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COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known



September 2024

What's Ahead

Worship Times

Sunday Morning
9:00 a.m. Sept 1 & 8
Back to TWO Services
8 & 10 a.m. starting
September 15
In-person and
Facebook Live

Sunday Morning
Bible Study
10:15 a.m.

September 1 ONLY
No Bible Study
September 8
9:00 – 9:50 a.m. starting
September 15

Pastor's Bible Study
Thursdays 1:00 p.m.

Outreach
September 4

Worship & Music
September 5

Quilt Ministry
September 3 & 17

Visitation Ministry
September 9

Council Meeting
September 10

Youth and Education
September 10

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

Church Office Closed
September 2



Pastor's Letter—September 2024: The Way of Jesus

A lot of the time in life, it's not just what you do, but how you do it, that makes the difference.

When I was a kid taking piano lessons, I can remember the vast difference between what it sounded like when I played a piece of music and what it sounded like when my teacher would sit at the bench and play the very same notes. Even though the sheet music was identical, her interpretation—the *way* she played the music—almost made it sound like a different piece. My fingers might be hitting the right keys, but I hadn't yet learned to give expression to the music: the drama of getting louder and softer, the moments of rushing and the measures of emotional tension as the tempo slowed. I might bury the melody underneath the loud clunky chords of my left hand playing the harmony, or I might miss the accent of a sharp staccato. But she had learned how to be expressive—how to be *musical*—with the music. Even though we were playing from the same book, it was the *way* my teacher played that made the piano sing.

Maybe you've seen something similar when a particularly gifted actor takes the familiar lines of an old script for a play and brings the role to life in a whole new way. A bad actor can make Shakespeare into a terrible bore, but an insightful actor has a way of taking words that are centuries old and breathing new life into them, no matter how many times you've heard, "To be, or not to be..." before. Or maybe you've tasted the difference between a meal prepared precisely from the printed recipe and one prepared by a gifted cook who can somehow take the same ingredients and transform them into something remarkable. When you take that first bite, you know: sometimes the difference isn't what you do, but in the way you do it. That's true of any art, whether it is music, drama, dance, or skill in the kitchen.

And it is true, too, with the art of living. The followers of Jesus are convinced that his way of life is remarkable, and that somehow, he makes us more fully and really alive. It's like the difference between a beginning piano student who can only plunk out notes clumsily and a true musician who makes the melodies dance off the printed page (we get the chance to hear some of those around here at Community of Christ at the piano, and with our other talents musicians and vocalists, don't we?). It's like the difference between just going through the motions and performing an elegant dance with graceful artistry. It's the difference between just ticking off minutes... and hours... and years... of a lifetime and leaving an impact on the world because of our presence in it. The way of Jesus brings us into what the New Testament calls "the life that really is life" (1 Timothy 6:19).

from Pastor Steve Bond continued

And that's what our focus will be this month in our year-long project of "Meeting Jesus." This September, we'll take a deeper dive into the way of Jesus. In other words, we'll look at the way Jesus interacts with people, the way he faces adversity, the way he serves God, and the way he embodies God's Reign. In all of this we'll look, too, at how we live out our daily lives in light of the way of Jesus. How do we go to work in the way of Jesus? How do we use our time and our money like Christ? How do we make small talk with strangers at the post office or in line at the grocery store in ways that embody Jesus for our neighbors? How do we love the way Jesus loves? If that conversation intrigues you, and if you have that hunger to be a part of "the life that really is life," then join us throughout the month of September here at Community of Christ to explore the way of Jesus.

Sharing the journey with you all along that way,
Pastor Steve



Crazy Faith Talk Podcast Asks

Did you know that our Pastor Steve continues to offer a weekly podcast with two colleagues in ministry? It's called **Crazy Faith Talk**, and each week we look 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." And new for this month, **Crazy Faith Talk is 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!

Our latest series, which just started in late August, asks the question, "Who would you NOT want to be in the Bible?" along with "Who WOULD you want to be from the Bible?" Listen in as these three friends and colleagues explore some of the surprising stories and challenging situations of biblical characters, with laughter and insight along the way. Check it out with new episodes every Tuesday!

"Held In Trust"—Sunday Morning Adult Forum Starts New Series Sept. 15

This fall, our Adult Sunday School class returns with a study called, "Held in Trust," intended to help us see our whole lives in response to God's goodness. Join us between services (from about 9:15-9:45 a.m.) in the Library for a six-part series looking at everything as a gift of God, and our role as stewards of those gifts. Beyond just thinking about "how we raise money to pay the church's bills," we'll be exploring a whole-life perspective that sees our time, our talents, our treasures, and creation itself as gifts held in trust, for which we are caregivers. Over these weeks, we'll gain a new perspective on everything in our lives, with a look at both biblical ideas of stewardship and practical connections for our daily lives. Join us for these sessions this fall:

Sep. 15—*Everything Is God's*: Sources for Stewardship

Sep. 22—*Gardeners of the World*: Caretaking for Creation

Sep. 29—*For the Sake of the Body*: Tapping Our Talents

Oct. 6—*Where Our Treasure Is*: Rethinking Money and Faith

Oct. 13—*Stewards of Time*: Making the Most of Each Day

Oct. 20—*Unexpected Gifts*: Offering Our Weaknesses



from Vicar Natalie Downs



Greetings Community of Christ Lutheran Church!

My name is Natalie Downs, and I will be your vicar! First off, I want to start by saying thank you. Thank you for your willingness as a congregation to open up your community as an internship site and for the planning that has taken place to make this happen. I am thankful for this gift of internship you have provided to pave the way for me to grow in ministry, and I look forward to learning and growing together in the ways of Jesus.

Some things to know about me: I was born in Toledo, OH but lived a majority of my life in the Bedford area. My husband, Trevor and I, are both Bedford graduates. We have been married for 16 years. Trevor is a Business Intelligence Analyst. We have two daughters, Genevieve (10) and Amelie (5), who share the same birthday! Previously, we lived in Dexter, MI (right next door to Ann Arbor), and a year ago moved back to Temperance to be closer to family. I am a Master of Divinity student at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. I am a distance learner, which means I do most of my coursework online and then meet on campus for the start of classes twice a year.

I have been a lifelong ELCA Lutheran, but my path has taken me down many different interactions within ecumenical and interreligious circles. I believe those experiences were spirit-led and helped me to learn how to work with and love other people across denominational and religious lines. Previous to finally saying yes to God's call to ministry (God was working on me for a long time), I served as a collegiate music professor for a number of years, where I did a variety of things including teaching voice, diction/phonetics, music history, music appreciation, vocal pedagogy, and led the Women's Chorale. I also had a private voice studio and have taught at the Michigan State University Community Music School, teaching voice and developed programming. I have been blessed to perform in a variety of settings as a classical singer in both operas, recitals, and musical theater. Since having children, I am not as active in the performance realm. I have also previously worked as a church musician, serving at Zion Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor, MI for six years where I led a few different ensembles, coordinated music for worship and community, and have even composed a few pieces of music. After that appointment, I have served as a sub-accompanist for churches on Sunday mornings.

Some other tidbits about me: I have degrees from Otterbein College (now University- Bachelor of Music) and Michigan State University (Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts). I am a Michigan State grad, so I cheer for the Spartans (Go Green! Go White!) but also living in the Ann Arbor area for a number of years, so I am a huge University of Michigan fan (GO BLUE!). I believe that grace is possible during football season 😊 Being a singer, I have always been interested in languages (translating, pronunciation). Currently, I am continuously working on my Hebrew and Greek. For fun, I like to read, play video games, do cardio drumming, vacation to Disney World, study languages, and play the piano.

I look forward to getting to know all of you. Please stop by if you are in the office to introduce yourself or catch me on Sunday morning. I will be in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

God's peace,
Vicar Natalie Downs



Grow in Faith Together



Blue Jeans Sunday—September 8

As the culmination of our year-long fiftieth-anniversary celebration, we're once again having a special outdoor worship service, with a picnic, games, and activities following, on September 8th. Worship will be at 9:00 a.m. for the last time this summer (**beginning on Sept. 15, we'll be back to our usual rhythm of an 8:00 a.m. and a 10:00 a.m. service with Sunday School in between**), outside in the churchyard on the back side of the building. After worship, we'll have activities and games, a potluck picnic lunch, grilled burgers and hot dogs, and more! This will also be the first official Sunday with our intern, Vicar Natalie, joining us, and we'll also be dedicating a time capsule of memories and memorabilia from this milestone in our congregation's history to be opened in 25 years when we celebrate our 75th anniversary! Look for more details in the September newsletter, too, but for now, mark your calendars, sign up for what you can bring to the picnic, and get ready to help us celebrate the conclusion of our golden anniversary!



Contribute to the Time Capsule at Blue Jean Sunday

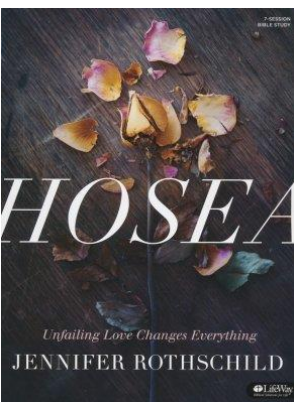
Part of our concluding celebration of our 50th anniversary year (culminating in our Blue Jean Sunday service and picnic on Sunday, Sep. 8) will include creating a *time capsule* to be opened at our 75th anniversary (in the year running 2048-2049!), and we would love your input of memories or messages for the future on that day! At Blue Jean Sunday we'll have a stack of special cards you can write out a memory or a message for the future, and we'll add them to our time capsule, along with some other mementos from this past year and from this moment of our life as a congregation! Join us on Sep. 8 to leave your impression and legacy for our 75th!

Spiritual Gifts Workshop—Coming September 14

Coming up this fall, we are inviting people of all ages—including youth and young adults!—to be a part of a one-day event to discover your spiritual gifts, tap into your God-given abilities, and explore more of what God might be calling you to do in the world! Join people from across the congregation for this event on the morning of Saturday, September 14, starting with light refreshments at 8:30 a.m. and concluding by noon for a chance for you to learn about your unique gifts, to see what strengths and challenges might come with your own unique mix of gifts and preferences, and how your spiritual gifts connect you with others, not just in church but in every part of your life! Save the date, sign up at the kiosk in the church gathering space, and plan to join us for this special event here at Community of Christ!

The Tuesday Morning Ladies bible study

This new study begins Sept. 17th @ 8:30 am. This fall we will learn about the prophet Hosea and his prostitute wife who leave, and Gomer continues under God's direction to buy back and bring home. This study shows how God kept loving the Jewish nation even when they had turned from him, he kept loving them just as Gomer loved his wife. We have much to learn about so great a love. You will need to purchase your study guide entitled 'Hosea'. Please sign up on the kiosk if you will be attending. Questions? call Becky King @ 419-349-7319.





Grow in Faith Together



Welcome Table Wednesdays— Starting September 4

This fall, we're inviting children, families, and adults to a weekly gathering on Wednesday evenings with food, fellowship, and faith activities for all ages. Our Welcome Table Wednesdays will kick off on Wednesday, September 4th with a dinner open to all from 6:00-7:00 p.m., at 7:00 p.m., we'll have activities that are especially geared for kids and families, but that is open to everyone, too! (Of course, if you are planning to be in the choir this fall but want to bring your kids along to church, this is a great chance for kids to get to do fun and faithful activities with music, art, stories, and games while you join the choir! All will wrap up by 8:00 p.m. so you can get to the rest of your evenings after that! *Sign up at the kiosk* in the church gathering space and join us this September on Wednesday evenings!



CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation Class Kicks Off for the Fall

Our new year of Confirmation Classes will kick off on Sunday, September 15, and this year we are anticipating eight students from here at Community of Christ, along with a renewed partnership with neighbors at Zion Lutheran in Waterville! This year, our sixth and seventh-grade students will be exploring the essentials of the faith, like the Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and what we believe about baptism and Holy Communion, as well as how we live our lives as disciples of Jesus, all with the guidance and insight of Martin Luther's Small Catechism. This year will be a great experience for our young people to grow in faith and deepen their relationship with Christ while learning to think theologically and live as witnesses! Stay tuned for more news and moments from our year in faith together!



Three To Receive First Communion!

Coming up on Sunday, September 15, we will celebrate with Andrew Carman, Addison Carman, and Trevor Nye, as they receive their First Communion and receive the gifts of Christ's body and blood in the bread and cup **FOR YOU!** Join us at the 10:00 a.m. service on Sept. 15 to mark this milestone of faith with them and their families!

Worship Volunteer Schedule, 8:00 & 9:00 a.m. September 2024



Week	Sept 8 9 AM only	Sept 15	Sept 22	Sept 29
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	Joseph Perkins	Laurie Mauro	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Acolyte/Crucifer 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler	Volunteer Needed
Bulletin 8:00	None Needed	Vince Mauro	Volunteer Needed	Irene Rang
Bulletin 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler
Camera Operator	Neil Raymond	Sarah Rockwell	Carol Wiemken	Kevin Swagler
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Joseph Perkins	Volunteer Needed
Communion Prep/Clean 10:00	Susan Raymond	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Kari Swagler
Greeter West 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Greeter East 8:00	None Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Greeter East 10:00	Marsha Cochran	Chris Rilling	Rob Kohntopp	Volunteer Needed
Greeter West 10:00	Dean Nofzinger	Natalie Rilling	Jill Kohntopp	Elaine Hetherwick
Lector 8:00	None Needed	Vicar Natalie	Kathryn Whitacre	Volunteer Needed
Lector 10:00	Marsha Cochran	Chris Rilling	Greg Aubell	Volunteer Needed
Worship Asst 8:00	None Needed	Laurie Mauro	Kathryn Whitacre	Volunteer Needed
Worship Asst 10:00	Vicar Natalie	Kathryn Whitacre	Don Schroeder	Dean Nofzinger
Verger 8:00	None Needed	Vince Mauro	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
Verger 10:00	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

****Volunteer list as of 08/20/2024****

*****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.

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!



Blessings & 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:

BARB ATKINSON, SUE BROWN, TROY BERNHARD, SHIRLEY COFER, VIRGINIA DILLON, SUSIE DONNAL, GLORIA & STEVE EBERLY, JIM & SUE ENK, RON HETHERWICK, ART INGMIRE, TOM JENNINGS, TRISTAN KIMMEY, JACK MILLER, KATHY PHILLIPS, CHRISTAL & CHAD PRITCHARD, DICK RISON, IRIS ROCKWELL, PETER SCHULTZ, PHYLLIS STURGEON, LOIS WISE, JOANNE MILITARY: JAY RASMUSSEN, NOAH PITZEN, AUSTIN CUNNINGHAM



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 on Sunday at 9 a.m. until Sept. 15, when we move to having the 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!!!!



Prayer Shawls

Irene Rang and Cheryl Fischer 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 reach out to Irene at 269-832-7714.



*****ATTENTION Members and Friends***
SPONSORED WEEKENDS HAVE NOT
BEEN TURNED IN*****

If you have sponsored a weekend for Altar Flowers and have not turned in your envelope(s) please do so no later than the Sunday before that weekend so this can be shared in the bulletin. Thank you ☩



CoC Ministry Dates to Remember



Outreach

Next Meeting Date
September 4 @ 7:00 p.m.



Next Meeting Date
September 5 @ 10:00 a.m.



VISITATION MINISTRY

Next Meeting Date
September 9 @ 10:30 p.m.



**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION
AND TEACHER MEETING**

Next Meeting Date
September 10 @ 6:30 p.m.



Church Council Meeting

Next Meeting Date
September 10 @ 7:00 p.m.



**SOCIAL ACTION
MINISTRY**

FIRST Meeting Date
September 17 @ 7:00 p.m.



As we welcome Vicar Natalie Downs and her family to Community of Christ for her internship, several members of our congregation have stepped up to serve on the Lay Internship Committee. This group spans age groups and backgrounds to offer a sounding board and a place of mentorship and support for Vicar Natalie in her time learning and serving here. Special thanks to Lay Internship Committee members Pam Davis (chair), Pat Roth, Andrea Donley, Lisa Alleman, Cammie Abraham, Rebecca Jaessing, Debbie Warner, and Chris Rilling, who will meet regularly with Vicar Natalie and offer feedback for her as her year and a half with us progresses. Stay tuned for news and updates from the Internship Committee here!

COC Music News!



Choir Sign-up

Saying Yes....It's not too late!!

So, you enjoy singing, and you have considered joining the choir, but perhaps you are up against some obstacles. You work late, you don't have a babysitter, your kids are in sports, you travel. All potential roadblocks. My roadblock is travel. As your new volunteer choir director, I am going to be gone for several weeks during the 2024-2025 season. I get it. We want to be involved, but we have to pick and choose and sometimes we feel squeezed for time.

When Eric asked me to help out with the choir, I was excited to say yes, but also hesitant because, like I said, there are times I won't be in town. He said, "How about you conduct when you are home?" He made it easy for me to say yes.

I want it to be easy for you to give this a try too. Whether it be a solid commitment from September to May or for a 4–6-week period when it works to have choir in your life, I want to give you the flexibility to say yes to singing!

Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays from 7-8 starting on September 4. Our schedule for now until Christmas will be as follows:

Session 1: 9.4.24 - 9.22.24

We will rehearse for 3 Wednesdays, culminating in our first anthem Sunday on 9.22.24.

Sign up here: [Session 1](#)

Session 2: 9.25-10.27

We will rehearse for 5 Wednesdays and will sing on Sunday 10.13 and 10.27, (Reformation Sunday). We will also record a song for an Advent/Christmas recording the church will be producing.

Sign up here: [Session 2](#)

Session 3: 10.30-11.24

We will rehearse for 4 Wednesdays and sing on Sunday, 11.24, (Christ the King Sunday.)

Sign up here: [Session 3](#)

Session 4: 12.4-12.24

We will rehearse the 3 Wednesdays in December from 7:45 to 8:45 after the Advent service. And sing on Sunday 12.8, Sunday 12.22, and at the 11:00 pm Christmas Eve service.

Sign up here: [Session 4](#)

Please consider saying YES to choir for 1,2,3 or all 4 sessions. Sign up by clicking the links above or on the signup sheet on the kiosk. I am so excited to make beautiful music with you!

Musically Yours,
Lisa Alleman

Lisa has been a member of Community of Christ for over 20 years. She has directed church choirs, community choirs, high school choirs, and children's choirs, including The Children's Choir of Northwest Ohio which held Monday night rehearsals at Community of Christ for several years.



Coming to COC this Fall

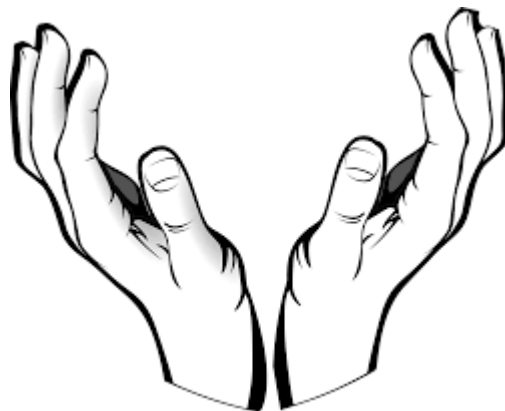
Save the Date—God's Work, Our Hands Sunday Service Project on Sep. 22

Every year each September, congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), our church body, are dared to take on a service project of some kind to help celebrate the anniversary of the ELCA. Last year, we had an outing to Urban Wholistics garden in downtown Toledo, and this year, we are planning an outing for all willing hands to help plant trees for our friends at Salem Lutheran Church in the North End of Toledo. Stay tuned for details about times and carpooling plans, but for now you can save the date for the **afternoon of Sunday, September 22**, departing from the church at **12:30 p.m.** with a group meeting from Community of Christ and traveling together for an afternoon of caring for God's creation and partnering with neighbors in the North End!

Pastor Mike Hanck from Salem shares this about the need for tree planting to improve the health and well-being of the neighborhood around Salem:

"Recently, the Department of Public Utilities amounts of concrete and - especially - the lack of an urban tree canopy. Even in comparison with other areas of the City of Toledo did a study on Urban Heat, and Salem's neighborhood was listed as one of the hottest. Temperatures here can climb to more than 10* hotter than most other areas. The reason for this? The vast as ours is one of the worst in terms of heat. Additionally, beatification and urban blight are continual worries for engaged residents of our area. Since 2016, in some way, various ways, Salem has been addressing these issues. It began with a park, James Colbert Park, and has increased to an expanding mini-arboretum project. It used to be that Pr. Mike, and the staff and members of Salem would just add a few trees each year, but as of late, it's seemed wiser to them to do large batches of trees at one time, since then, one only needs to worry about how the trees are doing at one time instead of new ones every year. With this influx of trees, not only will we physically alter and remake our part of the neighborhood, but we will drastically add to the tree canopy in a way that none of us have ever done before. Once the trees begin to grow, this will feel like an entirely new area. The trees for this project will fill out the park, fill out the first stage (of three stages) of the arboretum. It will also pave the way for further investment of trees by the City of Toledo and Salem's National Wildlife Foundation partners. Remember, when, in the Book of Genesis, God had created plant and animal life, God was able to turn and say, 'It is good.' It is our bet that we all too will be able to come back and say the same thing as these trees grow."

We hope you'll consider supporting this project *either* by **volunteering** to help with planting on Sep. 22 or **donating** money toward the cost of the trees—you can make a special donation through a line item in your offering envelope, or through our special collection display in the Gathering Space on Sundays!





Coming to COC this Fall

Opening Our Gifts: Time, Talent, and Treasure

If you're given a gift—say, for your birthday or at Christmas—it's a terrible thing to leave it wrapped in the paper. It's a shame if someone has gone to the trouble of choosing something for you that they hope you will enjoy and you leave it in the packaging forever unopened. And on the flip side, when you receive a thoughtful gift and use it, well, everyone's lives are enriched. Your relationship with the giver is deepened, your joy is increased, and the same is probably true of the people around you whose lives are made better because you are using your gift well.

It's the same, really, in our relationships with God and with one another: when we use the gifts we have been given by God, our relationship with God is deepened, our joy is increased, and we make the world a better place for the people around us, too! That's why this fall, we are inviting everyone at Community of Christ to prayerfully consider how **YOU** will use your time, *talent*, and treasure—all gifts from God—in the year ahead, with our Time and Talent forms, and our invitations to Financial Commitment for the year 2025! You've already been given incredible gifts by God: the hours in each day, the abilities and interests that make us unique, and the resources we live on. Those are already in your hands, like a present waiting to be unwrapped and taken out of the box. This September, when you and your household receive the Time and Talent forms and Invitation to Financial Commitment forms for our church family, you have the opportunity to use those gifts with joy and gratitude! We're asking for you to complete those and return them to the church **by October 15**, so that we can get new volunteers connected with the ways they are being led to serve, and so that we can make our proposed 2025 budget grounded in realistic expectations of our planned giving.

Now, maybe you're wondering, "How do I know what talents or abilities I really have?" Well, that's why we're also offering this September a Spiritual Gifts Workshop coming up on September 14th (see the article here in this newsletter for more details!), where you can learn more about your own talents and gifts, and you can explore what kinds of serving connect best with your gifts! And in case you've been asking, "What are the places we need volunteers for here at Community of Christ?" well, good news there, too! At our Sept. 28 Festival of Talents (and on Sunday, Sept. 29 between services, too) we'll have displays representing each of the areas of ministry in our congregation so you can learn more about what we do and how you can be a part of it. Think of it like a career fair or college expo but for serving God and God's people—check out the displays for each ministry at Community of Christ, and let that help guide where you might serve in the year ahead! It's all about opening up the gifts God has already given us!





Coming to COC this Fall

Coming This Fall: Festival of Talents Weekend!

We're still enjoying the heart of the summer, but we want to get you thinking about something special coming up this fall—a new event for people of all ages that we are calling our Community of Christ *Festival of Talents*! On the weekend of *September 28-29*, we want to celebrate the many kinds of talents in our church family from people of all ages, from kids to great-great-grandparents, and everybody in between! That will include an evening program on **Saturday, Sept. 28**, where we can perform and show talents of any kind.

Do you have a musical talent? Bring a song to sing, a piece to play, or share an ensemble with some other folks from Community of Christ! Would you share a piece of artwork you've made or a quilt or afghan you've sewn or knitted? Are there handcrafts or wood projects you've built, or skills you can showcase? We want to share them all—whether performed like in a talent show or displayed in our fellowship hall and gathering space like a gallery—all of it will be a part of this special weekend! Sign up at the kiosk and let us know about what you'd like to share as YOUR talent!

We'll also be using that weekend to let our congregational committees have displays and tables to share more of what they do, and how *you* might want to be a part of their ministry. Want to find out more about what the Toolbox ministry does? Interested in learning more about Social Ministry or Fellowship? This will be a chance to hear, see, and learn more, too.

But wait! There's more! Our Festival of Talents weekend will also be a chance to share stories of what each of us has done with the *dollar* that was given to us back in October when one Sunday morning there were dollar bills stuffed secretly into all of our worship bulletins, and the dare to use them somehow for the Reign of God. (Didn't get your dollar, or weren't in church that day? See Pastor Steve, and we'll get you set!) Maybe you've already used your dollar somehow—maybe you bought stamps and sent a card or letter to someone who needed a note of caring; maybe you bought a flower for someone who could use a pick-me-up. Maybe you bought some sidewalk chalk and drew designs with children or grandchildren on a sunny day. Maybe it bought an item of canned food to be donated to the food pantry. Whatever you did—or whatever you might yet do this summer with it—we'll have a chance to share stories of how we used those dollars for the sake of good in God's world.

All of this will make for a great weekend between our Saturday program and Sunday worship, and we hope you can plan to be with us on *Sept. 28-29* to share in the excitement and celebrate our various talents and gifts from God!

Community of
Christ's GOT
T★LENT

Getting Involved at COC



Community of Christ Book Club



**CoC Toolbox Crew
helping a neighbor in
need**



Book Club meets at 1:00 in the library on the third Tuesday of the month from September through June. We would love to see some new faces! This is a chance to share your love of books with like-minded folks, learn about some new authors, and try something new that you wouldn't pick on your own. Discussions can be lively. If you hate the book, come and tell us why! If you didn't finish the book, come and see if other readers had the same problem. Didn't read the book, come and listen, you may find you want to read the book after hearing what others have to say about it! The Waterville Library has the books set aside for the Community of Christ Book Club, so just ask for a copy at the check-out counter!

Here is the schedule for 2024-2025:

Sept 17 - *The Truth About the Devlins* by Lisa Scottoline

TJ Devlin is the charming disappointment in the prominent Devlin family, all of whom are lawyers at their highly successful firm --- except him. After a stint in prison and rehab for alcoholism, TJ can't get hired anywhere except at the firm, in a make-work job with the title of investigator. But one night, TJ's world turns upside down after his older brother, John, confesses that he murdered one of their clients, an accountant he'd confronted with proof of embezzlement. It seems impossible coming from John, the firstborn son and Most Valuable Devlin. TJ plunges into the investigation, seizing the chance to prove his worth and save his brother. But in no time, TJ and John find themselves entangled in a lethal web of deception and murder. TJ will fight to save his family, but what he learns might break them first.

Coming Up:

October 15 - *First Ladies* by Marie Benedict & Victoria Christopher Murray

November 19 - *The Maid* by Nita Prose

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

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





Getting Involved at COC



ROCHE DE BOEUF PARADE

The **Ladies Lunch** will be at Brandywine Restaurant on **September 27th @ 11:30 a.m.** located at 6904 Salisbury Rd. Maumee, Oh 43537. It is located on the grounds of the Brandywine Country Club. Please sign up at the kiosk so reservations can be made. Questions? Call Becky King @ 419-349-7319

The Roche de Boeuf Parade is the cornerstone of the Roche de Boeuf Festival. Local bands and organizations make their way through downtown Waterville as a kickoff to the Festival. As another way of celebrating 50 years of making Jesus known in Whitehouse, Ohio, Community of Christ Lutheran Church is participating in this year's parade! Saturday, September 28, line-up time will be between 9:00-9:30 a.m. If you wish to help celebrate and walk in this year's parade, please sign up at the kiosk!!!



Save a Life

Blood Drive **Community of Christ Lutheran Church**

Community Center
6517 Finzel
Whitehouse, OH 43571

Friday, September 6, 2024
12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Save a Life

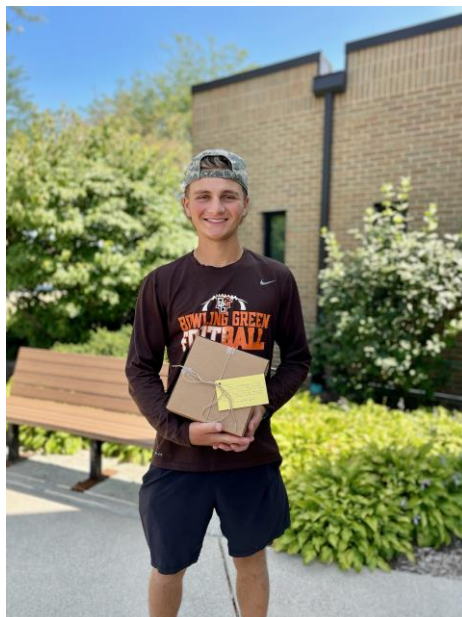


**American
Red Cross**

Visitation Ministry News!



19 young people from our Community of Christ family left for college recently with a box of homemade "Cookies to Share With Friends". Visitation Ministry invites you to keep in touch with these students and our military servicemen throughout the year. Current contact information will be available soon.

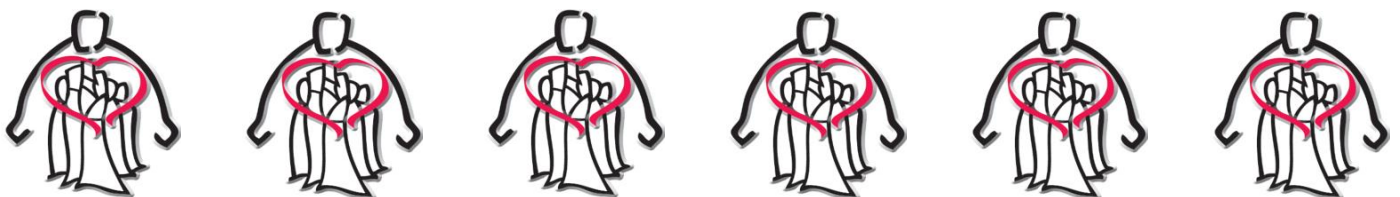




Making Jesus Known Even From Afar!



Thank you to our Visitation Ministry Team and congregation for doing a wonderful job reaching out and providing support to Bernie Mank. It's great that despite the distance, the care and connection from her former church community are making a difference for her. The prayer shawl and kind words are such meaningful gestures. We know Bernie is grateful for being able to stay connected online on Sunday mornings and throughout the week as she posts comments from the state of Oklahoma! Thank you all for helping to Make Jesus Known 🙏❤️





Social Action News!

Social Action Reboots as Standing Committee and Ministry

At Community of Christ, we have lots of opportunities to participate in projects and ministries that serve our neighbors and respond to needs in the wider world. From the quilting ministry of the Material Girls whose finished quilts go around the world through Lutheran World Relief to our collections of items for school kits or migrant workers to our partnerships with friends on the North End at Salem or at the garden beds of Urban Wholistics, there are many ways to be involved in social ministry through Community of Christ. But up to this point, what we haven't had is a way of coordinating these individual projects together. That can mean that people miss out on opportunities or that we end up with numerous events in a short period rather than spread out evenly on the calendar for easier participation. That's why we're trying something new this fall: we're rebooting our various social ministry projects to bring them together in a regular meeting committee, to help keep our social action ministries organized for the future. We'll still do the projects and activities that people are passionate about—don't worry!—but our hope is to make sure our left hand and right hand know what each other is doing. If you have ideas for new kinds of social action ministries that you would like to see happen at Community of Christ, or if you are willing to help us coordinate and carry Social Action Ministry into the future, we invite you to join us for an organization meeting on **September 17, at 7:00 p.m.** here at Community of Christ!

We are collecting for

LWR School Kits

One sturdy drawstring bag

Four 70 sheet notebooks

One 30 centimeter (12 inch) ruler

One box of 10 or 24 crayons

One blunt pair of scissors

One 2 1/2" eraser

Five unsharpened #2 pencils

Five black or blue ballpoint pens (not gel)



**LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF**



More New Members of the CoC Family

This August, we welcomed several new members into our church family over the course of several Sundays in worship! Back on August 11, Clara Bucher was baptized into the body of Christ during our Sunday service, and her parents, Kyle and Janessa, as well as their other children, Evelyn and Nolan, were received into membership as a family. Then on August 18, we welcomed Ron Atkins, and Amy, Stella, and James Fifer as they affirmed their baptism and joined our church family at Community of Christ, along with Ken and Sharon Bucher (parents of Kyle and grandparents of Clara, who was baptized!), who have been received into membership as active members as well!

For folks who wanted to hear or download the original song, "The Storied Water (Clara's Song)," from the Sunday of Clara's baptism but might have missed the link on our Facebook page, you can listen to the song at <https://mercymovesus.bandcamp.com/track/the-storied-water-claras-song>. You can listen for free at this link, or if you want to download it for yourself, all proceeds will be passed along to Lutheran World Relief and the good work they do to respond to disaster, war, poverty, and suffering around the world!



Ron Atkins



Ken & Sharon Bucher
Kyle & Janessa Bucher
Evelyn, Noah, and Clara



Amy Fifer
Stella and James





Making Jesus Know in All We Do!

Prairie Meadow Update

Summer has brought more blooms in the Prairie Meadow – Black Eyed Susan, Blue Vervain, and Partridge Pea are the most common seedlings in bloom, along with the plants rescued from the Buehner Center at Oak Openings last fall, and of course our 6 healthy sunflowers! The Sacred Grounds Prairie tour was here on Aug 7th, with 20 + attendees being inspired by our efforts to be good stewards of God's World. We will continue our battle of the weeds that have sprung up and flourished from the seed bank later this summer/fall with repeated tall mowing. If you have not had a chance to visit the Prairie Meadow close and see and hear the pollinators, please take a short walk out for a visit. But since we currently have many small seedlings still coming up late in the summer, please enjoy it from its edges.

We recently learned that the very healthy and well-developed prairie at Oak Openings Heavy Wheelhouse would be converted in part to a playground, our request to rescue some plants was granted by Metroparks. Becky King and Laurie Mauro made a combined 6 trips to Heavy to dig out and transplant around **72 very large native plants** for our prairie. In addition, we were able to collect some seeds that can also be used to supplement our native seed bank. The Metroparks native staff was disheartened that one of their most well-developed prairies was planned to be lost, so they were very happy that we were able to use the plants, and we are extremely grateful that we heard of the possibility in time to rescue the plants and transplant them to enrich our native plot. They should provide a nice addition of more mature plants, that should be notable next spring and summer.



A Stop on the 2024 Sacred Grounds Prairie Tour



Making Jesus Know in All We Do!





Making Jesus Know in All We Do!



Blessing of the Backpacks



Flat Jesus traveling alongside Dean and Susan Nofzinger



Jesus made it to Boston!



♪ "Where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came! ♪



Jesus made it to the Boston Tea Party!




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.  **Tithe.ly**

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.

2024 Building Loan Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Jul	\$9,357	\$12,563	(\$3,206)
YTD	\$82,054	\$87,941	(\$5,887)
2024 General Fund			
	Income	Expense	Diff.
Jul	\$22,628	\$29,237	(\$6,609)
YTD	\$222,469	\$240,538	(\$18,069)

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

Brenda Druschel	09/01	Stephanie Olman	09/10	Luke Campbell	09/20
Don Heilmann	09/01	Jamie Kaczor	09/11	Lainie Davis	09/21
Joan Bierley	09/01	Brian Bocian	09/12	Gavin Rardin	09/22
Ethan Rozick	09/04	Chad Ackerman	09/12	Tracy Brosten	09/22
Isabel Haack	09/04	Chris Campbell	09/12	Greg Archer	09/23
Larry Battles	09/05	Declan Stewart	09/13	Cody Steinman	09/24
Karen Oden	09/06	Caleb Leonard	09/15	Grant Schuchmann	09/24
Kyler Dorton	09/06	Anna Ollerenshaw	09/16	Noah Pitzen	09/25
Leila Sheidler	09/06	Elaine Schubert	09/16	Beverly Fischer	09/28
Cherryl Stout	09/07	Joseph Perkins	09/17	Catherine Sautter	09/28
Jacob Detwiler	09/07	Donna Cochran	09/18	Lisa Papenfuss	09/28
Sheryl Couch	09/08	John Schuchmann	09/18	Sandy McPherson	09/28
Andrew Taylor	09/09	Susan Gill	09/18	Susan Kaplan	09/28
Beth Stewart	09/09	Taylor Johnson	09/18	Jonas Zieman	09/29
Larry Druschel	09/09	Amanda Kohntopp	09/19	Kara Yokum	09/29
Leanna Swartz	09/09	Matthew Rardin	09/19	Kevin Swagler	09/29
				Lucas Ray	09/29





Community of Christ Lutheran Church Welcomes You!



****Exciting News! Scan Our New QR Code!****

Community of Christ Church Members

We're thrilled to introduce our new QR code system, making it easier than ever to connect with us and access valuable resources! Simply scan the QR code below using your smartphone camera or QR code scanner app to unlock a world of information and opportunities:

By scanning this code, you'll gain instant access to:

- Church announcements through our Newsletter
- Worship bulletins & recordings, and podcasts
- Church calendar
- Donation portals and volunteering opportunities
- And much more!



This innovative technology allows us to streamline communication and enhance your experience within our community. Whether you're a longtime member or a newcomer, we invite you to scan the QR code and explore all that awaits you.

Thank you for embracing this new initiative as we strive to make your engagement with us as seamless and enriching as possible.

Church Office Hours

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



Like us on Facebook

Community of Christ Lutheran Church

419-877-0607

secretary@commofchrist.org

www.commofchrist.org

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