

“Job, God, Whirlwinds, Life”

By Rev. Dr. Jeffrey A. Schooley

Life has been a whirlwind lately. That’s not me complaining; I’m merely describing.

Even though there aren’t that many additional worship services to plan during it, Lent always seems to pick up steam, moving faster and faster with each passing week. Maybe it’s the way the days get longer as winter ends and spring progresses – maybe it’s that we’re forced out of winter’s semi-hibernation – but the days grow longer not just in sunlight, but workload. Add to this, then, fun – amazing even – opportunities like participating in the Wood County Special Olympics “Celebrity” basketball game (and, yes, my inclusion means they’re really stretching the word “celebrity” to its breaking point!) and opportunities like the Interfaith Panel at BGSU, and life swirls even more chaotically. Then there have been some increased Presbytery engagements as I serve as a liaison to three churches – two of whom I had to meet with the Sessions for their annual reviews. My Kiwanis duties are generally manageable, but leadership transitions for the collegiate Kiwanians I advise happen on April 1, so there was some increased activity around that work. The winds blow harder, swirl more chaotically. I continued to co-lead “J-worship” at the Juvenile Detention and Residential Centers, while also taking on a new mentee. Now the winds are really whipping all around me. And then comes a crisis in a congregant’s life like we’ve experienced together with Chris Williams’ stroke. Then, on top of these professional challenges, my mother is still trying to sell her house, meaning I’ve spent multiple Fridays off in my hometown helping out there, and then my dad went to the ER with a hernia, which didn’t require my presence, but certainly demanded my attention.

Okay. That’s enough whirlwind. I can’t take much more. (Oh, Pudge had surgery; nothing major... he’s fine... but, yeah, that’s one more thing).

Again, these are not complaints. It is an honor to do the fun parts of ministry, and it is an honor to do the hard, tragic parts too. It is an honor to do the fun parts of life, and it is an honor to do the hard, tragic parts too. I have no discontent in anything I named above; indeed, I find more joy than I’m worthy of in this work and in my life. But joy doesn’t mean that the whirlwind isn’t windy.

Of course, you know this. I am most certainly not special just because I’m a pastor. I could be a claims adjuster at State Farm and the confluence of personal and professional stresses would feel like a whirlwind all the same. To wit: My sister is an assistant manager at our hometown bank, and I know her life is a whirlwind between parental needs, professional requirements, and the demands her children put on her. She’s a living, breathing example of the “sandwich generation” – a person living with aging parents who need care, as well as growing kids who need attention too. (Side note: Sometimes parents in their 70s can sound an awful lot like teenagers, so she’s *really* catching it from both ends!). No, I’m not unique and Kerry (my sister) isn’t unique. And I know this because you’ve lived through these whirlwind-y seasons too. It’s natural, but it ain’t pleasant.



Anytime I find myself in the whirlwind, I remember Job. The Book of Job from the Hebrew scriptures is a fictitious accounting of a fictitious man named Job whom God and Satan gamble over. Satan's claim is that Job only loves God because Job's life is so good. Satan reckons that if he can afflict Job – destroy his family and his land, stricken him with disease, make him hate his life – that Job will turn his back on God. God believes better about Job. And for roughly 37 chapters we get to watch this drama unfold – with the aid of three friends who come and sit with Job in the ashes of his life – as these four men try to sort through the rubble of Job's life to see if there is any meaning. And while they largely fail, Job never turns his back on God.

In chapter 38, God finally appears to Job. Verse 1 of that chapter begins this way: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind." What follows is multiple chapters not of God explaining away every pain and all the pressure, but chapter after chapter of God proclaiming God's own might and majesty. The bevy of rhetorical questions that follow verse 1 come as a whirlwind, from God in a whirlwind, as God addresses the whirlwind of Job's life.

To be sure, these are not pleasant passages to read, but that doesn't mean they're devoid of comfort. And I suspect I find myself returning to Job when my life – as it has of late – feels like a whirlwind because if it is my lot to stand in the whirlwind, then the one thing I want to be assured of is that God is in the whirlwind with me. How much better, then, that God *is* the whirlwind?

Scripture presents us a multitude of images and metaphors for God. Since God is ineffable and sublime, it makes sense that the best we ever achieve is a sort of composite sketch of God and God's work in the world. And as if we were meant to prove just how ineffable, the scriptures are more than happy to present God using even contradictory or antithetical images. And so, for Elijah, God is a "still, small voice" – and this is true of who God is every time we get that sense that maybe God is whispering something to us. But for Job, God is a whirlwind. God is a lion; God is a mother hen. God is pure spirit; God takes on flesh in Jesus Christ. These contradictions are not a negation of God, but are the only sort of honest substantiation of God possible given the limits of language.

As is probably already clear, I wrote this newsletter article for me (and because Tammy, graciously, reminded me I was already 48 hours past due on it! Ha!). But I also wrote this as a reference manual for you... for the times or seasons when your life becomes a whirlwind too. The whirlwind is not God's curse on me or on you; it is not evidence of God's displeasure. Indeed, that God is the whirlwind means that the whirlwinds of life are sanctified and made holy by God's love, mercy, and presence.

What happens to Job, though? Well, once God is done rattling off chapter after chapter of God's own majesty, Job is humbled. Good. The journey to humility is never pleasant, but the destination is always holy. If, in the course of the whirlwind, we find ourselves kneeling lower to better sustain the onslaught, then we're in the exact right posture for God to lift us up and hold us in His hands. Such is my prayer today. Such is my prayer for you when the whirlwinds come. Amen.



holy week

Events Calendar

Sunday, March 29, 2025 – Palm Sunday

10 a.m. Special Hymns and Lessons Worship



[No WeMeet on Wednesday, April 1]

Thursday, April 2- Maundy Thursday

6:00 p.m. Dinner-and-Worship in Fellowship Hall

*Communion will be served at your table



Friday, April 3 - Good Friday

7 p.m. Special Bowling Green Ministerial Association-led service at First United Methodist Church

*Featuring music with multiple church choirs.



Sunday, April 5 – Easter Sunday

10 a.m. Easter Sunday Worship

Communion worship service featuring special music with a brass quintet as well as the choir

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering and Fish Collection.

Easter Egg hunt with all church children during nursery and Children's Church time.



APRIL FYMS PAGE

Family and Youth Ministry Monthly Updates

WE MEET

We Meet will continue through April. As we did for the fall sessions, help is needed again to assist with meals each week. If you can help, please let Amanda or Michael Botts know!

APRIL 1ST - NO WE MEET

APRIL 8TH - NEURODIVERGENT WORSHIP

APRIL 15TH - ROMANS 13 WITH DONNA

APRIL 22ND - GREEN TEAM EARTH DAY MEETING

APRIL 29TH - BYSTANDER INTERVENTION WITH THE COCOON



CHILDREN'S CHURCH!

Children's Church will continue through April with lessons about God's love for us and how we should love and care for the earth and each other.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COCOON!

BGFPC will be partnering with The Cocoon to put on two events on the 29th of April! More information to follow!

BE ON THE LOOK-OUT!

Coming Back Soon!



GET YOUR SWEET TOOTH READY!



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL, 2026

HOPE

BUILD

THRIVE

06

What Were You Wearing?

BGSU Union, 207, 8:30 am - 6:30pm

11

5k & Dog Walk (fee of \$15-20)

BGSU Rec Center, 10am 5k starts

12

Take Back The Night

BGSU Library, Pallister Room, 6pm

22

Awareness and Donation Day

Grounds For Thought, 7am - 5pm

29

WWYW? & Clothesline

First Presbyterian Church, 11am - 8pm

29

Bystander Intervention Class

First Presbyterian Church, 6 - 7:15pm



Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

thecocoon.org

a.ark@thecocoon.org

419-373-1730

COMMUNITY
GOOD FRIDAY
WORSHIP SERVICE

Friday, April 3, 2026

7:00 pm

*Hosted by: First United Methodist Church
1526 E. Wooster St., Bowling Green, OH*

**A Tenebrae Service featuring
BG area churches and combined choir**



Sponsored by the Bowling Green Ministerial Association

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**The office is closed daily for
lunch 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.**



Deacons' Shop



The shop is now open on the fourth Saturday of each month from 9:30 to 11:00 am. These extended hours accommodate patrons who are unable to visit on Thursdays. Donations of clean, seasonal clothing are accepted Tuesday through Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm, and on Friday from 9 am to 1 pm. **Children's clothing is especially needed.** Please drop off clothing in the church lobby, using the cart by the bulletin board.

Volunteers are always welcome. Sorting clothing and stocking racks and shelves takes place on Wednesday mornings. If you would like to assist customers during shop hours, your help would be greatly appreciated. For questions, please contact Susan Dunn or Peggy Brigham.



Helping Hands –

April 10

Thank you for supporting this community project. We are making a difference in people's lives. Last month, more people found this

assistance program. If you would like to donate products, we need the following items.

- Toilet paper
- Facial Tissues
- Paper towels
- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent/dryer sheets
- Body wash/shampoo
- Deodorant
- Children's pull-ups (sizes 3, 4, 5, 6)

Please place donations in the box located in the church lobby by April 5th for distribution on April 10th at the First Christian Church. If you want to contribute but don't have time to shop, a monetary donation can be made. The Deacons will do the shopping.

If you would like to help with the distribution of the cleaning and hygiene items, just show up on April 10th from 4 to 6 pm at First Christian Church, corner of Poe and Haskins Roads. You will see familiar faces.

DEACONS
Following to Lead | Leading to Serve

Ellyn Stout, Scotty Huntington, Libby Dachik,
Kathy Sweeney, Lee Liebetreu, Anna Beeker,
Terri McNamara



April 22 is Earth Day.

Earth Day was first
celebrated April 22, 1970

as pollution raged in the United States. It has continued to raise awareness of ways we can be kinder to the Earth.

We will celebrate Earth Day twice. **The first will be in our regular service on April 19.** We will be talking about growing things, and have a special job for the young ones in our congregation.

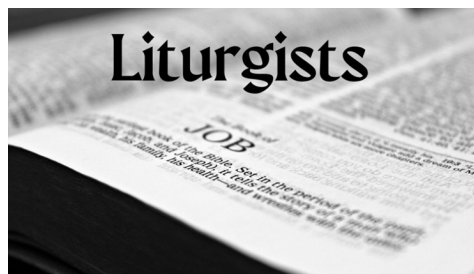
Then we will continue to talk about earth matters at **We Meet on April 22.** Please join us!



It's only a few weeks until we can plant outdoor gardens. While you're waiting, you can begin to sprout seeds indoors. Or you can start planning your trip to a local greenhouse. In the meantime, you can start cleaning up your yard. Who knows what has blown into your yard during our wind storms!

There are two upcoming activities which may help your garden. The Wood County Parks Native Plant Sale is happening Friday and Saturday, May 1 and 2 from 10 am – 1 pm at the fairgrounds. You do need to be a Friend of the Parks to shop on Friday, but you can get a membership there.

We've also encouraged you all to use the city food waste program, and compost your food scraps. Those scraps are now compost that you can buy and use in your garden as fertilizer. Go to this site: <https://gozero.org/community-compost-pickup-point-program>



Liturgists Needed (or, a small way to help Chris): One of Chris Williams' many acts of service to this church is securing liturgists for each Sunday. With him still residing in the ICU at St. Vincent's,

Pastor Jeff is kindly requesting that you consider stepping up and signing up to serve in this way. There is a sign-up sheet for every Sunday through the end of May located in Fellowship Hall and it is Jeff's sincere hope that every spot will be filled after Fellowship Hour today.

If you're open to serving, but nervous about what is entailed, Pastor Jeff is more than happy to walk you through all that's expected and even give a few tips and tricks he's picked up along the way.

Thank you for this. Chris will be glad to know his community is rallying together in both prayer and participation.

BOWLING GREEN HANDBELL EXTRAVAGANZA

An Afternoon of Inspiring Handbell Music!

Sunday, April 26 • 3:00 PM

St. Mark's Lutheran Church • Bowling Green, Ohio

Featuring Handbell Choirs:

- BGSU Collegiate Ringers
- First Presbyterian Church
- St. Aloysius Catholic Church
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church
- Trinity Methodist Church

*Hosted by the
Bowling Green Ministerial
Association*

Free Admission • All Are Welcome!

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
ESL=English as a	YG=Youth	Med.	HYT=Horizon	CN=Chris. Nurture	TL= Trumpet	SC=Sort Clothes
			1 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons NO We Meet	2 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Maundy Thursday meal w/service FH 7 MR in FH	3 No 1st Friday 7 Community Good Fri @ 1st United Methodist, BG	4 11 Linda Myers Memorial Service/Meal
5 10 Wship/Easter 11 Fellowship time 4 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	6 Closed Jeff on vacation	7 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 8 AA in FH	8 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5 Trustees 5:30 We Meet w/ Neurodivergent worship	9 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	10 10-2 United Way set-up FH 4:30- Helping Hands at First Christian Church	11 11-1 A. Roos recital rehearsal 12-6 United Way in FH
12 10 Worship 11 Fellowship time 11 Mission 3 A. Roos Recital in sanctuary 4 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	13 Closed	14 7-9 Multi Faith Brkfst 1 Book Group in Library 5 Session mtg 5:30 ESL Classes 6-8 La Conexion in GL 8 AA in FH	15 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet /Romans 13 w/Donna Nelson Beene	16 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5 Worship Mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	17 3-7 American Music Recital—FH	18
19 10 Worship 11 Fellowship time 11:30 Deacons 4 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	20 Closed 8:30-5:30 Ldship Com. of MVP-FH 4:30 Kindred Spirits	21 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 8 AA in FH	22 9 Sorting Clothes 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet /Gr Team	23 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH	24	25 9:30 Deacons' Shop open to the public 1-5 Circle K Intr'l BGSU—FH
26 10 Worship 11 Fellowship time 3 BG Handbell Ring @ St. Marks 4 Girl Scouts 7 MRG-GL	27 Closed	28 May Newsletter Deadline 1 Book Group in Library 5:30 ESL Classes 7 Cong. Care & Christian Nurture mtgs 8 AA in FH	29 9 Sorting Clothes 9-7 CoCoon using GL & FH & Gr Space 3-4 Trumpet Lessons 5:30 We Meet w/Cocoon	30 9:30 Deacons' Shop is open & Staff mtg. 5:30 ESL Classes 6 Bell Choir 7 Choir 7 MR in FH		



Apr 01	Jan Marcin
Apr 05	Lyn Long
Apr 07	Kathy Sweeney
Apr 12	Lowell Nees
Apr 14	Michael Botts
Apr 16	Linda Smith
Apr 18	Jeff Schooley
Apr 20	Don Boren
Apr 28	Rosemary Apple
Apr 29	Judy Martin
Apr 30	Mike Evans

(if your birthday doesn't appear here, please contact the office with your date of birth mm/dd/year)

2026 Officers of the Church

SESSION

Class of 2026: Dar Bevelhymmer, Karla Geyman,
Chris Williams

Class of 2027: Anne Moser, Christine Guenther, Lisa Lawson

Class of 2028: Jen Coddington, Michael Botts

Moderator: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey A. Schooley: Clerk: Anne Moser

DEACONS

Class of 2026: Kathy Sweeney, Lee Liebetreu

Class of 2027: Libby Dachik, Scotty Huntington, Ellyn Stout

Class of 2028: Anna Beeker, Terri McNamara

Chair: Terri McNamara Secretary: Libby Dachik

TRUSTEES

Class of 2026: Lowell Nees, Dana Nemeth

Class of 2027: Rosemary Apple, Chet Marcin

Class of 2028: Mike Evans, Joyce Kepke

Chairs: Dana Nemeth

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We are on Facebook.

