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COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Making Jesus Known

December 2026

Worship Hours
Sunday,
8 a.m. & 10 a.m.

Sunday Morning Bible Study
9:15 a.m.

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

Worship & Music
December 2,
6:00 p.m.

Social Action
December 3,
10:00 a.m.

Annual Council Meeting December 6, 11:15 a.m.

Visitation Ministry
December 7,
10:30 a.m.

Christian Ed.
December 7,
6:30 p.m.

Concert Committee
December 8,
6:00 p.m.

Worship Services
Available at
www.commofchrist.org

Church Office Closed December 24, 25, and January 1

Christmas Eve Services 4, 7, & 11



Advent and Christmas (December) 2026—God Is Like Jesus

What is *God* like?

There are surely a million ways you could answer that question. The Bible has all sorts of ways of describing God, from titles like "Creator" and "King of the Universe" to imagery like "Refuge and Shelter," or "Good Shepherd." The biblical authors compare God to being as big and powerful as a sweeping storm or whirlwind tearing across the landscape, or as calming and quiet as a mother embracing her children and lulling them to sleep peacefully. Of course, God is bigger than any one image, and certainly bigger than any of our minds to fully comprehend. God is Mystery with a capital M, for sure.

And yet… the audacious claim of the gospel is that God chooses to be knowable… relatable… and tangible… *in Jesus*. The Gospel-writers all have their own ways of saying it, but the common message is clear: Jesus isn't just an interesting spiritual teacher, a giver of life-lessons, a prophet, or a pundit. Jesus is what God looks like in a human life. Jesus is the fullness of the divine within a human being at the same time. Jesus is, as the Creed would later put it, "God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God." In other words, *what Jesus is like, God is like.*

Wow. Let that sink in.

What Jesus is like, God is like.

Where Jesus is, God is. What Jesus does, God does. How Jesus loves is the way God loves.

In other words, even though no image, title, metaphor, or name can encompass the fullness of God, we truly believe that God is… *like Jesus.*

This Advent and Christmas, that's the central idea we'll be exploring together. In our worship life, from Sunday mornings to Advent midweek Wednesdays, from daily prayer and devotions to artwork for the season, from our shared life in community to our individual daily lives, we'll be delving deeper into the Gospel's Good News that *God is like Jesus*.

That means God chooses to be fragile like an infant, helpless as the newborn child of two out-of-towners who borrow a food trough in Bethlehem to lay their baby in.

It means God chooses to share human things like hunger, weariness, love, heartbreak, loneliness, pain, and weakness.

It means God is not ashamed of being associated with lowly people, humble things, or a sinful and messy world.

And it means that God was willing to be bound permanently to our existence, our bodies, and our life—in order to redeem humanity and restore the world.

From Pastor Steve Continued.....

All of that is more than our minds can comprehend—and yet, I'm sure it is good news. So, all throughout this season, join us to reflect in awe-filled joy at the amazing claim that God is like Jesus, and the One for whom we wait at the manger is the very same One who created the world and fills the whole universe. In worship, in study, in serving, in giving, in singing carols and shining our lights, we'll celebrate the Good News that God has come to be with us in Jesus, once and for all. See you along the way this Advent.

Sharing the journey with you gratefully as God continues to make all of us *like Jesus*,
Pastor Steve

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD



This Advent on Crazy Faith Talk Podcast: Titles for Jesus

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 also now on **Spotify** as well as **iTunes**! 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 three other colleagues in ministry: Sarah Aasheim, an ELCA pastor serving in eastern Pennsylvania, Methodist colleague Erica Wellner, who is serving in central Pennsylvania, and former intern and soon-to-be pastor Natalie Downs. 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 to listen and reflect on wherever you go—in the car, from your smart speaker, or on your phone or tablet.

This Advent, our conversations will take us to the familiar words of the prophet Isaiah, who spoke of a promised king using titles like "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace." (You might have just heard those phrases in your mind set to the tune of Handel's *Messiah*, because they are pretty famous from that piece of music!) But what do these titles tell us about Jesus, whom we Christians confess to be the long-awaited Messiah for whom God's people were waiting? And what would these words have meant initially for the prophet Isaiah, who was speaking to his own time and situation in ancient Judah? How do we hold those two strands of thought together? And what does it mean for us to confess Jesus as "Messiah" and "Christ" today? We invite you to come along this Advent to explore all of these questions and these ancient words from the prophet Isaiah as a way of preparing our hearts and lives for the coming of Christ. New episodes are released every Tuesday afternoon, so check out Crazy Faith Talk for new conversations every week! There's something for everyone, so listen in and find episodes with our weekly posts on our church Facebook page or Twitter/X (@BeingGraced), by searching for "Crazy Faith Talk" on Spotify, or on your smart speaker!

December Adult Forum Series—Advent: The Musical!

The Gospel writers want us to know that in Jesus, God has done something amazing and world-changing. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all have their own ways of trying to express the amazing news that the long-awaited Messiah, the incarnate Word of God, and the Savior of the World has come to us in Jesus. In Luke's Gospel in particular, though, people seem to break out into song left and right in the lead-up to the birth of Jesus and immediately afterward. From the urgent reversals of Mary's "Magnificat" to Zechariah prophesying about his own son, John (the Baptizer) and Jesus who would come after John, to the song of

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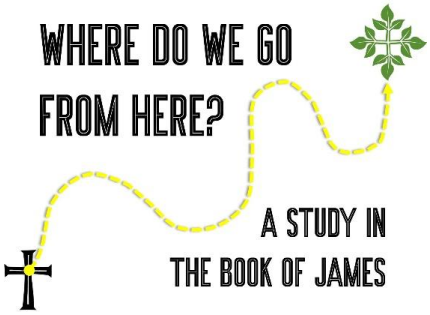
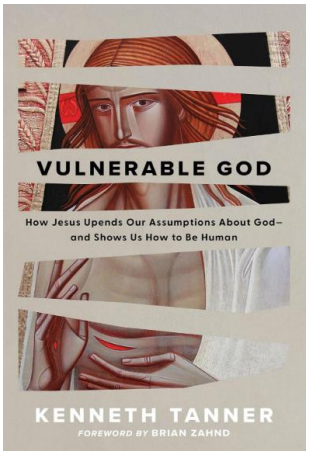
the angels over the shepherds' fields to the praise of Simeon at seeing the Christ child in the Temple, Luke's Gospel helps us to understand the meaning of Jesus' coming by giving us songs and poetry! So, this Advent in our Sunday Adult Forum, we'll invite you to join us for a closer look at each of these songs from the opening chapters of Luke. Together we'll explore what they mean, how they understand Jesus, and why they matter to us even two thousand years later. Join us on Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and Dec. 13 in the 9:00 a.m. hour for "Advent: The Musical" in our Adult Forum!

Thursday Bible Study Explores the Book of James Continues in December



If our faith is just a matter of reciting religious-sounding words, there's a pretty decent chance we are play-acting rather than following Jesus. But on the other hand, if our trust in God is evident in our actions, words, and priorities, it's a sign that our faith is alive and kicking. And because of who our God is, that kind of living, thriving faith will always be expressed in love and care for neighbors around us—because that's who God is. That's the kind of faith that the New Testament book of James is interested in kindling within us: something living, daring, thriving, and visible in our daily lives and actions. Curiously enough, though, our older brother in the faith, Martin Luther, was really nervous about this book because he was really worried we would hear James' statement that "faith without works is dead," like he was saying we have to earn God's love through our good deeds. So how do we read this New Testament book on its own terms, remembering the good news that we are justified by grace through faith while also letting James call us out of just "playing church" by mouthing the right words without letting our faith shape our actions? That's what we'll be looking at in our next Thursday Bible Study, continuing this December on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m., as we explore the letter of James. If you're interested, join us on Thursday afternoons in the Bible Study/Council room, and we'll find our faith stretched and our discipleship deepened together!



Vulnerable God: An Invitation to a Four-Part Book Discussion Starting this December

In the coming church year (starting with Advent in December 2026), we'll be invited especially to focus on how Jesus shows us simultaneously both what *God* is like and what it truly means to be *human*. And as one way for us to more deeply engage those BIG IDEAS, Pastor Steve is inviting anyone who is interested to a four-part discussion group that will read a recent book exploring these themes, spread out over the upcoming seasons of the church's liturgical year. Kenneth Tanner's book, *Vulnerable God: How Jesus Upends Our Assumptions About God—And Shows Us How To Be Human*, is written to explore the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus in ways that echo the flow of our church's year. So, we'll invite anyone interested to gather four times in the coming months, beginning in early December 2026 and then throughout the winter and spring of 2027, for discussion gatherings about each section of the book, from Advent and Christmas to Epiphany, and then to Lent and Easter.

Our first round of discussion and reflection will be held on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. here at Community of Christ. We'll share information about future dates and gatherings in the coming weeks, but we'd welcome you to join us for this first event on Dec. 5. For those who ordered a copy of the book in November, your copies are available for pickup, or if you want to get the book on your own and just join us for conversation, we'll welcome you to join us still! See you on December 5 for Part One of *Vulnerable God*!

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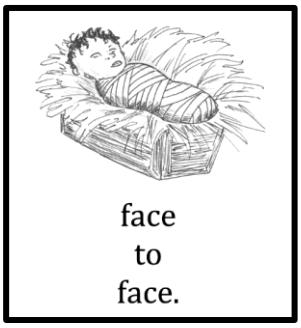

"Face to Face" Daily Prayers for Advent

For the past several years in Advent, we have offered an anthology of daily Scripture readings and original prayers for the season that dovetailed with daily Scripture readings. In 2023, that collection was called "Astonish Us Again," 2024's was "On the Edge of Hope," and last year we offered "Prayers for the Peaceable Kingdom." Because these have been well-received, this year, we are pleased to offer a new compilation that will connect with our new theme for the year that begins this Advent (November 29). *Face to Face* is a new collection of original prayers and Scripture readings for each day in Advent, drawing especially on readings from the Bible that speak to the amazing news that in Christ, God came to share humanity with us… as one of us, and that it is God's presence in such a fragile, fleshly life that we most deeply need. This collection is available to you this year either as a printed booklet (in the Gathering Space), as a PDF compilation you can read on your phone, computer, or tablet, or as daily posts on our church Facebook page. These are free, original, and can be shared as far and wide as you would like. Check them out this Advent, as together we turn our hearts to the One who came to meet us in Christ face to face!



Introducing "…Like Jesus," Our Theme for Discipleship in 2027!



Since 2024, we've begun each new church year with a guiding theme to focus our worship and devotional life, shaping everything from artwork and music in worship to themes in preaching and Pastor Steve's daily devotions, to projects and activities throughout the year. The idea, we hope, is to help lift up some of the BIG IDEAS that are already there in our weekly Scripture readings and in the rhythms of the church year, as we trace the story of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection each year, and as we hear different voices from the Scriptures fleshing out what it means to follow Jesus. In this new church year, beginning with Advent 2026 and then throughout 2027, our Discipleship Focus and Theme is "…Like Jesus." And it's rooted in two vital ideas that are at the core of the Christian faith:

1. *God is like Jesus. 2. God is making us to be like Jesus*.

Both of those are essential claims of the gospel, and both of them really are good news! To say that God is like Jesus means that Jesus really does show us what God's heart is like—in his words and actions, his love and his serving, his willingness to lay down his life, and his joyful resurrection. Where Jesus is… *God* is. And then secondly, to say that God is making us to be like Jesus means that as we continue to grow in faith and follow Jesus, God is making us to be more and more Christ-like—so that others can see a glimpse of God's character in us, in the ways we speak, act, serve, love, and spend our time. So, over the course of this new church year, we'll explore how both of those key ideas make a difference in our daily lives and witness.

You'll see that focus on Sunday mornings, in Pastor Steve's daily devotions online (at beinggraced.blogspot.com), in visual arts throughout the year, and in other opportunities to learn and grow together. This coming year, our Sunday Scripture readings from the Revised Common Lectionary will be primarily rooted in the Gospels of Mark and John, which hold together these two BIG ideas—that Jesus is the very fullness of God, revealing what God's heart is like, AND that Jesus is completely human and reveals what it truly means to be human, too. We hope this time together in the Word will help deepen our connections to one another as fellow disciples and strengthen our relationships with God through this focus.

To get things started, we have a couple of free gifts for anyone who wants one. You can get one of two 3-inch sticker designs in the Gathering Space. One reads simply, "God is like Jesus," and the other reminds us to *welcome, walk, love, surrender*, and *rise.. like Jesus*. They're free and just a way of remembering our focus for this year ahead together. Stay tuned for more ways to be a part of this "Like Jesus" year of discipleship at Community of Christ!

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Advent Midweek Services with Holden Evening Prayer… And Desserts!

We call Jesus the "Prince of Peace," and we sing that on the night of his birth, "all is calm, all is bright." But quite often our lives are especially hectic and stressful in the weeks before Christmas, aren't they? From gift-buying and cookie baking to parties and concerts, from decorating our houses and family gatherings, we can feel flustered and frazzled during the "most wonderful time of the year" rather than at peace. So, we want to invite you to a weekly chance to hit the pause button on the craziness and recenter on the Good News of God's coming to us in Christ, with our three Advent midweek services using Holden Evening Prayer. *On Dec. 2, 9, and 16 (each is a Wednesday) at 7:00 p.m., join us for a beautiful and contemplative sung setting of Evening Prayer and reflections on the Word that will ground us in our hope for Jesus*' coming. (Choir will rehearse following these services starting at 7:45 p.m. on these evenings.) If you've never experienced this setting for evening worship, you'll definitely want to try it, and this is a fantastic event to invite friends and neighbors to, as well!

And as a special addition to this year's midweek Advent services, our youth and their families are helping to host an offering of desserts both before and after these Wednesday services in the Gathering Space, and we would welcome your free-will donations for these cookies and other treats as part of our fundraising for the 2027 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis! Join us this Advent!

Blue Christmas Service Offers Comfort and Hope—Dec. 20 at 3:00 p.m.

The holidays can be a difficult time for people, especially if they're dealing with grief and loss. Whether still working through a recent death, feeling renewed sadness over a long-time loss, or just struggling while others seem full of Christmas-time cheer, this can be a heavy season of the year. So, we'll continue a tradition we've done for the last several years here at Community of Christ by hosting a Blue Christmas service—a time of worship that offers comfort for those who need it particularly at this time of year, and that connects our faith in God-with-Us who came among us in Bethlehem with our lived experience of loss and grief. This year's service will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 20, here at Community of Christ. As always, it is open to any and all who would find it helpful. You are welcome to invite friends, relatives, neighbors, or community members who might need a moment this season for grief to be named and comfort to be given, together with folks from around our community.

Faith Lab: God Rescues Us!

Last month at Faith Lab, we explored the story of Joseph and learned that God can bring good even out of difficult situations. During our time together, we made our very own colorful robes out of paper bags, just like Joseph's colorful coat!

This month, we'll continue exploring God's story as we hear about Moses and how God rescued Moses and the Israelites from Egypt. Together, we'll discover that just as God rescued Moses and His people, God rescues us, too!

All children and young adults are invited to join us on Saturday, December 12, from 5:00–6:30 p.m. for an evening of food, faith, and fellowship.

We'll share a meal together, and while the kids enjoy songs, activities, and a craft, adults will have an opportunity to connect with one another and reflect on Scripture. Faith Lab is a chance for families to grow in faith, build relationships, and discover God's love together.

Please email the church office to RSVP or for more information.

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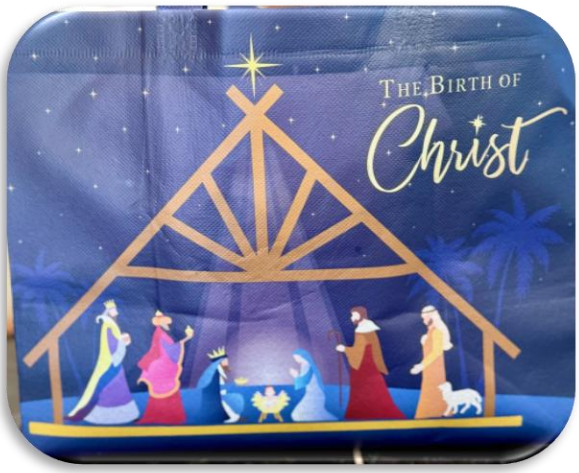


Family Activity Bags with Faith Connections from Advent through Epiphany!

In 2025, we offered activity bags for families to take home with ideas, projects, and faith practices for the season of Advent, and they were a hit! So, this year, starting on the First Sunday in Advent, Nov. 29, we have created new kits with great ideas for marking the days of hopeful expectation in Advent, through Christmas, and even into Epiphany. Get yours in the Gathering Space starting Nov. 29, and find fun, easy, and creative ways to celebrate Advent and the coming of Christ at Christmas as a family this year!



Children's Christmas Play Sunday, December 20!

We are excited to invite the children and grandchildren of our congregation to participate in this year's Christmas Play during the 10:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 20! Practices will take place on December 6, 12 or 13, 19, and 20. Children are welcome to participate in either speaking or non-speaking roles. Please call or email Michelle by Thanksgiving if your child or grandchild would like to participate and their preferred role. We look forward to sharing the joy of Christmas!

Sunday School: The Jesus Family Tree

As we enter the season of Advent, our children will begin a new Wonder Ink series called *The Jesus Family Tree*. Throughout this five-week series, we'll explore the stories of the people who were part of Jesus' family line, from God's promise to Abraham to the birth of Jesus. Along the way, we'll meet people like Ruth, David, Joseph, and others who trusted God's promises and played a part in God's unfolding story.

As we get ready for Christmas, we'll discover how God worked through generations of people to bring Jesus into the world and how God's promises are worth waiting for. Just as God's people waited with hope and anticipation for the promised Savior, we celebrate the coming of Jesus and look forward to all that God continues to do in our lives. We invite all children to join us Sunday mornings at **9:00 a.m. in the library** as we learn, explore, and grow together. We look forward to seeing you!

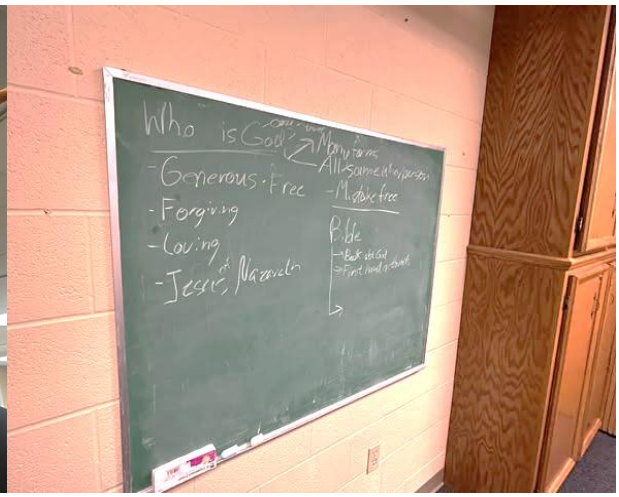
This Month's Prayer: God of the sea and skies, we give You thanks for all the ways You are present with us. Help our youth and their leaders to trust in Your power and find rest in Your presence. Give them all they need in the months ahead and throughout their time in Minneapolis. Help them to care for one another, for themselves, and for all of Your creation. Remind them that even in the midst of life's storms, You are with them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Kids, Youth, and Teens!

Great class in Confirmation as we met up with our neighboring congregation St Paul in Haskins. We talked about how we would explain what God is like to a visiting space alien (Gleepglorp from the Planet Meepmorp) and how we would introduce Jesus to a friend.







Imagine More: Journey to the Gathering

Priority registration is officially closed, and we have a total of 15 youth and adult leaders from CoC and Providence preparing to travel to Minneapolis this coming summer to *Imagine More*! Our group recently gathered for our first preparation meeting, where we began getting to know one another and exploring the theme: *Imagine More Love*.

As part of our time together, each participant brought an item that represents something about themselves. The items ranged from a poem to a pair of weightlifting straps, and together they became the beginning of an altar that we will continue to build throughout our preparation journey.

We also heard the story from Mark's Gospel of Jesus and His disciples crossing the Sea of Galilee. We reflected on how Jesus experienced the same human needs that we do, including the need for rest and care, while also recognizing His power as the Son of God who can calm even the fiercest storms. We closed our time by blessing one another with the words, "God is with you in the storm," and adding a bowl of water to our altar as a reminder.



An Invitation to the Congregation

We invite you to stop by and spend some time with the altar as it continues to grow over the coming months. Each item tells a little piece of our group's story, and we look forward to sharing more of that journey with you!

As we prepare for the Gathering, we hope you'll also join us in praying for our youth and adult leaders. Over the coming months, we'll share more about the Gathering's themes, what our youth are learning and anticipating, and ways the congregation can be part of this journey.

Worship Volunteer Schedule

December 2026

Week	Dec 6	Dec13	Dec 20	Dec 27
Acolyte/Crucifer 8:00	Josef Perkins Teresa Loga	Laurie Mauro Teresa Loga	Teresa Loga	Teresa Loga
Acolyte/Crucifer 10:00	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	Kari Swagler	**Volunteer Needed**
Bulletin 8:00	Connie Hudson	R and L Metcalf	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Bulletin 10:00	**Volunteer Needed**	Heather Boytim	Kari Swagler	**Volunteer Needed**
Camera	Neil Raymond	Sarah Rockwell	Kevin Swagler	Rick Yokum
Communion Prep/Clean 8:00	Josef Perkins	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Communion Prep/Clean 10:00	Susan Raymond	**Volunteer Needed**	Kari Swagler	**Volunteer Needed**
Greeter West 8:00	Rick Metcalf	R & M Pratt	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Greeter East 8:00	Linda Metcalf	R and M Pratt	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Greeter East 10:00	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	Jill Kohntopp	N and C Rilling
Greeter West 10:00	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	Rob Kohntopp	N&C Rilling
Lector 8:00	Marita Perkins	Cheryl Fischer	Teresa Loga	**Volunteer Needed**
Lector 10:00	Greg Aubell	Volunteer Needed	Cheryl Fischer	**Volunteer Needed**
Worship Asst 8:00	Josef Perkins	Laurie Mauro	Teresa Loga	**Volunteer Needed**
Worship Asst 10:00	Dean Nofzinger	**Volunteer Needed**	Don Schroeder	Kara Yokum
Verger 8:00	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Verger 10:00	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**

****Volunteer list as of 11/18/2026. If you need to cancel your scheduled date, please arrange for another volunteer to take your place and fill your time slot. 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!

Blessings, Prayers & More

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:

JEFF BUCHER, CAROL BORKOWSKI, DONNA COCHRAN, VIRGINIA DILLON, TODD DUTCHED, MICHAEL ELLERBROCK, JIM & SUE ENK, PAULA GRUHLER, PASTOR RON HEINZ, RON HETHERWICK, LUKE HOLTZ, ART INGMIRE, MATT JURRUS, GINNY KRUEGER, PAUL LADD, CHRISTAL & CHAD PRITCHARD, EVELYN REILLY, DICK RISON, PHYLLIS STURGEON, SARAH S., MOLLY WACHTMANN, KATHRYN WHITACRE

MILITARY: JAY RASMUSSON, NOAH PITZEN, AUSTIN CUNNINGHAM, JAKE COPE, LANDON CHRISTY, DREW TROTTER, RYAN DUNN, AMANDA ROTH, STACIE PHILLIPS, DAN MEYER

Prayers of the Church

Prayer Requests

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!





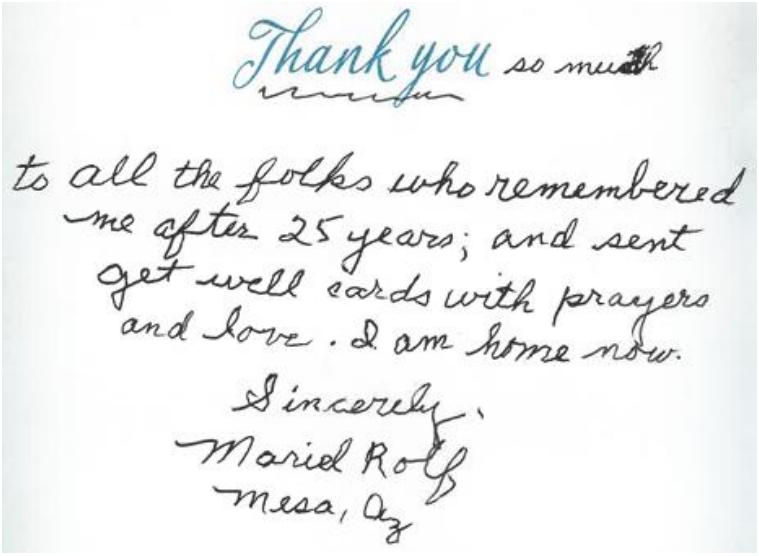
Prayer Shawls

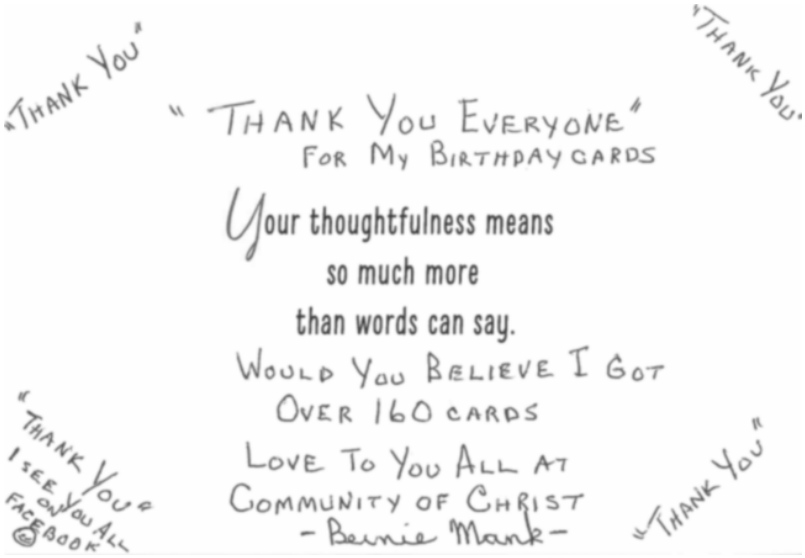
If you are interested in making a prayer shawl or know of someone who would be blessed by receiving one, please contact Irene Rang at 269-832-7714



Children's Sermon

Children of all ages, please join Pastor Steve for a Children's Sermon at the 9:00 a.m. service. 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!!!!





CoC Ministry Dates to Remember



Next Meeting Date
December 2 @ 6:00 p.m.

SOCIAL ACTION MINISTRY

Next Meeting Date
December 3 @ 10:00 a.m.

VISITATION MINISTRY

Next Meeting Date
December 7 @ 10:30 a.m.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Next Meeting Date
December 7 @ 6:30 p.m.



Next Meeting Date
December 8 @ 6:00 p.m.



****Deadline Announcement****

****Deadline for the January Newsletter****

Looking ahead, due to the busyness of the holiday season and upcoming vacations, the **firm deadline** for the next newsletters will be **January 2027 newsletter:** Tuesday, **December 15**

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Annual Congregational Meeting—December 6 at 11:15 a.m.

Coming up in December will be Community of Christ's annual congregational meeting, following the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, December 6, at about 11:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall. We would invite you to mark your calendars now and plan to join us for this important yearly time to review the year behind us, to give thanks for God's presence among us now, and to look ahead to the year in front of us. We'll consider reports from the committees of our congregation, elect new council members for terms starting in the new year, consider a recommendation to increase the amount the council can authorize to spend beyond budget categories to respond to emergent situations in a timely way, and address any other congregational business, so this is an important meeting to attend!

Christmas Eve Services



Community of Christ will host three worship services on Christmas Eve: 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., & 11:00 p.m. Each worship service will include Christmas carols, candlelight (battery-operated candles for the kids), and Holy Communion.

Invite a friend to worship with you this season!



Announcements



Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace…" — Luke 2:14

FROM ADVENT WAITING TO CHRISTMAS JOY!

December invites us on a beautiful journey. During Advent, we light candles, pray, listen, and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. As Christmas draws near, our quiet expectation blossoms into joyful praise: Jesus is born! The angels' song of peace and goodwill reminds us that God's love has come close to us in the gift of the Savior.



There is always room for you in our music ministry. If you enjoy singing, ringing bells, playing an instrument, or sharing music as a soloist, please consider joining us.

You may sign up on the music ministry sheets at the kiosk, talk with me, or email me at music@commofchrist.org.

With gratitude for making music together, Mariana



Our Rehearsal Schedule:

Chancel Choir During Advent: Wednesdays at 7:45 p.m.
Bell Choir: Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
Children's Music Time: At the beginning of Sunday School
Vocal Ensemble: 1st Sunday of each month immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service
Chamber Ensemble: TBD



Announcements



Save the Date!

Sunday, December 13, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Hope United Methodist Church in Whitehouse invites everyone to a free community Christmas Concert featuring choir, handbells, instrumentalists, and vocal music. Come celebrate the joy of the Christmas season!

Concert Committee Hosts Organ Concert on Jan. 10, 2027, at 3:00 p.m. Celebrate the Epiphany season with a selection of pieces on the organ from five different organists from Northwestern Ohio, with a free-will offering to benefit ministries beyond our doors in our wider community, here at Community of Christ on the afternoon of Sunday, January 10, 2027. This concert will feature selections from five area organists from around Northwestern Ohio, including Dennis Blubaugh, Kate Philabaum, Pam Stover, David Saunders, and our own Mariana Steffan. Join us for an enjoyable afternoon of music after all the bustle and busy-ness of Christmas has quieted down and help support ministries beyond our doors!

May the hope of Advent, the peace of Christ, and the joy of Christmas fill your homes and hearts. May our songs of praise carry the good news of Jesus' birth into the new year.

Adopt a Resident at the Lutheran Home of Mercy!



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

Important Details: Gift Submission Deadline: Sunday, December 13th

Please wrap each gift and place it under the tree in the sanctuary. After dropping off your gift(s), please sign them back in with the date on the sheet on the rolling board. This helps us track and confirm that all resident gifts are accounted for. Thank you for your generosity!



Freezer Meals!

Our new freezer is full—with homemade casseroles, sandwiches, and soup. They're waiting for you to share with friends, co-workers, neighbors, or relatives---anyone who will appreciate a hot meal but, because of life's circumstances, doesn't have the time or energy to prepare it.

Just select your items from the freezer in the kitchen and sign the sheet on the freezer door to help us with inventory.

And many, many thanks to those who generously provide the ingredients, finances, and cooking help to support this ongoing ministry.

Announcements



Book Club News

Recruiting new members! We'd love to have some of the men participate. Fred Shuman joined us in June, and he was a delightful addition to the group.

Save the upcoming dates for the Book Club! This way, you will have a reminder if something comes up and you need to make other plans.

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month, from 1:00-2:15ish.

- **December 15, January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15**

Questions? E-mail or text me! Kathryn Whitacre 567-395-9444; kathrynwhitacre13@gmail.com



Announcements



Covenant Charter Signing this Advent



Every year at this time, members of Community of Christ are invited to reaffirm their commitment to the life of the congregation by signing the covenant charter in the back of our worship space. Beginning on November 29 and running through December 20, we would ask you to add your name to the charter for the year, continuing the practice that began at the founding of Community of Christ *(you can see the Charter in the Gathering Space on the wall, or during these weeks, it will be on an easel in the back of the sanctuary).* Think of it as a way of continuing to say "Yes" to being a part of God's work in this place, to growing in faith among this congregation, and to loving and serving together with these sisters and brothers in Christ. There's a place for your name this Advent on the Covenant Charter, just as there's a place for you here!

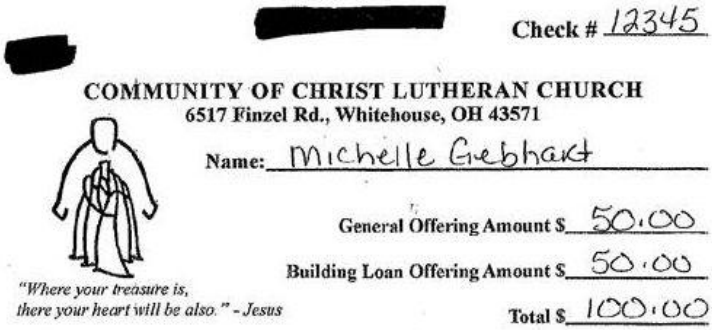


Altar Flower dedications for 2027 will soon be available on the bulletin board in the church hallway. If you would like to honor or remember a loved one, please sign up today! Simply fill out a date tag and envelope, include your check or cash along with the tag, and place it in the offering plate.

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

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







2027 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Our 2027 offering envelopes will be arriving soon! These envelopes cover weekly offerings and special services such as Lenten Wednesdays, Holy Week, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent, and more. If you have any questions about completing your weekly offering, please don't hesitate to contact the church office.

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

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

Announcements



"…Like Jesus" Tote Bags to Support Salem Available this December through Social Action!

You might have already read about our new theme for 2027, "…Like Jesus," which will be a big part of our discipleship and worship focus in the new year. Maybe you've already spotted one of our new stickers or put one on your travel mug. But we have another way of sharing the reminder to *welcome, walk, love, surrender and love… like Jesus*, available this December, and it's also a great way to support our mission partners at Salem Lutheran Church in the Old North End/Vistula neighborhood of Toledo. These 15"x 16.25" tote bags feature a version of one of our new logo designs for the year ahead (in stylish Advent royal blue, or AW blue, if you prefer to think of it that way!), and they are great either for reusable shopping bags when you are going to the grocery store or doing some gift-buying this season—OR they would be great as gift bags to put your gifts for others in, and they will certainly last longer than a one-time-use paper gift bag from the wrapping paper aisle! We are inviting your donations of $5.00 each per tote bag, and Social Action will direct all these proceeds to the food and community outreach ministries and building maintenance needs at Salem, so that our partners in the North End can keep feeding their neighbors and offering genuine community. Get your bags in the Gathering Space today while we have them!



Christmas Caroling

Join us for an evening of **Christmas caroling on Friday, December 11!** We'll gather together to share some holiday cheer through song, with stops to be determined closer to the event.

After caroling, we'll head to the **Swagler's home** for pizza, fellowship, and a chance to enjoy the evening together.

Come share your voice, your Christmas spirit, and the joy of the season!



Thank you to those who have ordered your Christmas Poinsettias!

They will be available *for pickup after the 11:00 p.m.* Christmas Eve service.

Merry Christmas and Blessings to you all!

Loving Our Neighbors!

Thanks to all who donated items for our last collection for Bridge of Hope to give to migrant workers for the season, and thanks to our members who made the trip to Fremont to bring these items to be given away! Way to make Jesus known!





Our Rooted youth group built and painted bluebird boxes to use at home as a shelter for birds in their own yards, and a couple to replace broken ones at the church in the back churchyard! Many thanks to all who helped make this project possible!



Many thanks to all who donated food items for the Thanksgiving collection through the Anthony Wayne Community Food Ministry! All this food was collected and will be given out as part of their Thanksgiving distribution! Thanks for your generosity!

Thanks to our intrepid Outreach crew for giving out candy at the Trunk or Treat in Whitehouse!



Thanks to our volunteer cooks in the kitchen making freezer meals and casseroles for those who will need them in the coming weeks after being home from the hospital or rehab, or just who need a break from cooking. We appreciate your help, time, and culinary skill!





Friends, Faith, & Fellowship!

We had a great class in confirmation, the world's first-ever game of "Is This Most Certainly True?" and the all-important monkey-hold versus cat-hold Christianity conversation about the Holy Spirit! Thanks to all who are a part of our Confirmation program!







Thanks to all who came out to this month's FaithLab night, where we learned about Joseph and his many-colored coat, how God turned bad into good, and for the grown-ups, how God is more interested that we treat each other decently and speak up for those who are most on the margins than putting on a religious show. It was a great gathering, and we are thankful to all who came out!







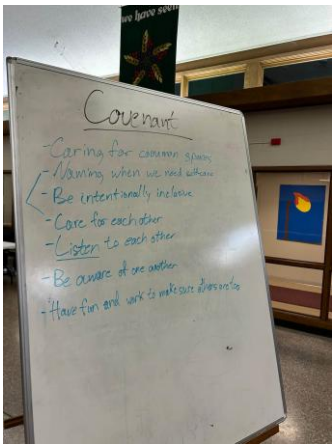


Friends, Faith, & Fellowship!

Our first pre-gathering meeting for our young people attending the 2027 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis got off to a great start. We are really excited for those who are planning on joining us, and really appreciative of the support of our congregations!

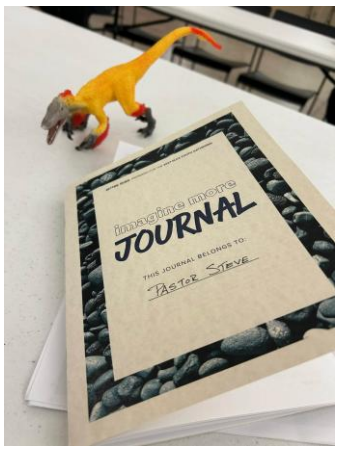












"Views in the Prairie Meadow"









STEWARDSHIP

A Disciple's Way of Life

TIME
TALENT
TREASURE
Growing In Faith Together



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 the 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 money 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 the 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.

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!

Community of Christ Lutheran Church





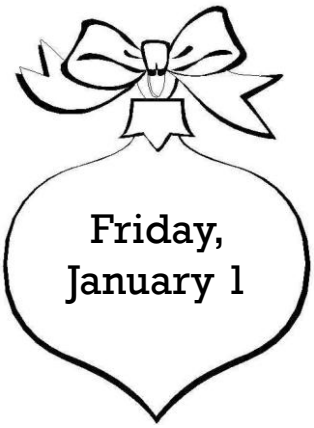


Kristi Sutter	12/03	April Smucker	12/13
Ned Challen	12/03	Jeffrey Bucher	12/13
Tina Baden	12/04	Eryn Ackerman	12/14
Jennifer Braun	12/06	Debbie Carman	12/15
Lydia Swartz	12/06	Teresa Loga	12/16
Alexander Ackerman	12/07	Cinda Pontsler	12/18
Curtis Rhoten	12/07	Stephen Meyers	12/21
Kenneth Bucher	12/07	Cindy Smigelski	12/22
Bruce Lammon	12/08	Dan Sigg	12/23
Eric Leonard	12/08	Rory Hartbarger	12/24
Paul Ayres Jr.	12/08	Eric Rasmusson	12/30
Stephen Bond	12/08	Jay Rasmusson	12/31
Victoria Leonard	12/09	Marita Perkins	12/31
Jill Kohntopp	12/11	Sue Brown	12/31

Church Office Closed







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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