



Pastor Steve Bond
 pastor@commofchrist.org
 6517 Finzel Rd
 Whitehouse, OH 43571
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www.commofchrist.org



COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
 LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known



December 2024

What's Ahead

Worship Times

Sunday Morning
 8 & 10 a.m. starting
 In-person and
 Facebook Live

Sunday Morning

Bible Study
 9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

**Pastor's Bible
 Study**

Thursdays 1:00 p.m.

Visitation Ministry

December 2

Quilt Ministry

December 3 & 17

Worship & Music

December 5

**Youth and
 Education**

December 9

Annual Meeting

December 8

**Holden Evening
 Prayer**

December 4, 11, &
 18, 7:00 p.m.

Choir

Wednesdays after
 our Advent Service

Worship Services

Available on the net
 at
www.commofchrist.org

**Church Office
 will be closed on
 December 24, 25,
 31, and January 1**



Pastor's Letter, December 2024—Living on the Edge

In 2024, I invited the congregation to journey through the church year in our worship, spiritual life, and faith formation dimensions of ministry with the year-long theme of Meeting Jesus. The idea was for us to spend the year getting to know Jesus more deeply so that when we do the work of our purpose statement, *Making Jesus Known*, we would have a deeper and richer understanding of who this Jesus is.

This year, we are building on that re-acquaintance with Jesus with a new focus for 2025. We want to invite you along to follow this same Jesus to the particular kinds of places and people where he leads us, especially to the folks on the margins and to the places beyond the routine and the familiar. So, our focus for the year beginning now with Advent (December 2024) will be *Living on the Edge—Christianity Beyond Our Comfort Zones*. You'll discover that the idea of practicing our faith "beyond our comfort zones" and following Jesus "on the edge" outside of the familiar and the routine is a central theme of Luke's gospel, which is actually the primary Gospel we'll be rooted in for Sunday worship in this year, using the Revised Common Lectionary. Luke's gospel in particular (as well as its companion book, Acts, which we will hear from throughout the year as well, especially in Eastertide) portrays Jesus as someone always on the margins of society, also leading his disciples beyond the familiar places of their comfort zones and into new adventures. Jesus is deliberately among the poor, the outcast, foreigners/Gentiles, the least, the lost, and the left-out in Luke's Gospel, and he calls his disciples to be among them as well. In our day and time, it can be tempting to see our Christian faith simply as a comfortable thing that never pushes us beyond the familiar or the routine. But Jesus never intends to leave us as we are: he stretches us, leads us, challenges us, and transforms us as we follow where he goes. That's what we want to invite you to be a part of in the year ahead.

And as a starting point, this Advent we'll be focusing on what it means to live *on the edge of hope*. As people who live in a world full of heartache, tragedy, brokenness, injustice, and war, we hope for God's promised renewal of all things. We look forward to the coming of Christ, like people watching the eastern sky for the first brightening shades of blue that tell us the dawn is breaking. In a sense, all of our lives are lived balancing on that line, on the edge between the brokenness of present reality and the wholeness for which we hope. That's where Jesus meets us, and from there, we go—well, we go where Jesus leads us.

So let this be a formal invitation for the year ahead as a congregation—not only to meet Jesus, but to go with him to the edges of our lives—out beyond the familiar, past the temptation to just "play church," and out among the mix of misfits, mess-ups, and broken hearts on the margins that Jesus always surrounds himself with.

Who knows where that might lead us as a congregation as we move into the next fifty years of our story? For sure it will be outward. Probably it will be somewhere we cannot quite predict. Certainly, it will be with Jesus.

Let's go.
 Pastor Steve





From Vicar Natalie



Recently, I went on a silent retreat and stayed at a hermitage in Michigan. It is something I try to do annually for myself around this time of year. I always look forward to the time to rest and slow down. But I will say, it does take practice shutting my brain off. After having the time to settle in and decompress, I am able to have time that is rejuvenating with God, and it brings me comfort, peace, and rest. Often after these retreats, I remind myself though that while it is great to have an extended period of rest, it doesn't mean that I cannot find those moments throughout the year.

Advent is a time of waiting for the Messiah. It is a time to slow down, pause, breathe, to hear the good news for you, of Jesus Christ breaking into the world as Emmanuel, God with us. For those of us who have been long-time church attendees, we have heard these Advent texts over and over. I know for myself; they can sometimes become background noise having heard them so many times. But what if we decide that the way to find rest this season and to hear God's voice is to find moments in our busy days to pause, pray, read these scriptures slowly and more than once, despite the need to move this holiday at a fast pace? What if we also find ways through different spiritual practices in our home to connect to God and one another- lighting the Advent wreath, praying at mealtimes, setting up the manger with your children as you read the gospel story, singing or listening to your favorite Christmas carols and really pondering the lyrics, reading the advent devotional through the church, finding ways to serve our friends in need through meal services, charities, and activities.

Maybe we can't escape to a silent retreat for 3 days during this busy time. But the good news is that we have a God who meets us here and now in the unexpected and mysterious. And God's great story of Jesus coming to this earth is for you, to bring healing and hope to what has been on your heart, to bring comfort in your time of mourning, to set you free from what has weighed you down this year. As you travel to the manger with a few pit stops to help fill your cup, may God fill you with the promises of God's love, and hope and ignite in you a spirit of hospitality and service for your neighbor.

We are called to ponder myst'ry and await the coming Christ,
To embody God's compassion for each fragile human life.
God is with us in our longing to bring healing to the earth,
While we watch with joy and wonder for the promised Savior's birth.
(Unexpected and Mysterious)



Crazy Faith Talk Podcast Explores “Hope in Exile” for Advent

Our weekly podcast, “*Crazy Faith Talk*,” offers conversation and insights looking at a variety of topics, subjects, and ideas from faith and church life to pop culture and everything in between. *Crazy Faith Talk* releases new episodes every Tuesday at noon, and you can listen for free, either by finding the link on our Facebook page, finding it at www.blogtalkradio.com/crazyfaithtalk (where you can also subscribe for free to get notifications of new episodes), or even asking your Smart Speaker (like Amazon Echo) to play the podcast “Crazy Faith Talk.” **Crazy Faith Talk is also now on Spotify, too!** If you like to listen to music or podcasts using the Spotify app, you can find Crazy Faith Talk there, too! Think of it like being invited around the table to listen in to pastors talking through their own faith, questions, and struggles and being able to take the conversation with you listen and reflect on wherever you go—in the car, from your smart-speaker, or on your phone or tablet.

This Advent, we are blessed to have our own Vicar Natalie again joining regulars Pastor Steve, and colleagues in ministry Erica Wellner, a Methodist, and Sarah Aasheim, a fellow Lutheran, as we look at the theme of “Hope in Exile.” Every year, Christians around the world sing the ancient words from “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” which continues, “...and ransom captive Israel *that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appears.*” So, what did exile mean in the Biblical story, and what does it mean for our hope this season? What did it mean for the birth of Jesus that his homeland was under foreign occupation under the Roman Empire, or that he and his family had to flee to Egypt in a sort of exile as refugees escaping Herod? And how do we see all of our lives as Christians lived as “resident aliens” or “exiles” awaiting the new creation when God makes all things new? These are the questions we’ll be exploring each week this December on Crazy Faith Talk—listen in this Advent!

Worship Life in December

Sunday, December 1

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, in Person 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FACEBOOK LIVE 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 8

Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, in Person 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FACEBOOK LIVE 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, in Person 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FACEBOOK LIVE 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 22

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, in Person 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FACEBOOK LIVE 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 29

First Sunday of Christmas

Sunday, in Person 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

FACEBOOK LIVE 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Services

Community of Christ will host three worship services on Christmas Eve; 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., & 11:00 p.m. Each worship service will include Christmas carols, candlelight (and glow sticks for the kids), and Holy Communion. Invite a friend to worship with you this season!



GROWING IN GOD'S WORD



Last year in Advent, we offered an anthology of daily readings and prayers for the season, called *Astonish Us Again*, that dovetailed with the Scripture readings we are using in Sunday worship (which are also keyed into the Revised Common Lectionary). Because that was well-received, this year, we are pleased to offer a new compilation that will connect with our new theme for the year that begins with this Advent (Dec. 1). *On the Edge of Hope* is a new collection of original prayers and Scripture readings for each day in Advent, and it is available to you this year either as a printed booklet (in the Gathering Space), or a PDF compilation you can read on your phone, computer, or tablet, or as daily posts on our church Facebook page. These are free, original, and can be shared as far and wide as you would like. Check them out this Advent, as together journey on *the edge of hope!*



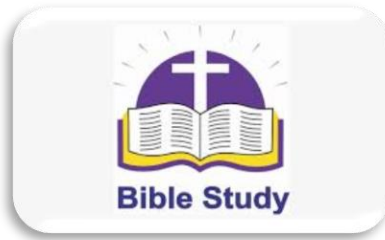
Advent Midweek Worship with Holden Evening Prayer
We call Jesus the “Prince of Peace,” and we sing that on the night of his birth “all is calm, all is bright.” But quite often our lives are especially hectic and stressful in the weeks before Christmas, aren’t they? From gift-buying and cookie baking to parties and concerts, from decorating our houses and family gatherings, we can feel flustered and frazzled during the “most wonderful time of the year” rather than at peace. So, we want to invite you to a weekly chance to hit the pause button on the craziness and be re-centered on the Good News of God’s coming to us in Christ, with our three Advent midweek services using Holden Evening Prayer. On Dec. 4, 11, and 18 (each are Wednesdays) at 7:00 p.m., join us for a beautiful and contemplative sung setting of Evening Prayer and reflections on the Word that will ground us in our hope for Jesus’ coming. If you’ve never experienced this setting for evening worship, you’ll definitely want to try it, and this is a fantastic event to invite friends and neighbors to, as well! Join us this Advent!



Blue Christmas Service Offers Comfort and Hope—Dec. 22 at 3:00 p.m.
The holidays can be a difficult time for people, especially if they’re dealing with grief and loss. Whether still working through a recent death, feeling renewed sadness over a long-time loss, or just struggling while others seem full of Christmas-time cheer, this can be a heavy season of the year. So, we’ll continue a tradition we’ve done for the last several years here at Community of Christ by hosting a Blue Christmas service—a time of worship that offers comfort for those who need it, particularly at this time of year, and that connects our faith in God-with-Us who came among us in Bethlehem with our lived experience of loss and grief. This year’s service will be held at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 22, and is open to any and all who would find it helpful. You are welcome to invite friends, relatives, neighbors, or community members who might need a moment this season for grief to be named and comfort to be given, here at Community of Christ.

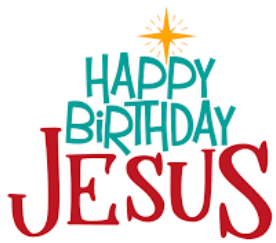


GROWING IN GOD'S WORD



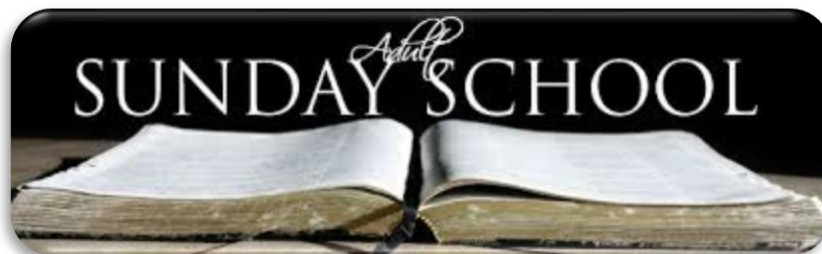
New Thursday Bible Study Series: "Things Seen and Unseen"

Starting this December, we'll begin a new series in our Thursday Afternoon Bible Study, co-led between Pastor Steve and Vicar Natalie, exploring angels and other spiritual beings in the Bible, what we do (and don't!) know about them, and what difference their existence makes in our lives. Have you ever been curious about what angels look like, or where some people get the idea of "guardian" angels from? Don't know your "cherubim" from your "seraphim"? Wonder why the first words out of the angels' mouths in the Bible are so often, "Do not be afraid!"? Join us on Thursdays beginning in December and running into the new year as we explore **Things Seen and Unseen: An Introduction to Angels** in our Thursday Afternoon Bible Study, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Room, starting Dec. 5 after our series on Galatians concludes! We'd love to have you around the table!



Sunday School "Birthday Party for Jesus" on Dec. 22 at 9:00 a.m.!

While our Sunday School classes for kids have been meeting every Sunday throughout the fall, we're doing something special on the Sunday before Christmas—our annual "Birthday Party for Jesus" event at 9:00 a.m. (between services) on Sunday, Dec. 22 in the fellowship hall! (Grown-ups, you'll find the Adult Sunday School class in the Council room on that day!) Join us and kids of all ages for songs, fun, food, and a chance to celebrate together as we say, "Happy birthday, Jesus!"



"More Than Wishful Thinking: An Exploration of Christian Hope" Advent Adult Sunday School Series

Hope is a funny word. Sometimes we use it with bold confidence in spite of impossible odds: "Even though he was wrongfully imprisoned, he held onto hope that he would be vindicated and set free." Sometimes we use it as a polite way of expressing doubt, like when you say, "I hope it doesn't rain today," while the sky darkens with threatening clouds from the west. Emily Dickinson famously said that hope was "the thing with feathers that perches in the soul—and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all..." And of course, as one hero in the Star Wars movies says about fighting against the Galactic Empire, "Rebellions are built on hope." That's a lot of range for one word to have to cover—and maybe it can be confusing for us as Christians to know what we are talking about when we say we are people of *hope*. This Advent season especially is one marked by both waiting and hope (which, fun fact, use the same word in Spanish!), as we hear the centuries-long hopes of prophets and exiles who waited and hoped for homecoming, for restoration, and for the arrival of the promised Anointed One (Messiah/Christ) of God. We also hear in these weeks the hope we have for God's new creation when all things are made new. So, what does it mean for us to be people of hope, and how is it different from just "wishful thinking" or mere optimism? That's what we want to explore in this December's Adult Sunday School series, running on December 1, 8, 15, and 22 between services. On all of those dates except the 22nd, we'll be in the fellowship hall, and on Dec. 22 we'll move to the Council Room to allow the kids to have the larger space for the Birthday Party for Jesus! We *hope* you'll join us around the table for good conversation and learning together this Advent in the Adult Class!



Faith and Friendship



Welcome New Members



Teresa Loga



Karen & Bruce Meyer



Amy & Larry Mustafaga



Jami Williamson



Community of Christ Book Club



December - Our Annual Christmas outing. Date to be Announced!

Coming Up in 2025!

January 21 - *The Women* by Kristen Hannah

February 18 - *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon

March 18 - *Demon of Unrest* by Eric Larson

April 15 - *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Reid Jenkins

May 20 - *Grey Wolf* by Louise Penny

June 17 - *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelley Van Pelt

Questions??? Call or Text: Kathryn Whitacre 567-395-9444



Worship Volunteer Schedule December 2024



Week	Dec 1	Dec 8	Dec 15	Dec 22	Dec 29
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	Joseph Perkins/Teresa Loga	Teresa Loga/ Please Volunteer	Laurie Mauro	Teresa Loga/ Please Volunteer	Volunteer Needed/ Teresa Loga
Acolyte/Crucifer 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler	Please Volunteer
Bulletin 8:00	Volunteer Needed	Vince Mauro	R and L Metcalf	Irene Rang	Please Volunteer
Bulletin 10:00	Tina/Jessica Baden	Kari Swagler	Dick Burdo	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer
Camera	Carol Wiemken	Sarah Rockwell	Carol Wiemken	Kevin Swagler	Please Volunteer
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	Josef Perkins	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer
Communion Prep/Clean 10:00	Kari Swagler	Kari Swagler	Carol Wiemken	Kari Swagler	Please Volunteer
Greeter West 8:00	Rick Metcalf	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer
Greeter East 8:00	Linda Metcalf	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer
Greeter East 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Jill Kohntopp	N&C Rilling	Please Volunteer
Greeter West 10:00	Dick Burdo	Marsha Cochran	Rob Kohntopp	N&C Rilling	Please Volunteer
Lector 8:00	Josef Perkins	Cheryl Fischer	Natalie Downs	Becky King	Please Volunteer
Lector 10:00	Greg Aubell	Tammy Myers	Lisa Alleman	Chris Rilling	Natalie Downs
Worship Asst 8:00	Josef Perkins	Laurie Mauro	Natalie Downs	Cheryl Fischer	Natalie Downs
Worship Asst 10:00	Dean Nofzinger	Kevin Swagler	Kara Yokum	Natalie Down	Please Volunteer
Verger 8:00	Volunteer Needed	Vince Mauro	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer
Verger 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Please Volunteer

****Volunteer list as of 11/17/2024**

*****Should you need to cancel your scheduled date, please get in touch with another volunteer to fill your position and time slot. Also, cancel in Sign-Up Genius so the person covering you can sign up.**

Lectors: The readings are available for preview on our website at www.commofchrist.org under "Worship and Bulletins" and then the appropriate bulletin date.

Bulletin Assistants: Arrive 15 minutes before service to pass out bulletins. Count the number of people in attendance (including worship volunteers and all in the nursery if applicable) and mark this number on the chart inside the kiosk.

Door Greeters: Arrive 15 minutes before service to greet members and visitors at the doors of both entrances of the church.

The Verger: is a caretaker role who keeps their eyes and ears open to lend a hand for any need that arises with congregants or worship providers during the service.

Should you have any questions, please contact Laurie Mauro at (419) 877-5366. Thank you all for your time and attention to helping make our Worship Services run smoothly!

Prayers



Blessings & Prayers



Prayers

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN OUR DAILY PRAYERS FOR ALL WHO ARE ILL, SHUT IN, RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED, MILITARY, OR IN NEED OF PRAYER:

MATINA BENTON, DEBBIE CARMAN, SHIRLEY COFER, JANET DELLINGER, VIRGINIA DILLON, SUSIE DONNAL, JIM & SUE ENK, FLO HANNUM, RON HETHERWICK, LUKE HOLTZ, ART INGMIRE, TOM JENNINGS, TRISTAN KIMMEY, CHRISTAL & CHAD PRITCHARD, DICK RISON, IRIS ROCKWELL, PETER SCHULTZ, PHYLLIS STURGEON, LOIS WISE
MILITARY: JAY RASMUSSEN, NOAH PITZEN, AUSTIN CUNNINGHAM, JAKE COPE



Prayers of the Church

For us to keep our prayer requests current and fresh in worship---we update our prayer list every two weeks. The names you provide will be included in the congregation's prayers for two weeks. If you want to renew your prayer request, please use the form available in the gathering area or contact the church office. Thank you. Continue to pray for one another!



Children's Sermon

Kids of all ages please join Pastor Steve for a Children's Sermon at both the 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. services. This is the Pastor's time to share the good news of Jesus with our younger friends! He'll even have a sticker waiting just for YOU!!!!



We remember the families of Sara Snow and Bob Preston in prayer. May our Lord grant them peace and comfort in their hearts in the days ahead.



Prayer Shawls

If you are interested in making a prayer shawl or know of someone who would be blessed by receiving a prayer shawl, please reach out to Irene at 269-832-7714.



CoC Ministry Dates to Remember



VISITATION MINISTRY

Next Meeting Date

December 2 @ 10:30 a.m.



Next Meeting Date

December 5 @ 10:00 a.m.



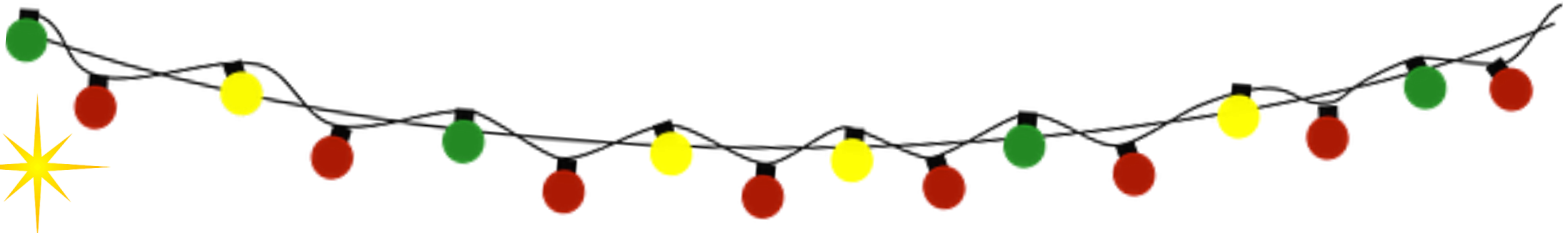
Next Meeting Date

December 9 @ 6:30 p.m.



**ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING**

Please plan to ATTEND our congregation will host an **annual meeting** on **Sunday, December 8**, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service. We will receive the proposed budget for 2025 and elect four members for the church council. Please plan to attend this important meeting. Thank you!



A Cherished Tradition - The Annual Covenant Renewal: Community of Christ

From the very beginning, the founding pastor and leaders of our congregation established a tradition of annually affirming our commitment to the work God is doing through this community. Starting **Sunday, December 1**, all who gather in worship, whether in person or online, will have the opportunity to renew this covenant. More details will be shared during the Sunday morning services. We encourage you to reflect on this covenant and recommit to your participation in the life and ministry of Community of Christ.





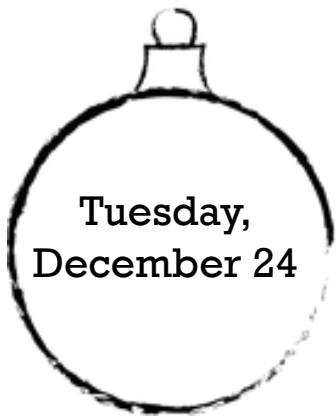
Announcements



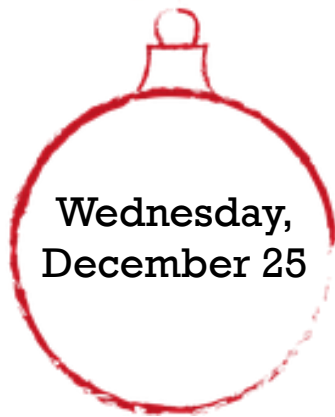
Closed
**Christmas Eve
& Christmas Day**
December 24 - 25



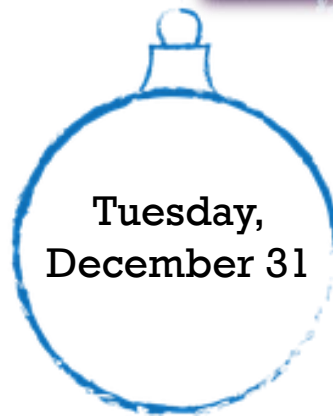
★ *CLOSED ON* ★
New Year's Eve
AND
New Year's Day



Tuesday,
December 24



Wednesday,
December 25



Tuesday,
December 31



Wednesday
January 1



Toledo Choral Society

Performs **"Messiah"** on December 8th at 3:00 p.m. Gesu Roman Catholic Parrish, 2049 Parkside Blvd., Toledo, Ohio. Did you know that Vicar Natalie Downs and member Shelly Hayes perform with the Toledo Choral Society? Help them and the other 100 voices of the TCS to continue to bring this truly-inspired piece of music to NW Ohio each year! Tickets are just \$35.00 and can be purchased from Shelly or \$38. 25 online: <https://toledochoralsociety.org/get-tickets>

Stay tuned for other TCS Holiday performances later in December.





Announcements



Altar Flower dedications for 2025 will soon be available on the bulletin board in the church hallway. If you would like to honor or remember a loved one, please sign up today! Simply fill out a date tag and envelope, include your check or cash along with the tag, and place it in the offering plate.

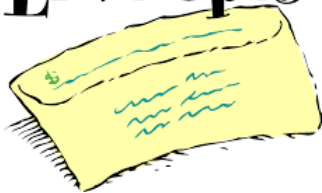


If you wish to reserve a date but don't have payment with you at the moment, **please leave the tag on the board** so we can keep a record of your reservation. Please do not take the tag with you in this case.

If you prefer to make a donation to the Flower Fund instead, you can use the envelope marked "donations only." We are grateful for your continued support and blessings! Thank you!



Offering Envelopes



Check # 12345

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
6517 Finzel Rd., Whitehouse, OH 43571

Name: Michelle Gebhart

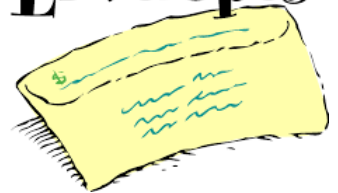
General Offering Amount \$ 50.00

Building Loan Offering Amount \$ 50.00

Total \$ 100.00

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Jesus

Offering Envelopes



2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES

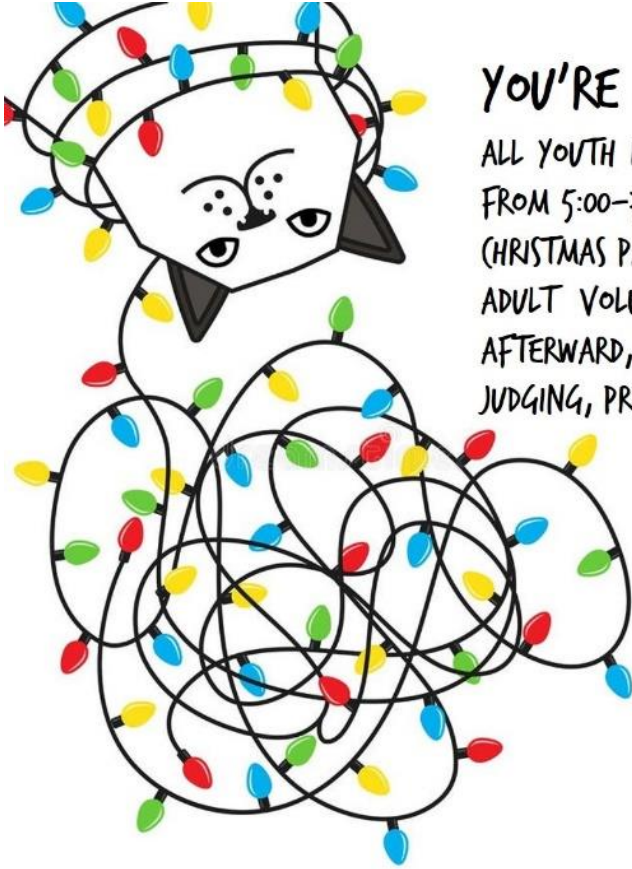
Our 2025 offering envelopes will be arriving soon! These envelopes cover weekly offerings, as well as special services such as Lenten Wednesdays, Holy Week, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent, and more. If you have any questions about how to complete your weekly offering, please don't hesitate to contact the church office.

****Please remember****—we also offer an electronic giving option through Simply Giving, which allows your offering to be automatically withdrawn from your account. Please contact Michelle for more information. secretary@commofchrist.org

Thank you for your generous support of the Lord's work at Community of Christ and throughout the Church!



Announcements



YOU'RE INVITED... TO A **CHRISTMAS SCAVENGER HUNT!**

ALL YOUTH IN 5TH-12TH GRADES ARE INVITED TO JOIN US SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH FROM 5:00-7:00 P.M. FOR A FUN YOUTH EVENT INCLUDING A SCAVENGER HUNT AND CHRISTMAS PARTY. WE WILL MEET AT HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AT 5 P.M. AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS WILL DRIVE GROUPS AROUND FOR THE SCAVENGER HUNT. AFTERWARD, WE WILL MEET BACK AT COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR JUDGING, PRIZES, PIZZA, AND THE MAKING OF A GIANT CANDY SALAD!

What: Christmas Scavenger Hunt

Who: all youth in grades 5-12
friends are welcome!

When: Sunday, Dec. 15 5:00-7:00pm

Where: **start** at Hope United Methodist
(10610 Waterville St., Whitehouse)
end at Community of Christ Lutheran
(6517 Finzel Road, Whitehouse)

How do I sign up? Use this QR code to RSVP
by Friday, Dec. 13!



Join Us for our 2nd Annual Christmas Caroling!

Saturday, December 14th. Please join us as we go out and spread Christmas joy to some of our shut-ins and community members. No experience is required! No talent is required! The words for the carols will be provided so no need to worry about not knowing the words. Start time is currently being worked out and after spreading Christmas joy we'll share in some holiday cheer with pizza and snacks at the Swagler's home. Please watch for the sign-up sheet on the kiosk.



Announcements



****We Welcome Volunteers of All Ages!****

There are many ways to serve at Community of Christ, including as a Door Greeter, Lector, Bulletin Distributor, Acolyte, Worship Assistant, Camera Operator for live streaming, or helping with Communion Set-up and Clean-up.

To volunteer, simply visit [www.commofchrist.org](<http://www.commofchrist.org>), click on *Volunteer for Worship*, select the ministry area you'd like to serve, then choose the date(s) you are available. After selecting your time slot, click on the "Sign Up" box, scroll to the bottom, and click "Submit and Sign Up." You will receive a confirmation email and a reminder shortly before your assigned date.

****Important:**** If you need to cancel, please arrange for another volunteer to cover your position, and update your cancellation in Sign-Up Genius so that others can see the availability.

Training is available at any time! Contact Laurie Mauro at (419) 877-5366.

We look forward to serving with you!



A Christmas Tree Waiting for Your Additions...

This Christmas season our Social Action Ministry is renewing our participation in the Lutheran Home of Mercy "Adopt A Resident" in-gathering of Christmas presents. You might have already noticed the **extra Christmas tree** in our Gathering Space, which we invite *you* to help decorate by bringing in an ornament from home to represent your household! Just bring it in and find an empty branch that is waiting for *your* family's ornament to hang on it. Gifts for the Luther Home of Mercy Adopt-a-Resident collection will be due back to the church by Sunday, Dec. 8, and you can set them right under the Gathering Space tree when you are here at church. (The Christmas tree in the sanctuary will still be the place to bring gifts for kids connected with Salem Lutheran in the North End of Toledo—see more details in this newsletter about our "Angel Tree" gift collection for them, too!) Thanks to all who are helping to decorate our extra tree this year with ornaments from your family's story, and to all who are helping us to care for neighbors at Luther Home of Mercy this Christmas season!



Monthly Singing Visit to Blue Creek Nursing Home—Dec. 10 at 10:00 a.m.

Every month, volunteers from Community of Christ gather at Blue Creek Nursing Home (11239 Waterville Street here in Whitehouse) on the *second Tuesday* at 10:00 a.m. to share a brief (30 min) time of singing, prayer, and fellowship. We can use singers every month, whenever you are able, but especially in December we would welcome extra voices as we sing Christmas carols and songs of the season with the residents. If you want to join us, you can just meet us at Blue Creek on December 10 at 10:00 a.m., or if you have questions, see Cinda Pontsler, Cheryl Fischer, or Pastor Steve!



Announcements



Thank you to those who have ordered your Christmas Poinsettias! They will be available *for pick-up after the 11:00 p.m. Christmas Day Eve service*. Merry Christmas and Blessings to you all!



2025

BLOOD DRIVE



Community of Christ will host our next Blood Drive, from noon to 5:00 p.m. Stay tuned **Friday, January 10, 2025**, for more details in the coming weeks!

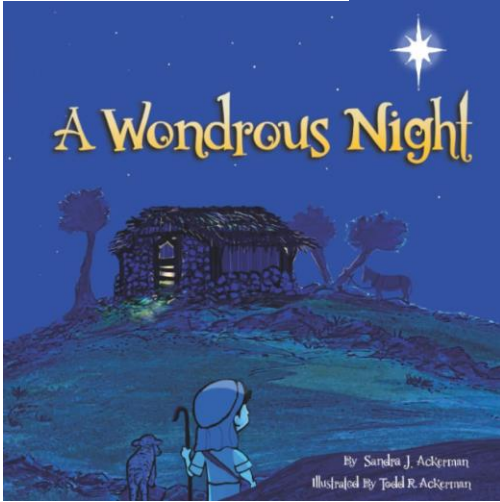


Did you know our Donna Cochran has moved? If you wish to send her a warm hello, please see her address below 🇺🇸 😊 🦋

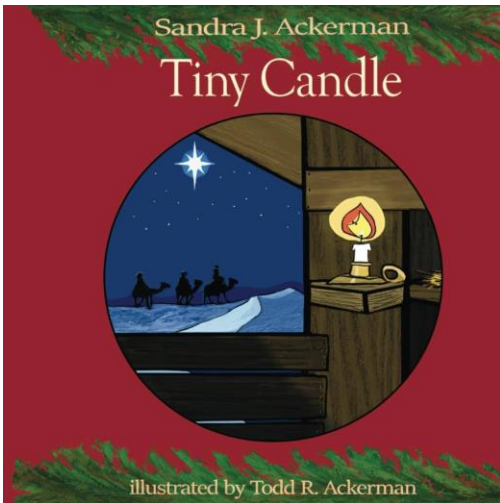
Sunrise of Findlay
401 Lake Cascades Pkwy #104
Findlay, OH 45840



Announcements



Looking for a meaningful Christmas gift while supporting our church? We've got the perfect solution! Reserve your copies of *A Wondrous Night* and *Tiny Candle* at the kiosk. Chad will have books available in the fellowship hall on December 15th. These heartwarming children's books, sharing the Christmas story, are written by Sandy Ackerman and illustrated by Todd Ackerman—mother and brother of Chad Ackerman. All proceeds, after covering costs, will be donated to Community of Christ.



Prices:

- *A Wondrous Night** – \$14.95
- *Tiny Candle** – \$16.95

If you'd like your books sooner, contact Chad at 1chadackerman@gmail.com to make arrangements.



Fellowship invites you to join us for a Toledo Walleye Hockey game on January 5th, 2025! Tickets are just \$17 per person. (No online sign-up this time.) To reserve your spot, please sign up on the kiosk and submit your payment by December 22nd. Cash is the easiest option, but if you need alternatives, see Chad Ackerman. You can also drop off the exact amount in a marked envelope with Michelle in the office. Don't miss out—sign up today!



Getting Involved at COC



****Adopt a Resident at the Lutheran Home of Mercy!****

Thank you to those who have adopted a resident! Your thoughtful gift can make a significant difference in their lives.

****Important Details:**** Gift Submission Deadline: **Sunday, December 8th**. Please **DO NOT** wrap gifts, as they need to be inventoried. Instead, please place them in one Christmas gift bag. After dropping off your gift(s), please write the date on your pink or blue paper to help us track and confirm that all resident gifts are accounted for.

Thank you for your generosity!



Salem Gifts for Children

This year, as in past years, Community of Christ has the opportunity to reach out and bless the children of our sister church, Salem Lutheran Church, in north Toledo. Pastor Mike from Salem provided us with a list of children's names and their gift requests. Both have been incorporated into an envelope and are displayed on the bulletin board in the Gathering place.

Here are some important dates for the project:

- See the bulletin board in the Gathering Place with Salem Angel requests.
- Select your "Angel" and enter your name and phone number on the pink or blue Angel slip on the board. Take the envelope behind the pink or blue slip with you. It has all the information you need regarding the gift request. **Please do not remove the pink or blue slips or relocate them on the board as this is our inventory method.**
- Shop for your "Angel" and leave your gift under the Christmas tree in the sanctuary.
- **Sunday, December 15th, 2024**, is the last day to return your gifts. Please have them under the tree **no later than 11:30 a.m.** Ken and I will be transferring your gifts to Salem that day!

Thanks for helping to bless these children at Christmas! Shelly & Ken Hayes



Announcements



@ HOPE LUTHERAN / 2201 SECOR RD. TOLEDO OH



NORTH -END TEEN ART SHOW

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

At Hope Lutheran Church, the young people and adult leaders from Salem's Teen Program will showcase their work from the past year. All proceeds from young artists' work will go to them. Adult work will go towards the program.

You can RSVP to:
PastorSalemLutheranChurch@gmail.com



Overflow Parking for Hope Lutheran

Salem: The Church with a Real Heart in the Heart of the Innercity

STEWARDSHIP


A Disciple's Way of Life



Exciting news from our church! We are offering you more options to support our church's financial needs. Council and Finance Committee (as well as the Synod) have recommended the use of a new online safe and secure tool to be able to give online electronically. The program is through Tithe.ly company used by many other churches and organizations. It has several options to be able to give as noted below:

- Your donations are recorded for your giving records, and confidential to the financial secretary.
- When you donate, you designate the fund you would like your monies to go toward e.g., building loan, general, thank-you, or other.

-There are four methods to give:

1. On the church website - @ <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2746426>
2. Online (through tithe.ly website, search for Community of Christ)
3. By text: simply text the word **give** to get started.
Community Of Christ Lutheran Church: (833) 985-2568
4. Download the app and give. 

2024 Building Loan Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Sep	\$12,061	\$12,563	(\$502)
YTD	\$103,201	\$113,067	(\$9,866)
2024 General Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Sep	\$32,065	\$33,420	(\$1,355)
YTD	\$278,491	\$302,133	(\$23,642)

Notes:

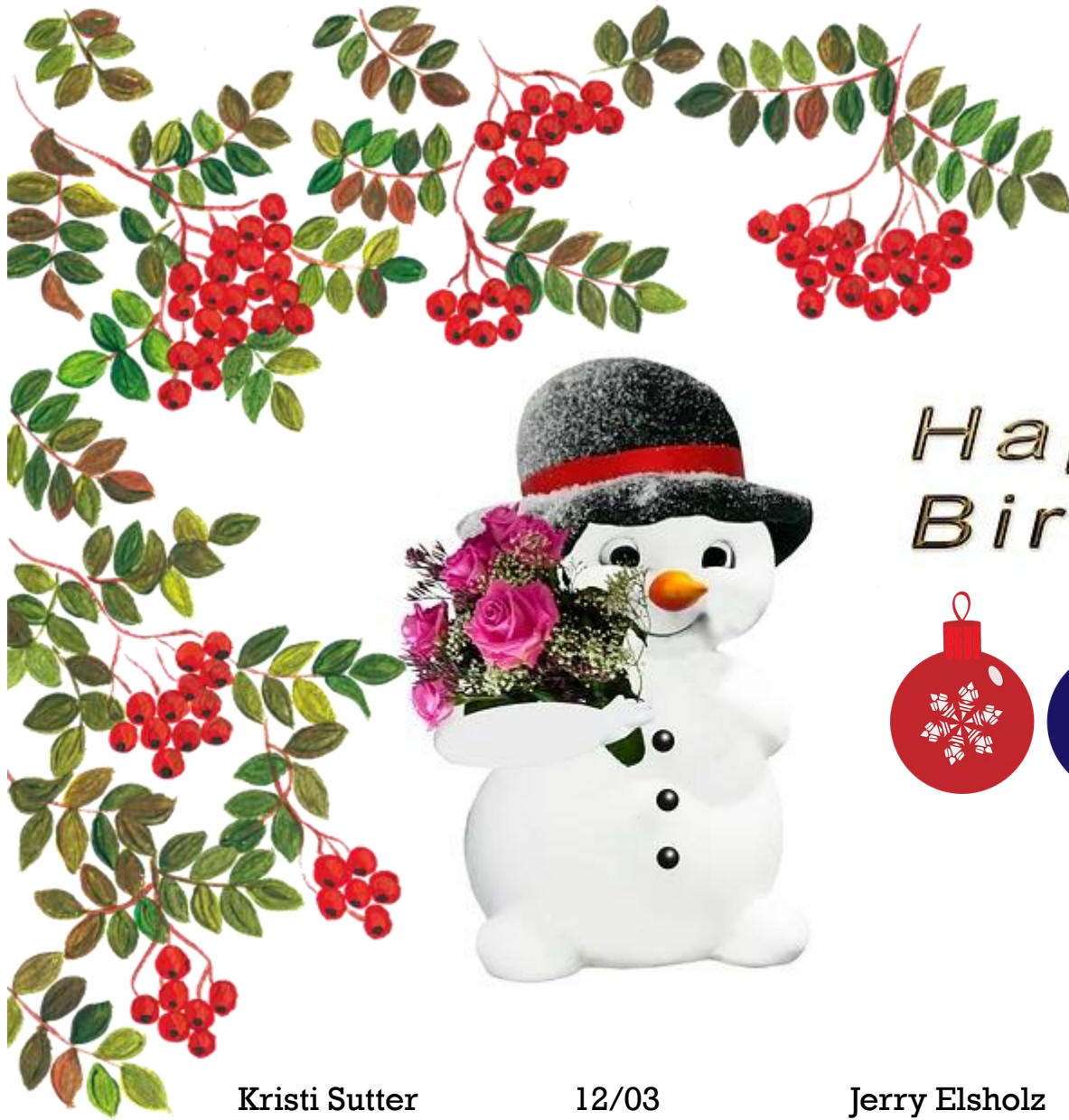
- The app and the web link allow you to input credit/debit card information. The text method will charge through your existing cell phone bill.
- There is a fee for this service for the convenience that it offers:
 - You can choose to cover this fee in addition to your donation, OR if you don't, the fee is deducted from the donation to the church.
 - This fee is a percentage typical of this type of service.

SIMPLY GIVING PROGRAM

PLEASE REMEMBER ---we also offer an **electronic offering, (Simply Giving)** that will withdraw your offering automatically from your bank account. THANK YOU FOR GIVING TO THE LORD'S WORK AT COMMUNITY OF CHRIST AND THE ENTIRE CHURCH!

Community of Christ: In Focus Video Series

Stewardship Committee invites you to check out a new series of short videos, releasing monthly, which highlight different areas of our ministry life here at Community of Christ. We're calling it Community of Christ: In Focus, and each one gives a bit of a deeper dive into the many facets of our congregational life. Our first video, highlighting worship and music, is already available to watch through our website (look under the Worship Bulletin and Recordings section of the "News and Events" tab), on our Facebook page, or YouTube. Future videos will help shine a spotlight on the different kinds of things our gifts of time, talent, and treasure go to support so that you can have a better sense of the MANY things God is up to around here at Community of Christ. Check them out, share them with a friend, and learn more about how our resources, shared for Christ's service in this place, are being used for God's work in the world!



Happy Birthday



Kristi Sutter	12/03
Ned Challen	12/03
Tina Baden	12/04
Jennifer Braun	12/06
Lydia Swartz	12/06
Alex Ackerman	12/07
Kenneth Bucher	12/07
Bruce Lammon	12/08
Eric Leonard	12/08
Paul Ayres Jr.	12/08
Victoria Leonard	12/09
Riley Myers	12/10
Jill Kohntopp	12/11
Amelia Hartbarger	12/12
April Smucker	12/13
Jeffrey Bucher	12/13

Jerry Elsholz	12/13
Eryn Ackerman	12/14
Debbie Carman	12/15
Teresa Loga	12/16
Andrew Fritz	12/17
Cinda Pontsler	12/18
Elizabeth Nitz	12/18
Stephen Meyers	12/21
Cindy Smigelski	12/22
Dan Sigg	12/23
Rory Hartbarger	12/24
Michelle Hayes	12/28
Eric Rasmusson	12/30
Jay Rasmusson	12/31
Marita Perkins	12/31
Sue Brown	12/31

Community of Christ Lutheran Church



Great to have Bishop Daniel Beaudoin with our confirmation class to lead us in learning about prayer and trying out several new prayer practices!

Pastor Steve and members of Community of Christ Lutheran,
On behalf of the residents and Staff at Wolf Creek, we want to thank you for your candy donation. It helped to bring many smiles to our facility and surrounding community. Warm Regards,
Vicki Ropp
Activity Director



Community of Christ Friends and Family

Please be aware that text, email phishing, and Facebook scams are circulating again. If you receive a message claiming to be from Pastor Steve or any of the staff, especially asking, "Can you do me a favor?"—it's a scam. After receiving a response, the scammer will often ask for money or gift cards.

****Do not respond** to these messages and be sure to report or block the number or email address. Remember, Pastor Steve or any church staff will never solicit requests for money or gifts via text, email, or Facebook. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the church office directly.**

Thank you for helping keep our community safe!



Like us on Facebook

Community of Christ Lutheran Church

Church Office Hours

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday)

419-877-0607

secretary@commofchrist.org

www.commofchrist.org

6517 Finzel Rd., Whitehouse, OH 43571