

In the midst of grief, sometimes it can be helpful to connect with others through shared interests or common purpose. If you are looking for possible ways to connect with others, we invite you to any of these groups and opportunities:

Anthony Wayne Area Senior Connection

Every Saturday at **Hope United Methodist Church** (10610 Waterville Street in Whitehouse) from 9:00am-12:00pm, with continental breakfast and a variety of presenters and programs. All are welcome!

Conversation and More... (returning January 2026)

Back in the new year, Conversations and More is a chance to meet here at **Community of Christ** with friends, old and new, and:

- Visit
- Enjoy drinks and something to nibble on
- Play games and cards (euchre anyone?)
- Use teamwork on jigsaw puzzles
- Help with Visitation Ministry projects
- Walk the halls for safe, warm exercise
- Share ideas for future activities

Bring a neighbor; bring a friend. More folks mean more fun!

Mark your calendars for *Jan. 9 and 27, Feb. 13 and 24, and March 13 and 24, all from 1:00-3:00pm.*

Check with the office if you have questions.

Bible Studies at Community of Christ

- Adult Sunday class meets in the Bible Study room at 9:00am (between services) and is led by Pastor Steve and Vicar Natalie.
- A ladies' Bible Study meets on Tuesday morning at 8:30 a.m. and is led by Becky King.
- A Thursday afternoon Bible Study meets from 1:00 to 2:00p.m.

QUILTING FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Do you enjoy quilting? A group meets at **Community of Christ** on the first and third Tuesday of every month from 10:00-12:00 a.m. to sew quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Sometimes they bring a sack lunch and eat together. You don't sew? There is also sorting, cutting, ironing, pinning, and visiting. For more information, please call Michelle in the Community of Christ church office 419-877-0607.



A Blue Christmas Service of Hope and Healing
December 21, 2025—3:00pm
Community of Christ Lutheran Church
Whitehouse, Ohio

"There were shepherds abiding in their fields..."

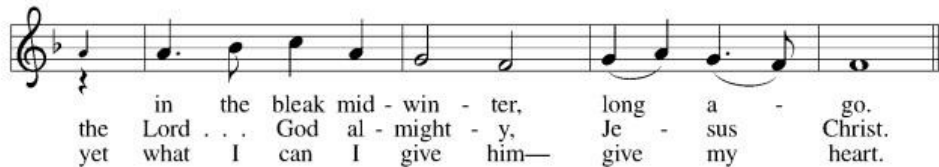
A Blue Christmas Service of Hope and Healing

Dec. 21, 2025. 3:00pm Community of Christ Lutheran Church

Welcome and Announcements

+ Gathering Hymn

In the Bleak Midwinter



Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894
Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

+ Apostolic Greeting

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

+ Distribution of Communion

All are invited to come through the center aisle and form a semi-circle around the Table, first to receive the bread, and then an assistant will have a tray of cups with wine (red) and juice (white).

+ Post-Communion Blessing

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen

+ Prayer after Communion

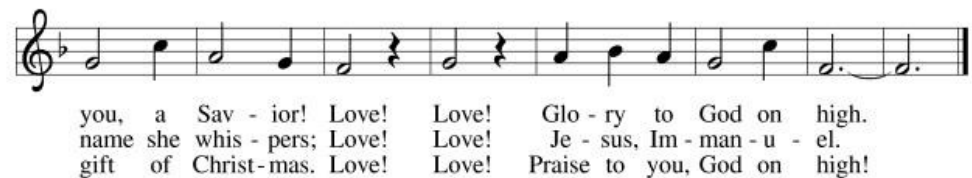
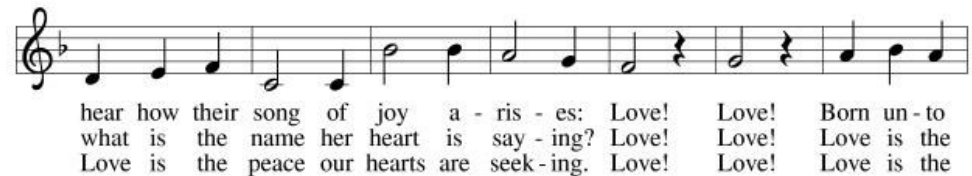
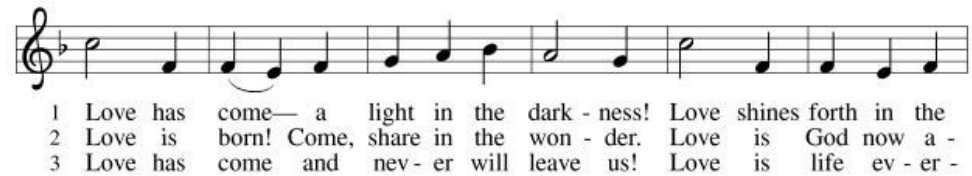
L Generous God, at this table you have come among us and fed us with your own life. Send us forth to comfort others in the name of the One for gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

+ Benediction

+ Sending Hymn

Love Has Come



Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950
Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856
Text © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP), c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

+ At this sign, all who are able are invited to stand.

*How can I even begin to understand God in our skin,
How Love wears our flesh and our bone, to show us that we're not alone?*

*It's an art to love freely, there's a cost that this art takes,
It's a world full of pain, it's a life framed with heartaches,
It's a cup laced with sorrow, but you chose to partake, but still... Oh, but still
You entered into our blame, into this darkness you came.*

*How can I try to explain the Mighty One owning our pain,
The timeless God bound up in years, who wipes away and shares our tears?*

*When it feels like there's no one who shares this depression,
When I'm dying for answers to my long list of questions,
There's a light from a manger that draws my confession: "But still, Oh, but still
You've been here shining tonight, into this darkness your light."*

You've been here shining tonight, into this darkness your light.

+ Prayers of the People

*For each portion of the prayer, the leader ends with the words,
"Immanuel, God-With-Us, in your mercy," and the congregation
is invited to respond with the words, "lighten our darkness."*

+ Sharing the Peace

All are invited to share a sign of Christ's peace with one another.

+The Great Thanksgiving

P The Lord be with you.	C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.	C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.	C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

+ Eucharistic Prayer and Words of Institution

+ The Lord's Prayer

**C Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

+ Litany of Lament *(taken from Psalms 13, 55, 56, 80, and 85)*

L How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

**C How long will you hide your face from me? How long
must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart
all day long?**

L Consider and answer me, O Lord my God!

C Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death.

L Give ear to my prayer, O God; do not hide yourself from my
supplication.

**C My heart is in anguish within me, the terrors of death up-
on me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror
overwhelms me.**

L You have kept count of my tossings;

C put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your record?

L You have fed us with the bread of tears,

C and given us tears to drink in full measure.

L Restore us, O God of hosts;

C let your face shine, that we may be saved.

L Will you not revive us again,

C so that your people may rejoice in you?

L Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,

C and grant us your salvation.

Prayer of Dedication

L O God, our Source of light in the face of darkness, you who share
our sorrows and keep track of our tears... through Christ Jesus, our
Lord, who came into our midst and enlightens our darkness.

C Amen

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.*

*For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in
blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.*

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
 authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
 Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace
 for the throne of David and his kingdom.
 He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness
 from this time onwards and for evermore.
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

+ Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room. Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
 and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Reflection

Pastor Warren Clifton

+ Hymn of the Day

Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, sts. 1–2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845–1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, st. 4
 Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1599

+ Ornaments

All are invited to come forward and to take two ornaments from the basket—one for you to keep, and one for you to give to someone else who could also use a reminder of God's promised peace in the times it feels like we are weary like the abiding shepherds.

Special Music (as people come forward): "Into This Darkness"

It was cold on that night, it was dark at the manger
 Just a flickering light in a barn full of strangers
 Left the safety of heaven for a world full of danger, but still... Oh, but still,
 Into this mess here of mine, into this darkness you shine.

Almost nobody knew what the world was receiving,
 Never noticed the gift, lost inside of our grieving,
 A message that sounded to good to believe in, but still... Oh, but still,
 While we were all helplessly numb, into this darkness you've come.

(continues on next page)