have any of these items to donate, please contact Pastor Nancy at nhiser@collegefirst.org.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

9:00AM 11:00AM

SERVICES IN THE SANCTUARY, 1100 N. MAIN ST.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

10:00AM @ WINEBRENNER
WINEBRENNER TLB AUDITORIUM, 950 N. MAIN ST.

SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE

LIVESTREAM 9 AM & 10 AM

FACEBOOK PAGE & YOUTUBE CHANNEL
GO TO THE WEBSITE 'ONLINE WORSHIP' PAGE FOR LINKS

1100 N. Main St. Findlay, OH 45840

PHONE: 419-422-7365 **FAX:** 419-423-9449

E-MAIL: office@collegefirst.org

WEBSITE: www.collegefirst.org

OFFICE HOURS: Monday-Thursday 9AM-4 PM, Friday 9 AM-2 PM



Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, & TikTok!
Download the Church Center app!

Love. Equip. Send.

Staff Directory

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Chad Smith, Custodian

Mark Fillhart, Assistant Custodian

Church Elders 2026

Deb Anders, Next Generation

Alvin Trusty, Connection and Discipleship

Nate Tice, Outreach and Missions

Randy Ewing, Property Management

Jon Rupp, Stewardship and Finance

Dave Green, Worship