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COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
 LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known



March 2025

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

March 3

Social Action

March 5

Worship & Music

March 6

**Christian
 Education**

March 10

Concert

March 11

Council Meeting

March 11

Stewardship

March 25

Choir

Wednesdays
 7:45 p.m.

Bell Choir

Thursdays 7:00 p.m.

Worship Services

Available on the net
 at
www.commofchrist.org

Lenten Services

Wednesdays
 7:00 p.m.

Pastor's Letter, March 2025—Love Beyond Boundaries

I don't know about you, but growing up, I had mixed feelings about the season of forty days we call Lent.

I recall the routine of weekly Wednesday meals shared with church family (a tradition I am grateful to experience again here at Community of Christ), and I can still remember the smell of a church fellowship hall filled with comingling aromas of chicken-noodle, vegetable beef, and cream of potato from my childhood. I remember the somber feeling of midweek Wednesday evening services as a kid, too, and the awareness that it was starkly different from the joyful energy of Sunday mornings. And yet at the same time, I really came to appreciate the quiet insistence of this season that God's love had gone to a cross for me. I know it might sound strange to say I get "excited" about Lent, or that I "like" it, given how sobering and serious these forty days are, and yet I do feel like something in my spirit needs the clarity, the sparseness, and the renewed call in Lent that pulls me to follow after Jesus even when it is costly. It might not be *happy*, per se, but it is good for my soul. It might not be celebratory like Easter or festive like Christmastide, and yet I need the rhythm of regularly stripping away the distractions and background noise of my life that allows my attention and focus to be turned once again on the cross of Jesus and what it means for me to follow the Crucified One as Lord.

Maybe this doesn't sound like much of a sales pitch. But then again, I'm not here to "sell" you on Lent, only to invite you to share this journey once again with us as a church family. For many centuries, the peculiar people called "church" have marked out time each year that clears the ground away for our hearts, hands, and habits to be recentered on the journey to the cross, and we have kept at it even though it doesn't have the hoopla of New Year's, the decorations of December, or the fireworks of the Fourth of July. We keep coming back to this shared journey of forty days because it helps us to be re-attuned to the center of our faith: the love that was willing to lay down its own life, all the way to death on a cross, a love so powerful that it has broken the power of death in the act of dying. In other words, we keep this season of Lent because it is one way we have found to keep ourselves re-grounded in the audacious love of God, a love that is richer and deeper than the pastel shades of colored eggs but comes dressed in the royal purple of Good Friday's robe and the deep red of blood.



Lent Pastor's Letter, March 2025—Love Beyond Boundaries

This year in particular, as our focus for 2025 on “Life on the Edge: Christianity Beyond Our Comfort Zones” continues, I want to invite you to share in this Lenten season with particular attention to that love, and how in Christ, we encounter a *love beyond boundaries*. We’ll hear in these weeks about how God’s love for a whole world full of us sinners is like the reach of a joyful father racing toward a long-lost son who has burned every other bridge he has. We’ll hear about how Jesus’ love longs to reach out for us like a mother hen putting her own life between the danger and her brood. We’ll hear how Christ was willing to die for us, not merely when we are well-behaved and righteous, but precisely when we are sinners still turned away from God. In other words, we’ll be reminded again of just how fierce, insistent, and relentless God’s love for us is as it crosses boundaries, removes obstacles, and goes to any length for the sake of reaching us. In a culture and in a time when so many other messages to us are mere sales pitches or just angry shouting, we need to hear that Good News—and we might just need a whole season of forty days or so to remove the distractions, ignore the commotion, and allow our hearts to hear it.

So, join us this Lent here at Community of Christ for a season of *love beyond boundaries*—which is first and foremost God’s love for us, and then flows through us to reach out to others as witnesses of Christ’s love. Join us in worship, in study, in service, and in shared time in community. I can’t promise that this Lent will be glamorous, sparkly, or trendy—but I’m not sure that’s what we need. I can invite you to a season that will be simply centered on the One who gave everything and crossed every boundary to redeem us and to share that together as the people of God. Come find a place here. Come and find what we most deeply need.

Grateful to share this journey of life on the edge with all of you, Pastor Steve

From Vicar Natalie Downs

The Places That Form Us

“Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul,
and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions,
but everything they owned was held in common.”

Acts 4:32



At the beginning of every semester, I jump in the car with my fellow seminary friend, Vicar Jacinda, and we venture west to Dubuque, Iowa, back to the castle (Wartburg Seminary). It is a special place. Every time we see the castle from a distance down the road, a smile spreads across our faces. Joy fills our hearts entering our on-campus house to be greeted by friends from far and wide. It is a place of learning and a time of gathering together as a worshipping community. This is a formative place where I am discerning how God is calling me to show up in the world as a Christian public leader through learning and listening to God’s word and allowing the Spirit to breathe life into action. And I do this with others, as the church has it designed.

We indeed are people in need of community to help shape us into the people God intended us to be. A place where we belong, and together, united in Christ and led by the Spirit, practice, learn, and live in ways that draw us close to God and one another. These spaces are important because they form us individually, and our families, and they bring transformation and life to the communities and places that we also belong. As I reflect on the importance of community and the formational element it brings, I am drawn to the text from Acts that talks about the early church. Before Bibles, church doctrine, and church buildings, they lived by simple means. Being in community with each other. Sharing what they had. And in doing so, they “were of one heart and soul.” And when we too practice the gift of hospitality and welcome, I am assured through this community’s witness and in the life of the church that God is there, and God will grow us in those formative times and spaces.

from Vicar, Natalie Downs continued

For the next few weeks in Bible Study on Sunday mornings, we will have a chance to talk about formative communities as we read an early church document known as the Didache, the teaching of the twelve apostles. My hope is that you will join us for this study as we talk about the early formative times of the church and also join in discussion around what it means to be a community forming disciples for the church and the world today. And I pray in our time together in worship and learning on Sundays that Community of Christ is a place where you are being formed and sent out into the world. Join us for this exciting discussion!



Ash Wednesday Begins Lent on March 5

This year, our shared Lenten journey to the cross and the hope of resurrection that lies through it begins on March 5 with Ash Wednesday. Here at Community of Christ, we'll once again offer worship at 7:00 p.m. including the Imposition of Ashes and the celebration of Holy Communion, and we'll offer a shared light meal together at 5:30 p.m. first in the fellowship hall, as in previous years.

In case the tradition of *imposing ashes* is new to you—or in case you have always wondered what it's all about!—this practice goes back in some form more than a thousand years in Christian observance and has much older roots in ancient Judaism that connected ashes with public repentance. The marking of our foreheads with ashes in the shape of the cross is meant to be a reminder of our mortality, a sign of our own turning from sin, and a symbol of hope in Christ as well, all at the same time. As our heads are marked with the sign of the cross in a mix of dust, ash, and oil, we hear the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Of course, we remember as well what God can do with dust since the storytelling of the Scriptures describes God making humanity out of the dust and breathing life into the clay shaped by God's own hand. We also remember how the cross of Christ was marked on our foreheads in our baptism, and how God's claim of love on us holds onto us through this life, through death, and into the promise of resurrection, much like our journey this Lent along with Jesus to the cross and eventually Easter's empty tomb. So even though it is a difficult reminder to hear that our lives are not permanent and to be reminded of our sin, we also receive the ashes in the hope that the One who went to the cross for us has still claimed us as his own forever. This year, our ashes have been made, with the help of our confirmation students, from the burning of last year's palms from Palm Sunday, continuing a long-standing tradition in the church where last year's “Hosannas” point toward this year's Lenten journey to the cross.

You are invited to join us on Wednesday, March 5 for worship at 7:00 p.m., and to share dinner with us beforehand at 5:30 p.m. here at Community of Christ. Sign up at the kiosk if you are willing to help bring something for our Wednesday, meals and share this journey of forty days together this Lent with all of us here at Community of Christ!

Midweek Evening Prayer Lenten Series: *Love Beyond Boundaries*

Throughout the Wednesdays of Lent (running through March and into the beginning of April), we will once again be offering a series of simple shared meals and evening prayer services to mark our journey that takes us to the cross of Christ. As in previous years, our weekly Wednesday meals will start at 6:00 p.m. (beginning March 12—the Ash Wednesday dinner starts a half hour earlier at 5:30 p.m.) and worship will follow at 7:00 p.m. Continuing something we began last year, we'll also invite your help with hands-on creative projects that will help connect us with some of the central stories of our faith along the way to the cross and resurrection, and you can be a part of these between dinner and worship, with the materials and projects set up in the Gathering Space. Our Wednesday series this year will be for all ages, including children and adults, and we hope you'll make the time to join us this year for this special Lenten series, focused on the seasonal theme “Love Beyond Boundaries” as part of our 2025 Life on the Edge: **Christianity Beyond Our Comfort Zones** year.



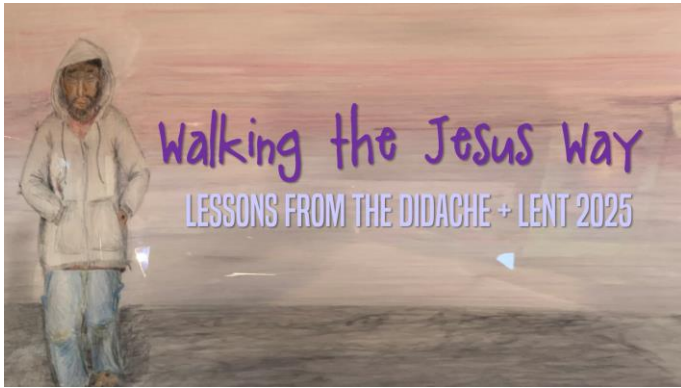
New Canvas Labyrinth Offers Contemplative Prayer Opportunity

Frederick Buechner once wrote that “faith is the direction our feet begin to move when we discover that we are loved” by God. There’s something to that idea—faith isn’t stationary but points us in a certain direction and gets us moving as God leads us along life’s path... including all of its twists and turns. With that in mind, we offer this Lent a new resource for your own contemplative prayer: an 18-foot diameter canvas prayer labyrinth, created in part with the help of our confirmation students earlier this winter. It will be set up and available for quiet times of walking in the fellowship hall at different times throughout this Lent, and you are invited to come by and make use of it.

In case you aren’t familiar with the prayer practice of walking a labyrinth, here’s the short version: unlike a maze, which has many paths which lead to dead-ends and wrong turns, a prayer labyrinth has only one path, but it turns, bends, and folds in on itself on the journey to the center in ways you might not be able to anticipate at first. When you walk the path, you have to trust that it will take you where you are supposed to go, even if you can’t see how you’ll get there at the end. And as you walk, slowly, quietly, and reflectively, your mind and heart are freed to pray, to listen, and to meditate on the presence of God while your feet are otherwise occupied walking. (It’s not all that different from folks who say they find it easier to concentrate their minds when their hands are fidgeting or doing busy work.) Walking a prayer labyrinth can be paired with silent prayer, talking out loud to God, reciting the words of the psalms, or repeating a centering prayer phrase as you walk, making room for God to speak into the silence. Look for more details posted soon about times to walk the Labyrinth in the fellowship hall here at Community of Christ this Lent!



GROWING IN GOD'S WORD



when God
BREAKS
THE RULES

Adult Forum this March: Walking the Jesus Way (Lessons from the Didache)

It's not just about hearing Bible verses on Sunday only to have them go in one ear and out the other, but about a way of life—a life shaped in Jesus' likeness. So, what could it look like to live the Jesus way of life today? And what wisdom can we gather from the early disciple community? That's what our Sunday Adult Forum will be exploring in our next series, running through March and into April, which we're calling, "Walking the Jesus Way." This series will make use of an ancient document that goes back to the late first century or the early second, a writing called "The Didache," which means "The Teaching [of the Apostles]." It may well be as old as some of the later books of the New Testament itself, and it gives a glimpse not only of the early church's life and witness but also offers a pattern for our own lives walking in the Jesus way. This Lent, as we focus especially on rededicating and recentering our lives on the way of Jesus, this series will be a great chance both to learn some ancient church history and to connect to present-day life application. We hope you'll join us on Sunday mornings in the fellowship hall from 9:00 - 9:50 a.m. for this series throughout March and leading up to Holy Week in April, as together we *walk the Jesus way!*

New Thursday Bible Study Series Begins: When God Breaks the Rules

We often picture God as the Giver of Rules and the Maker of Laws (including, obviously, the ones literally written in stone like the Ten Commandments). But what about the times in the Bible when God does a new thing, moves in a new direction, or expands the old order of the world? What about when God *breaks* the rules? That's what we're going to be looking at in our next Thursday afternoon Bible Study series, starting this January and running through the end of March, in a new original ten-part study that Pastor Steve is calling *When God Breaks the Rules*. We'll see how God overturned the customs and traditions of the day from the earliest stories in our Bible to times when Jesus broke with the inherited traditions of the Respectable Religious Teachers of his day, to the movement of the New Testament era church as the Spirit led the first Christians across lines and borders to the ends of the earth with Jesus' love. Join us on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in the council room running through March 27 for a ten-week journey in the expansive, surprising, and often rebellious ways of God! Everybody is welcome! See Pastor Steve for back issues of handouts or watch our weekly video YouTube summaries of each session, available also through our church Facebook page!

Ladies'
Bible Study

The Tuesday Ladies Bible Study will begin March 4th @ 8:30 am. We will be doing a Kristi McLelland study "The Gospel on the Ground"- Christ has ascended-now what? We will learn how the remaining disciples chose a new member to replace Judas and then became organized to begin spreading the Gospel without Christ present. This is a 7-week study, and please order your study guide before class. Please sign up at the kiosk. If you have any questions, please call Becky King @ 419-349-7319. Bring a friend!!

Worship Volunteer Schedule March 2025

Week	Mar 2	Mar 9	Mar 16	Mar 23	Mar 30
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	Theresa Loga	Teresa Loga/Josef Perkins	Theresa Loga	Laurie Mauro/Teresa Loga	Theresa Loga
Acolyte/Crucifer 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 8:00	Irene Rang	Becky King	Irene Rang	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 10:00	Kathy Depinet	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kevin Swagler	Volunteer Needed
Camera 10:00	Neil Raymond	Rick Yokum	Kevin Swagler	Volunteer Needed	Rick Yokum
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	Becky King	Josef Perkins	Sue Brown	Volunteer Needed	Carol Wiemken
Communion Prep/Clean 10:00	N & S Raymond	C & N Rilling	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler	Jill Kohntopp
Greeter 8:00 East	R & L Metcalf	Irene Rang	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Greeter 8:00 West	R & L Metcalf	Theresa Loga	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Greeter 10:00 East	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Marsha Cochran	Rob Kohntopp	Volunteer Needed
Greeter 10:00 West	Volunteer needed	Dean Nofzinger	Volunteer Needed	Jill Kohntopp	Volunteer Needed
Lector 8:00	Natalie Downs	Teresa Loga	Becky King	Josef Perkins	Theresa Loga
Lector 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Robin Fritz	Marsha Cochran	Natalie Downs	Ron Atkins
Worship Asst 8:00	Josef Perkins	Natalie Downs	Cheryl Fischer	Laurie Mauro	Carol Wiemken
Worship Asst 10:00	Dean Nofzinger	Volunteer Needed	Don Schroeder	Volunteer Needed	Kara Yokum
Verger 8:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Verger 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

****Volunteer list as of 02/25/2025 If you need to cancel your scheduled date, please arrange for another volunteer to take your place and fill your time slot. Additionally, remember to cancel your slot on Sign-Up Genius so the person covering for 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

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE



Prayers

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

MATINA BENTON, LISA BOLTZ, SHIRLEY COFER, VIRGINIA DILLON,
SUSIE DONNAL, JIM & SUE ENK, LARRY GEER, PAULA GRUHLER, RON HETHERWICK, LUKE HOLTZ,
ART INGMIRE, TOM JENNINGS, TRISTAN KIMMEY, FRANK O'KONSKI, CHRISTAL & CHAD PRITCHARD,
DICK RISON,
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 lift up the family of Nancy Myerholtz in our prayers. May the Lord bring them peace and comfort in the days to come.

In Loving Memory:

Please join us as we remember and celebrate the lives of Jerry and Dayle, both were devoted members here at Community of Christ Lutheran Church. A joint memorial service will be held on March 29 at 1:00 p.m. at the church.



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



SOCIAL ACTION MINISTRY



Worship Music



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Next Meeting Date

March 3 @ 10:30 a.m.

Next Meeting Date

March 5 @ 10:00 a.m.

Next Meeting Date

March 6 @ 10:00 a.m.

Next Meeting Date

March 10 @ 6:30 p.m.



Concert Committee

Next Meeting Date

March 11 @ 6:00 p.m.



Church Council Meeting

Next Meeting Date

March 11 @ 7:00 p.m.



Stewardship
A WAY OF LIVING

Next Meeting Date

March 25 @ 6:00 p.m.



Crazy Faith Talk Podcast Considers People Who Lived Their Faith

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 or even asking your Smart Speaker (like Amazon Echo) to play the podcast “Crazy Faith Talk.” **Crazy Faith Talk is now on Spotify!** If you like to listen to music or podcasts using the Spotify app, you can find Crazy Faith Talk there! *Crazy Faith Talk* features our own Pastor Steve and Vicar Natalie, as well as Sarah Aasheim, an ELCA pastor serving in eastern Pennsylvania, and Erica Wellner, a Methodist pastor in western Pennsylvania. 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 Lent we start a new series called, “When the Bible Flips the Script,” looking at times throughout the Scriptures when God overturned expectations, transformed someone in dramatic ways, or reversed the usual order of the day. We’ll explore stories like Jacob, Joseph, and Jonah, along with how the cross and resurrection is one more great reversal in the story of salvation. Check it out with weekly posts on our church Facebook page or Twitter/X (@BeingGraced), by searching for “Crazy Faith Talk” on Spotify, or on your smart speaker!

Social Action Ministry Announcements

Community of Christ Welcomes Isaiah 117 House Presentation this March

When children are removed from their homes out of concern for their safety, they are usually brought to a child welfare services office to await placement. This wait can be a few hours to several days. These children often have nothing with them and are scared, lonely, hungry, and in dirty clothing.

Here in Northwest Ohio, a new ministry is beginning following a model that has been successfully used in other places across the country to help support children waiting to enter foster care. It's called Isaiah 117 House (inspired by the Bible verse in its name, "Learn to do good, seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow"), and right now efforts are building, and funds are being raised to establish an Isaiah 117 House location in the Toledo area.

Here's how it works: Isaiah 117 provides a comforting home where these children entering foster placement instead can be brought to wait – a place that is safe with friendly and loving volunteers who provide clean clothes, smiles, toys, and snuggly blankets. This space allows children to receive the comfort and care they need while child welfare staff can do the necessary paperwork and identify a good placement. The mission of Isaiah 117 House is threefold: to reduce trauma for children awaiting placement, to lighten the load for child welfare services, and to ease the transition for foster families.

And here at Community of Christ, our Social Action Ministry sees this as the kind of work that we are being called to help support. To that end, we're welcoming a representative of the new initiative of Isaiah 117 House, Jennifer Bohnsack, to join us on Sunday, March 16, both to share a Temple Talk in worship and to present information in the Gathering Space between services. We'll also be directing our Noisy Offering, Thank-You Fund, and Daily Bread donations for the second quarter of the year (April, May, and June) to the work of Isaiah 117 House to help this project get off the ground. Come on March 16 and find out more about how we can use our resources to help children at one of the most difficult times of their lives to be surrounded by people who care about them and can offer comfort when everything else seems uncertain in their lives. (And see more in this newsletter about our "Have Mercy" sticker and button project, Too, which will also benefit Isaiah 117 House this Lent!) This is one more way we can help to *make Jesus known* in actions for the most vulnerable right in our area. Find out more this March and be a part of this fledgling ministry!



Social Action Ministry Invites You to "Have Mercy" and Share It Boldly This Lent

Weekly in our worship life, we pray, sing, and confess our need for it: the mercy of God. From the ancient call-and-response rhythm of the Kyrie, "Lord, have mercy..." to our sung acclamation before the gospel, "Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful..." to the prayer petitions and well-known hymns of centuries past, we are grounded in the mercy of God. And as Jesus reminds us in the Sermon on the Plain, we are called to "be merciful, just as your Father in merciful" (Luke 6:36). Mercy is both our hope and our calling, and the church's season of Lent is a fitting time to be focused again on both of those since these forty days leading to Holy Week point us toward God's mercy poured out for us in the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

With all of that in mind, the Social Action Ministry invites you to make a statement this Lent that calls to mind both our prayer to God and Jesus' instruction to us to "have mercy." These new stickers and lapel buttons, each featuring the simple message, "Have mercy," will be available in the Gathering Space all throughout Lent, and we would invite your suggested donation for one of \$5.00, which can just go in the slotted box alongside the display, and all our proceeds will go to the ministry of Isaiah 117 House as they seek to show mercy to children in Northwestern Ohio who are going through foster placement (read more about their work in a separate article in this newsletter!). We hope you'll boldly put one of these stickers or buttons on something you wear or carry around with you as a way to start a conversation, prompt a faith conversation, or to remind you both of God's grace and our calling to be merciful people. Get yours in the Gathering Space and help support Isaiah 117 House!

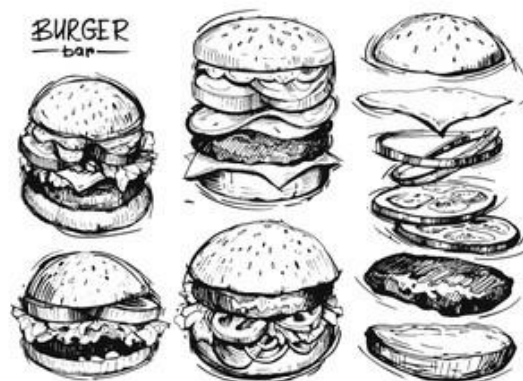


Concert News



Community of Christ hosts Perrysburg Symphony Orchestra Chamber Ensemble

Our first Sunday afternoon concert of 2025 is coming up on March 23 at 3:00 p.m. as Community of Christ hosts a quartet of musicians in the Perrysburg Symphony Orchestra Chamber Ensemble, featuring a program of French composers including Saint-Saens and Faure! This will be a lovely afternoon of beautiful music, and all proceeds from the free will offering at this concert will be divided between our Building Fund to pay down our mortgage and relief for victims of the wildfires in California through Lutheran Disaster Response. This will be a great event to invite friends, family, and neighbors to since we'll have the chance to share a fantastic performance while also supporting causes we care about for neighbors across the country rebuilding after disaster and also being good stewards of our own responsibilities and building here. We hope you'll join us on the afternoon of March 23 for this enjoyable concert and a time of light refreshments afterward in the Gathering Space!



Swingmania Concert and Burger Bar Night

Get ready for a good time coming up later this spring, as Community of Christ hosts a burger bar dinner, a charitable auction, and a concert and dance featuring the music of Swingmania, all on one big night! Mark your calendars now for the evening of April 12, when we'll have a dinner bar open to church members at 5:00 p.m. featuring burgers, chips, coleslaw, and ice cream, followed by a charitable auction event at 6:00 p.m. with a wide assortment of prizes whose proceeds will benefit Genacross Lutheran Services, and then a 7:00 p.m. concert with room for dancing, all to the musical stylings of Swingmania! If that sounds like a good time to you, then get your tickets this March! On Sunday mornings, the concert committee will have a table in the gathering space for both the dinner portion and the concert portion of the night, so that you can participate in either or both. The wider community will be able to get tickets for the concert as well (dinner is limited to Community of Christ folks because of space limitations), whether on Sundays or through the church office during the week. Meal tickets will be \$10.00 for an adult, \$5.00 for kids 10 and under, and then concert tickets will be \$25.00 for an individual, \$40.00 for a couple, and \$10.00 for kids (again, 10 and under). The whole evening's events will also help to benefit both our Community of Christ Building Fund as well as Lutheran Disaster Relief, as with other concerts hosted by the Concert Committee. Tickets will be available starting March 2 and throughout the month as long as they last, so get yours early, and plan to join us for a great night on Saturday, April 12!

Visitation Ministry News



Conversations and More JOIN US!

Friday, March 14, and Tuesday, March 25 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Don't forget to invite a friend!



Cookie Sunday: A Sweet Opportunity to Share!

Mark your calendars for **Cookie Sunday** on **March 9!** Join us as we hand out bags of delicious cookies after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services. These cookies are a great way to express your appreciation to a friend, thank a co-worker for their hard work, or brighten a neighbor's day with a little treat.

And don't worry; there will be plenty of cookies just for you to enjoy as well! Embrace this opportunity to spread joy and connection in our community!



"Restocking the Freezer"

Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 3rd, and join us as we "Restock the Freezer!" We're inviting volunteers to help prepare and or donate items for casseroles and soups, which will be frozen and distributed to families in need throughout the coming months. Your contribution will make a lasting impact on our neighbors, providing them with comforting, homemade meals when they need them most. Whether you're an experienced cook or just looking for a way to give back, we need your help! This event is a perfect way to show support for our community. Your donations will be appreciated. Let's work together to fill those freezers with warmth and kindness this April 3rd!

Monthly Singing Visit to Blue Creek Nursing Home—March 11 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 we would love to have your help and voice coming up this February when it can be so easy for folks to feel down after the hoopla and festivity of Christmas has passed for another year. Join us on February 11th to help brighten the day of residents at Blue Creek! If you want to join us, you can meet us at Blue Creek on February 11th at 10:00 a.m., or if you have questions, see Cinda Pontsler, Cheryl Fischer, or Pastor Steve!



Announcements



The Outreach Committee along with Social Action Ministry is partnering with Genacross Family and Youth Services to provide pool supplies to the youth center located in Liberty Center. Family and Youth Services works with children and youth ages 6-17 by providing programs that offer a structured daily routine, including teaching social skills, coping skills, and independent living skills. Their goal is to create behavioral changes in the children and youth that enable them to function productively and appropriately within their communities. They currently serve 30 children and youth at the Liberty Center location.

The center is renovating the outside pool for the kids to use this summer and is in need of the following items: Goggles -Outdoor play equipment (basketballs, soccer balls, frisbee, sidewalk chalk) -Pool toys and games (no pool noodles) - Arm Floats - Life Jackets - Diving sticks - Pool towels

The committee will be accepting items from Easter Sunday (April 20th) until Mother's Day (May 11th). You may also make monetary donations to Community of Christ Lutheran Church and show "Liberty Center Youth Pool Project" in the memo line. If you have any questions, please reach out to any member of the Outreach Committee. You may also contact Michael George, Executive Director of Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation at MiGeorge@Genacross.org.

Join the Social Action Committee to help families with food insecurity

Join us as we assist the Islamic Food Bank on Saturday, March 22, 2025, from 10:30 am to noon as we fill weekender food bags for area school children. The Islamic Food Bank provides these bags that contain breakfast, lunch, and dinner items for school children to take home on Fridays. Children and their families from Toledo Public, Maumee, Washington Local, and Perrysburg Schools have come to rely on these food donations that the Islamic Food Bank has been providing since 2014. They now provide over 2500 bags every month during the school year! We only have space for 15 people for this activity so sign up quickly at the kiosk in the Gathering Area.

Please complete one of the volunteer information forms next to the sign-up sheet and bring it with you to the event. Or complete it online beforehand at this link:

<https://islamicfoodbank.org/volunteer/> All ages are welcome. Those under 18 and don't have proof of age ID, require a parental or guardian signature on the volunteer form. Islamic Food Bank 1804 Monroe Street Toledo, Ohio 43604



Fellowship Adult Dinners for 8, March 15th

Please join us for a fun night of dinners for 8. These dinners are a great way to meet people or possibly get to know more about your fellow church members. You think you know people then you find out the person you've been sitting next to at church every week works in the Empire State Building! Sign up at the kiosk and let us know if you would like to host. The committee will let you know which home you're going to, and the hosts will call you with the time and menu and ask you what you would like to bring.



Blood Drive

Community of Christ Lutheran Church

Community Center
6517 Finzel
Whitehouse, OH 43571

Friday, March 7, 2025
12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

To schedule an appointment, please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter sponsor code: COMMUNITYCHRIST or call 1-800-RED CROSS.



The old furnace for the office area has been removed and a new one installed! Thanks to all who have been both patient in the cold and diligent in getting the new furnace installed! A very grateful crew in the office is loving the warmer inside temperatures!



2025 Altar Flower Sponsorships Available

The 2025 Altar Flower sponsorship weekends are open for selection. Tags and envelopes are available in the hallway to the left as you enter through the front doors. For office tracking, once you've chosen your weekend, please leave the tag on the bulletin board, do not take it home. To ensure your sponsorship is included in the bulletin, payment envelopes must be submitted by Sunday before your selected weekend. For any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with the church office. Your support is truly appreciated—thank you!

Community of Christ Book Club



2025 Book Club!

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



The Ladies Lunch Bunch!

We will resume on **Friday, March 28th**. We will be dining at the new Mexican restaurant 'Acapulco's' @ 11:30. It is located @ 10335 Waterville St., Whitehouse. Please sign up at the kiosk so reservations can be made. All ladies are invited & bring a friend! Questions?? Call Becky King @ 419-349-7319. (Dates for the other lunches are as follows- April 25th, May 23rd, June 27th, July 25th, August 22nd, September 26th, October 24th. The lunches are on the 4th Friday) I am looking forward to a new year of lunches and fellowship!





Fellowship Fun!



The Fellowship Committee would like to thank our extraordinary Chili Cooks and all who attended the 1st Community of Christ Chili Cook-Off on February 23rd. There were so many great chilis to try, no one was left hungry. Congratulations to Shelly Hayes, Kara Yokum, Pam Davis, and Doug Ackerman as winners of the event! We had 72 in attendance with special thanks to Pam Davis, Eryn Ackerman, Rose Ackerman, and all those who helped make the day a delicious success!

Confirmation Class



Our confirmation students had the special opportunity to assist in burning last year's palms to create this year's ashes for Ash Wednesday. They also participated in a fun and educational scavenger hunt around the church, organized by Vicar Natalie, which helped them learn more about the significance of baptism. It was a fantastic and meaningful class session!



AW Area Youth



What an awesome night with our Anthony Wayne Area youth at the Minute to Win It Game Night and Pancake Bar! Huge thanks to everyone who joined us and to all the volunteers who helped make it happen! We had a blast!





Worship & Music Workshop

Thanks to those who came out to be a part of our worship leader and volunteer training workshop, to help answer questions and encourage folks in their roles serving up front and behind the scenes in public worship! We appreciate all those who serve in so many ways!



Outreach Breakfast

Thanks to all who came out to make our Outreach breakfast a success! The food and fellowship were great; and the free will offering will help our Outreach committee bring breakfast treats to the staff of our local middle school, junior high, and high school later this spring!



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. 

2025 Building Loan Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Jan	\$18,112	\$17,063	\$1,049
YTD	\$18,112	\$17,063	\$1,049
2025 General Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Jan	\$37,658	\$34,475	\$3,183
YTD	\$37,658	\$34,475	\$3,183

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!

Stewardship Committee Introduces "Community of Christ: In Focus" Video Series

The Stewardship Committee invites you to explore our new series of short videos, released monthly, that highlight various aspects of our ministry life here at Community of Christ. We're calling it *Community of Christ: In Focus*. Each video provides a deeper look into the many facets of our congregational life. You can watch the videos on our website by clicking on the "Community of Christ: In Focus" tab on the homepage or find them on our Facebook page and YouTube. Future videos will spotlight how our gifts of time, talent, and treasure support the work we do, giving you a clearer understanding of the many ways God is active in our community. We encourage you to check them out, share them with a friend, and discover how our shared resources are used for God's work in the world!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Rebecca Jaessing	03/02	Cindy Smith	03/09	Jacob Gehring	03/21
Carol Stiles	03/03	Anna Bond	03/09	Jim Schwartz	03/22
Barbara Mersing	03/04	Liz Deacon	03/09	David Dick	03/23
Josh Swagler	03/04	Dana Schmidt	03/10	Harold Smith Jr.	03/23
Matthew Dick	03/04	Lindsey Alleman	03/11	Ken Hayes	03/24
Bob Smigelski	03/05	Thomas Lytle	03/11	Larry Papenfuss	03/26
Deanna Cedargren	03/05	Deborah Lytle	03/12	Avery Jones	03/27
Susan Olman	03/05	Douglas Pontsler	03/16	Clara Bucher	03/29
Zach Jones	03/05	Andrew Carman	03/18	Neil Raymond	03/29
Dave Alleman	03/06	Kim Jones	03/18	Donald Sutter	03/30
Alison Fritz	03/07	Nathan Steinman	03/18	Timothy Tuohy	03/30
Cammie Abraham	03/09	Lisa Pitchford	03/20	Brian Lowell	03/31
				Rob Kohntopp	03/31



The Material Girls quilters were back in action arranging patterns and working on quilts—thanks for your awesome work!

Community of Christ Lutheran Church



LENT

Dear Pastor Steve and Michelle,
Thank you for your willingness to host our December Synod Council Event! Your hospitality and warm welcome were very much appreciated. We are blessed to serve alongside you.

with gratitude,
The Nwos Staff &
The Nwos Synod Council

To my friends at Community of Christ -

Thank you so much for all your positive thoughts and prayers. They mean so much. It's wonderful to have such good friends though we haven't met. May God bless and keep you all in his Graces.



Lamen

Church Office Hours

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

419-877-0607



Like us on Facebook

Community of Christ Lutheran Church

secretary@commofchrist.org

www.commofchrist.org

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