

Pastor Steve Bond
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Whitehouse, OH 43571

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www.commofchrist.org



COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known



January 2024

from Pastor Steve Bond

UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us on Facebook
10:00 a.m.

or

Live in person!
8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Morning
Bible Study
9:15 a.m.

Ladies Craft
Wednesdays 1:00 p.m.

Children's Sunday
School
January 7

Church Office Closed
January 1

Outreach Meeting
January 3

Visitation Ministry
Meeting
January 8

Church Council
January 9

Youth & Education
Round Table
Discussion
January 10

Quilt Ministry Meeting
January 2 & 23

Worship and Music
Meeting
January 11

Stewardship
Meeting
January 11

Book Club
Tuesday, January 16

Worship Services
Available on the net at
www.commofchrist.org

Pastor's Letter—January 2024: "The Call of Jesus"

You don't get very far in the Bible before God starts drawing us into relationship and into our unique purposes. From the opening words at creation when God calls to the light and—BANG!—light comes into existence with a divine calling to scatter the shadows and fill chaos with beauty and order, to the dramatic stories of God calling prophets like Moses or Miriam, Isaiah or Jeremiah to speak and serve, to Jesus' call to fishermen and tax collectors to come and be his disciples, we are constantly reading about the way God calls us. This January, that's the invitation in our new year-long focus called *Meeting Jesus* for 2024: we'll explore the **call** of Jesus, and how the living Jesus still calls each of us into his own way of life, to be his disciples, and to share God's love far and wide. Join us on Sunday mornings as we explore that theme in worship and in our Adult Forum class in the library, as well as in our devotional life with a new daily devotional series that looks at Jesus' calling of people with Monday through Friday reflections.

And then, here's the challenge: beyond just learning about how Jesus called *other* people, like James and John or Peter or Mary Magdalene, we'll be invited together to explore what God is calling each of us *individually* as disciples and together as a *congregation* that is a "community of Christ." We'll focus on how to move beyond just learning facts or singing songs *about* Jesus to answering the call of Jesus to be his disciples. Like the great Danish Lutheran philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard wrote, Jesus "never asks for admirers, worshipers, or adherents...No, he calls disciples. It is not adherents of a teaching but followers of a life Christ is looking for.... [Jesus'] whole life on earth, from beginning to end, was destined solely to have followers and to make admirers impossible."

That's the challenge for us here this January: how can we move from being "fans" and "admirers" of Jesus to disciples who answer his call—a calling that meets us where we are, and leads us among the least, the lost, and the left behind, and that embodies Good News for all people? I want to invite you to be a part of that kind of adventure in discipleship this January here at Community of Christ, and to see where Jesus takes us.

Looking forward to meeting Jesus along the way with you, so that together we can make Jesus known.

Christ's Peace,

Pastor Steve

Happy New Year
2024

Jesus

from Pastor Steve Bond continued

Meeting Jesus

a year of getting to know the One who has claimed us in love

Meeting Jesus... in the Gospel of Mark

A new Bible Study series is starting this January at Community of Christ as we begin a year together *meeting Jesus* in our worship and discipleship ministries here at CoC! Pastor Steve will be leading a new series on **Thursdays, starting January 11, at 1:00**, here at the church, working through the Gospel according to Mark. Since Mark will also be the primary Gospel, we'll be hearing from on Sunday mornings in worship this year, we hope this will allow for a deeper understanding of both the Bible stories we're engaging with each week and also of Jesus himself. See how it affects our understanding to see how the individual stories we know fit together as part of a larger story and see how these stories connect to our lives and faith today! There's no cost or book to get for this study, but you're invited to bring a Bible and bring a friend to this weekly gathering on Thursdays! Sign up at the kiosk in the gathering space to help us get a better estimate of how many people to prepare for, and we'll look forward to digging into the scriptures and getting to know Jesus better over the course of 2024!

A Big THANK YOU!

This December, many people went above and beyond to help make our worship and ministry life richer and fuller—and we want to thank you! From those who helped prepare, set up, and live-stream additional worship services throughout Advent and on Christmas Eve, to those who helped with preparing food for special occasions and for our visitation ministries, to those who organized outings to sing carols or collecting presents for our neighbors at Salem, to our office manager Michelle and our music director Eric, we are so thankful for all the additional time, energy, and talent you shared with our congregation! Thank you all SO MUCH for making this a blessed Christmas season together!

Jesus



Jesus



50TH ANNIVERSARY



50th Anniversary Collection Fund and Thermometer

It's no surprise that Community of Christ is celebrating our 50th anniversary as a congregation this year, and the festivities that began last fall with Blue Jean Sunday are continuing throughout 2024. In addition to events like special concerts, dinners, and worship celebrations, we are also inviting the whole congregation to support a special 50th Anniversary Collection of special gifts and offerings that will both position us for the future (and our next fifty years!) and reach out to the world that God loves right now. Here's the goal—and it's a big and exciting dream: we want to raise \$50,000.00 this winter and spring, in celebration of our fifty years of history so far, and to split all those funds raised into two directions. Half of all that we receive in our 50th Anniversary collection will go to pay down our building loan so that we can retire that debt and burn that mortgage as soon as possible and open up new channels of ministry for us when that day comes. The other half of all we receive in this special 50th Anniversary campaign will go to relief work near and far through agencies and organizations like Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Lutheran World Relief. Community of Christ has a legacy of supporting refugees in its five decades of history so far, and we have a long relationship with Lutheran World Relief as well, as they respond to disasters, war, poverty, and need all over the world.

How can you help support the 50th Anniversary Collection campaign? We've got several ways to be involved: first off, you can simply donate, whether with your regular offering (electronically or in an envelope) by marking that you would like a portion of an offering to go to the 50th Anniversary collection. You can simply bring additional donations to the church office on any other day you happen to be stopping by or sending it in the mail. Also, projects like our unique custom-made 50th Anniversary Christmas ornaments are going to support the 50th Anniversary campaign, and you can look for other similar kinds of opportunities through the spring. Also, as we continue to have special events like concerts this spring, the proceeds beyond expenses from free-will offerings at those events will go to the 50th Anniversary campaign as well. So, whether you make a contribution, get an ornament, or invite a friend or neighbor to a concert or other event, you can be helping to mark this important milestone in our congregation's life in ways that both pay it forward and reach out to neighbors near and far!

Check out the new 50th Anniversary Campaign thermometer display in the gathering space, too, to see how we are progressing so far, between now and our May 5 Anniversary Weekend!

Spaghetti Dinner Save-the-Date

Our 50th Anniversary Committee is hosting a Spaghetti Dinner on the evening of Saturday, Feb. 10, starting at 6:00 p.m., as both are a chance to celebrate and share fellowship together, as well as to help support our 50th Anniversary Campaign. Dinners will include spaghetti, salad, bread, drinks, and dessert, and we'll have tickets available soon in the new year for purchase. So, consider this a Save-the-Date invitation, and plan to join us for a great evening of food, fun, and fellowship!

Feb. 10 Vow Renewal Celebration

While we've been celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Community of Christ being bound together in love, we thought this would be a great time to celebrate couples in our congregation, too! So, we're hosting a Vow Renewal Service on the afternoon of Saturday, Feb. 10 at 4:30 p.m. (yep, you can stay for the Spaghetti Dinner afterward, too, to make a whole day of celebration with our church family!) for any couple, no matter how long or short you have been together. Whether you are marking a special anniversary in your own marriage or just want to take the chance to say, "I keep on loving you and I will continue to share life with you!" to your beloved, this is a fun chance to renew your vows with others from our congregation. Our vow renewal is open to all—whether you were married at Community of Christ or not, whether you have been married for many or a few years—and we'll make this a day to remember here with other families from our congregation. There is no cost to be a part of the Vow Renewal Ceremony, but we'd ask you to RSVP by signing up at the kiosk starting in January so we can be prepared for those who will join us. We hope this day can make a special memory for you and your family as a part of our Community of Christ church family!



Announcements



Choirs!!

Choirs start back to work on January 3rd & 4th!!

Vocal Choir on Wednesday
January 3rd

at 7:00 p.m.

and

Blee Choir on Thursday

January 4th

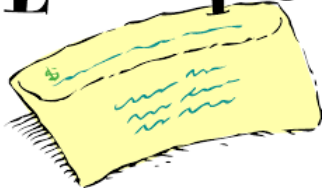
at 7:30 p.m.

Come One, Come All!!
We're open to new members!



Altar Flower dedications for 2024 are available in the church hallway on the bulletin board. If you would like to honor or remember a loved one, please sign up today. Simply fill out a blank date tag and envelope, place a check or cash and the tag in the envelope, and place it in the offering plate. Or if you simply wish to donate to our Flower Fund, please use the envelope for "donations only". We are grateful for your blessings.

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



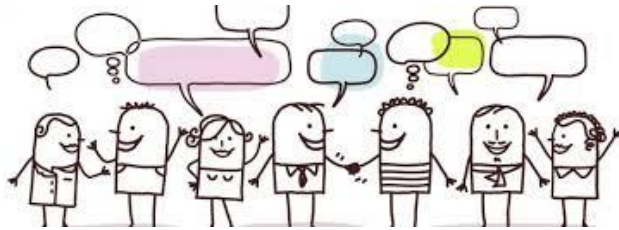
2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Our 2024 offering envelopes are now available! Our weekly offering envelopes include weekend offerings, Lenten Wednesdays, Holy Week, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent services, and more! If you have questions as to how to complete your weekly offering, please contact the church office.

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



Upcoming Training and Meetings



Join us! Wednesday, January 10th, at 6:30 p.m. for Round Table discussions regarding a Youth Director Job Description.

- Anyone is welcome to join discussions to share thoughts on what we would like to include in a job description for a Youth Director.
- Gather in the Fellowship Hall and then we will break into 2 groups:
 - Youth, age 5th -12th grade
 - Parents/Adults
- Dinner provided! Enjoy a Chipotle dinner and share your vision of an ideal Youth Director at Community of Christ!
- Sign up on the kiosk if you can join.

Worship Volunteer Workshops

Do you already or are you interested in helping as a Worship Volunteer?

Being involved in worship is a wonderful way to help "Make Jesus Known". Pastor Steve and the Worship and Music Committee will be hosting Worship Volunteer Workshops. We will provide a refresher on what is involved with each worship volunteer role.

The Workshops will be held on Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, January 18 at 10:00 a.m., and Saturday, January 20 at 10:00 a.m. Please join us and consider volunteering for a new or additional worship volunteer role!

"Making Jesus Known"



Next Meeting Date
January 3 @ 10:30 a.m.



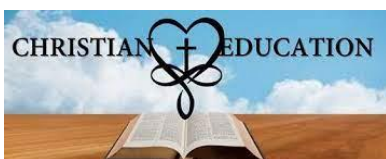
Next Meeting Date
January 8 @ 10:00 a.m.



Next Meeting Date
January 9 @ 7:00 p.m.



Next Meeting Date
January 11 @ 10:00 a.m.



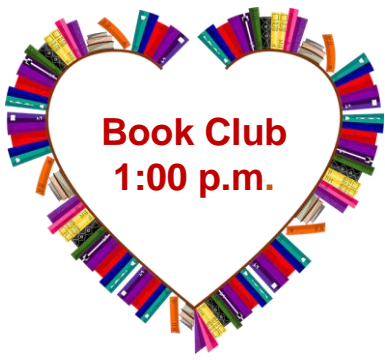
Round Table Discussion
January 10 @ 6:30 p.m.



Next Meeting Date
January 11 @ 7:00 p.m.



Next Sunday School is January 7th



GROWING IN Friendships

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

*January 16, 2024, The Sun Walks Down by Fiona McFarlane

*February 20, 2024, Someone Else's Shoes by JoJo Moyes

*March 19, 2024, The Golden Spoon by Jesse Maxwell

*April 16, 2024, The White Lady by Jacqueline Winspear

*May 21, 2024, Earth's the Right Place for Love: A Novel by Elizabeth Berg

*June 18, 2024, Braiding Sweet Grass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Members' suggestions:

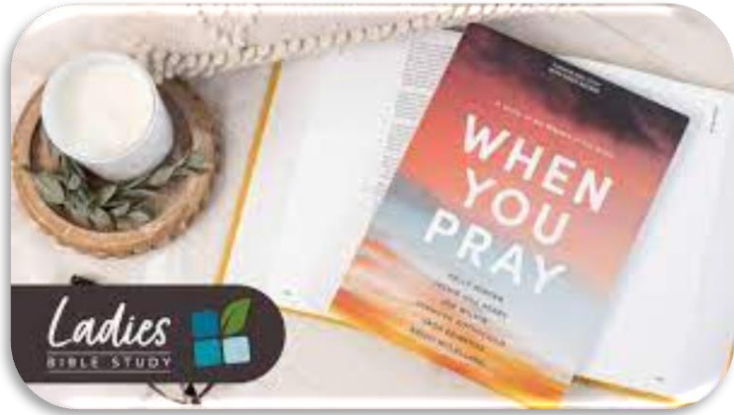
*Michelle: TRU BIZ by Sara Novic or MOUTH TO MOUTH by Antoine Wilson

*Joan B: HURRICANE SEASON by Lauren Denton

*Kathryn: THE PERSON LIBRARIAN by Marie Benedict

*Lauren Willig's: A BAND OF SISTERS: or A NOVEL TWO WARS AND A WEDDING

Marc Cameron books with the character, Arliss Cutter



The Tuesday morning Ladies' Bible study will begin on Jan. 16, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. To start the New Year, we will be studying a 7-week study on prayer entitled "When You Pray". In this study session Bible teachers Kelly Minter, Jackie Hill Perry, Jen Wilken, and Kristie McLelland will help us study prayers in the Bible that will inspire our own prayers. We'll learn that God welcomes our praise and lament, our thanksgiving and intercession. We'll find that when we pray our faith is strengthened and our heart is united to Jesus. You will have to order your own study book and a prayer journal is also available but not required for the Bible study. Please sign up on the kiosk- Questions?? Call Becky King at 419-349-7319.





Upcoming Events



ALL CHURCH

Fellowship BREAKFAST

Join us for breakfast!

Youth will be hosting a Congregation breakfast in between the two services on January 28th.

2024

Do good things! GIVE BLOOD.  American Red Cross

Mark Your Calendars!!!

Community of Christ will be hosting our next **Blood Drive** on Friday, January 12, 2024 from noon until 5:00 p.m. Look for more Information to come in the upcoming weeks!

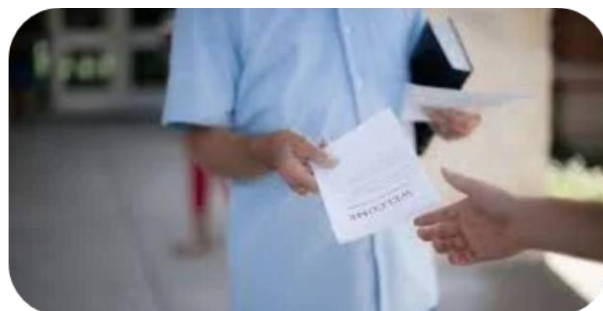
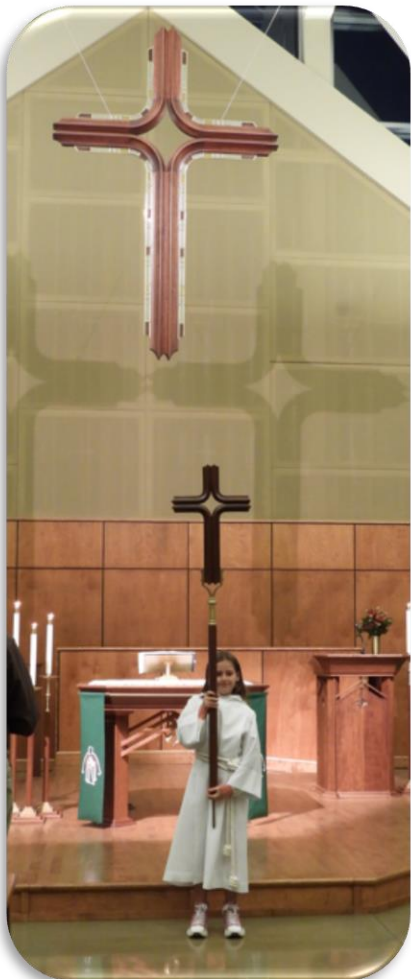




Ministry Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for a way to give a little of your time to **YOUR CHURCH???** We welcome volunteers of **all ages!**

Be a **Door Greeter** or **Lector**, **Distribute Bulletins**, **Acolyte**, or **Worship Assistant**. **Operate the camera** for live streaming or **help with Communion Set-up/Clean-up**. To volunteer simply go to www.commofchrist.org, click on "Volunteer for Worship", select the "tab" for which you'd like to volunteer, click on the "sign up" box in the date(s) you are available, scroll to the bottom and click on the "Submit and Sign Up" button and follow the steps from there! And, for your convenience, you will receive an acknowledgment email and another reminder shortly before your assignment. *****Should you need to cancel your scheduled date, please contact another volunteer to fill your position and time slot. Also, cancel in Sign-Up Genius so the person covering you can sign up.** Training can be provided at any time by contacting Laurie Mauro (419) 877-5366 or Carol Wiemken (419) 261-3577.





Worship Volunteer Schedule, January 2024



Week	Jan 7	Jan 14	Jan 21	Jan 28
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	Volunteer Needed	Josef Perkins	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Acolyte/Crucifer 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Nate Yokum
Bulletin 8:00	Rick Metcalf	Becky King	Irene Rang	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 10:00	Kari Swagler	Tina Baden	Volunteer Needed	Kevin Swagler
Camera 10:00	Kevin Swagler	Sarah Rockwell	Neil Raymond	Rick Yokum
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	Becky King	Josef Perkins	Bea Ludwig	Volunteer Needed
Communion Prep/Clean 10:00	Neil Raymond	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler
Greeter 8:00 East	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Greeter 8:00 West	Zach Weber	Irene Rang	Volunteer Needed	Becky King
Greeter 10:00 East	Chris Rilling	Dean Nofzinger	Marsha Cochran	Rob Kohntopp
Greeter 10:00 West	Natalie Rilling	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Jill Kohntopp
Lector 8:00	Josef Perkins	Kahryn Whitacre	Becky King	Volunteer Needed
Lector 10:00	Greg Aubell	Tina Baden	Marsha Cochran	Nate Yokum
Worship Asst 8:00	Kathryn Whitacre	Volunteer Needed	Laurie Mauro	Volunteer Needed
Worship Asst 10:00	Dean Nofzinger	Volunteer Needed	Don Schroeder	Kara Yokum

Effective 12/18/23. Changes can and do occur.

*****Should you need to cancel your scheduled date, please contact 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.

Should you have any questions, please contact Laurie Mauro (419) 877-5366 or Carol Wiemken (419) 261-3577. Thank you all for your time and attention to helping make our Worship Services run smoothly!





Blessings & Prayers



Praying for God's People

Please remember the following who are ill, shut in, recently hospitalized, Military, or in need of prayer:
Sue Brown, Val Brown, Kay Burdo, Craig Burdo, Troy B., Mike Carroll, Brianna Chavez, Shirley Cofer, Susan Dental, Brittany Dewitz, Jim & Sue Enk, Ron Hetherwick, Larry H., Tom Jennings, Tristan Kimmey, Christine & Sean McCarthy, Judy Mock, Joe Perkins Jr., Christal & Chad Pritchard, Deann Schiavone, Peter Schultz, Phyllis Sturgeon, Lois Wise,
Military: Jay Rasmusson, Austin Cunningham
Please remember them in your daily prayers. Thank you.



Sacrament of Holy Baptism

We celebrated Holy Baptism on Sunday, December 10. We celebrated with the family of Henry Powers. May the Lord bless His children in water and His Word! Please contact the church office if you are interested in Holy Baptism.

Prayer Shawls

Irene Rang and Mary Moats are responsible for the 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 contact Irene at 269-832-7714.

We remember in prayer the families of Carl Mock and Ray Chamberlain; may our Lord grant them peace in their hearts in the days ahead.

Children's Sermon

Kids of all ages please join Pastor Steve on Sundays at 8 and 10 a.m. as he shares the good news of Jesus! He'll even have a sticker waiting just for YOU!!!!




Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

Exciting news from our church! We are offering you more giving 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. 



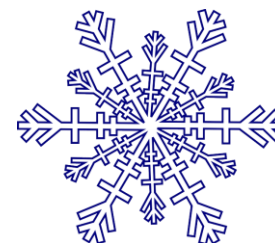
Notes:

- 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!





Thank you! Thank you!! Thank you!!!



December 11, 2023

Dear Friends,



Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$1,600.00 recently to the Anthony Wayne Community Food Ministry weekend food bag program. AWC FM provides food to over 150 households twice a month in the AW area and surrounding communities. We also provide weekly food bags to 100 plus students in the AW School district who are facing weekend food insecurity. Your donation will allow us to provide food to area families and students in need. What a blessing! Yours in Christ,

Ron Shoemaker
Board President
Anthony Wayne Community Food Ministry



Sincere thanks to all the Christmas carollers who braved the cold weather last Saturday night to share our wonderful heritage of Christmas music as Christians. May you all be blessed as you celebrate the birth of our Savior, the most important birth in the history of the world!
Christmas peace to all -



May the holiday season bring you beauty peace and above all, happy moments with the ones who mean the most to you.

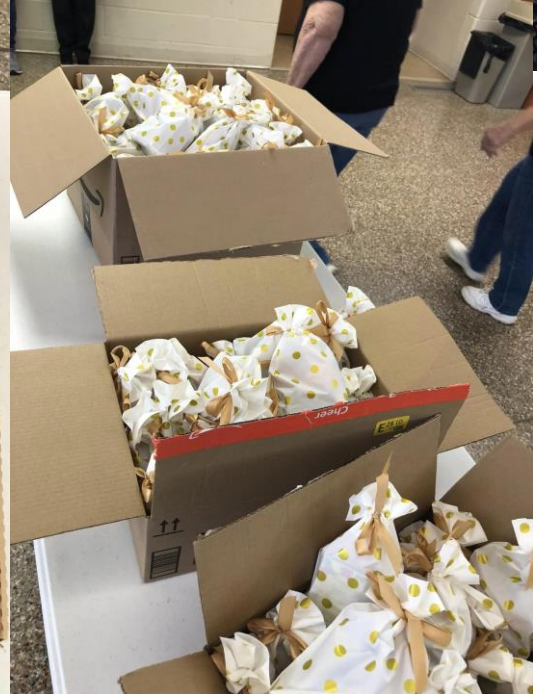
Joe + Alice Strieter



Visitation Ministry



Our Visitation Team was assembling gifts for residents and staff of a local nursing home we'll go to visit next week—thanks to all who lent their hands, time, and creativity to make the work smooth and speedy!





Visitation Ministry

Special thanks to the group from the church who joined us out at Blue Creek to sing Christmas carols and share gifts with the residents and staff! What a great outing!





Visitation Ministry



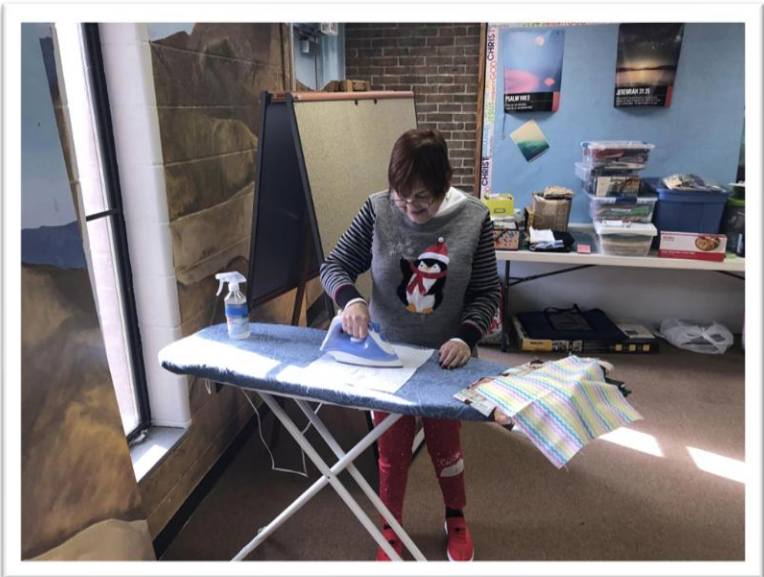
Thanks to our crew of volunteers who are making meals to be frozen and ready to give out to folks who could use a meal brought to them, whether after hospitalization, recuperating from illness or surgery, or just to help lighten the load. Thanks for the great work of the Visitation Ministry that makes all this happen, and to all who donated ingredients, too!



Community of Christ Ministry Work



Outreach Ministry Christmas Caroling!



**Social Action
Ministry
“Material Girls”
LWR Quilting
and
Angel Tree Gifts for
Salem Lutheran
Church**

Visitation Ministry casserole making!



Making Jesus Known in the World that God Loves!



Youth Activity



Thanks to all who came out for our youth Christmas Scavenger Hunt and Gift Exchange tonight, and for the folks who helped arrange a great Olive Garden dinner after our outings! What a great and fun time tonight!





Fellowship Activity



What a great time tonight with our outing to the Walleye game with pizza afterward! Thanks to our Fellowship crew who organized and to all who came out! [#letsgofish](#) [#lutheranswatchinghockey](#)



Happy Birthday!

Elizabeth Fowler	01/01	Becky King	01/10
Kirk Reid	01/01	Greg Aubell	01/11
Spencer Reid	01/01	Dana Gill	01/12
Robert Curtis	01/02	Steven Gill	01/12
Irina Haack	01/02	Sarah Hoy	01/13
Kari Swagler	01/04	Andrew Kuhlman	01/13
Jeffrey Bright II	01/05	Dawn Rhoades	01/14
Amanda Worthington	01/05	Nicholas Kronmann	01/15
Kathy Heckler	01/07	Luke Yokum	01/15
Susan Rasmusson	01/07	William Baden	01/15
Marilyn Pratt	01/08	Annette Merritt	01/16
Tom Schreiber	01/08	Julia Patterson	01/19
Claudia Jones	01/08	Richard Hannum	01/20
Sophia Cedargren	01/08	Bev Howard	01/20
Evan Ackerman	01/09	Nancy Myerholtz	01/21

Patricia Roth	01/21
Nicholas Kronmann	01/22
Brian Ray	01/22
Dale Grimes	01/23
Andrea Donley	01/24
Dave Nowak	01/25
Kerri Johnson	01/25
Christopher Deacon	01/26
Michael Marteney	01/27
Taryn Wise	01/28
Taylor Wise	01/28
Jason Bartley	01/30
Betty McSurley	01/31



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

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