

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Making connections and offering opportunities for faith, love, and service"

Worship 10 am

Education Hour – 11am

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP: PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, AND SERVICE

Pastor

Rev. Daven Oskvig

Office Administrator

Kyanah Nichols

Minister of Music

TBD

Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin

Custodian

Dan Waggoner

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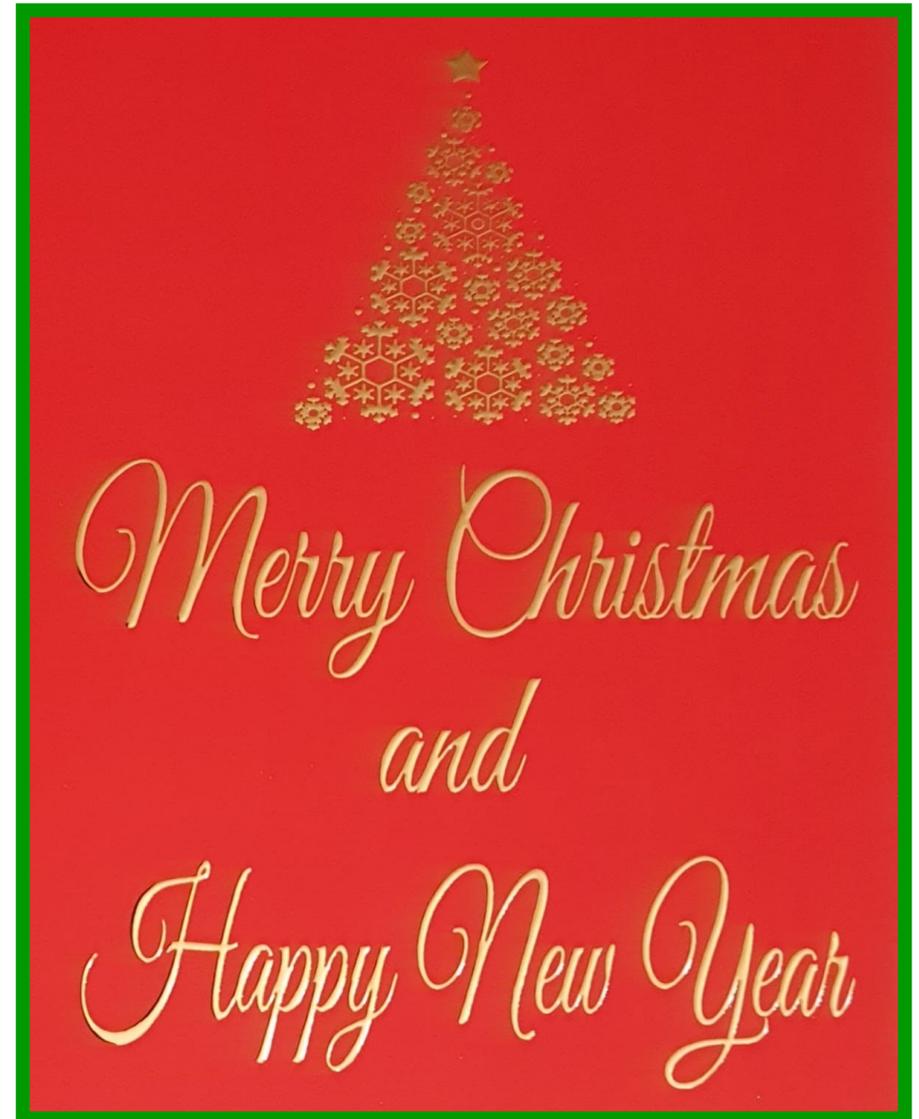
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30am-1:30pm

Office closed **December 25, 26 January 1, 19**



The Caller



December 2025/January 2026





NEW TIME

As we enter the season of Advent, so we begin a 'new' worship year with the message of preparation. Then, with the birth of Christ, comes another new beginning. This experience continues with the visitation and revelation of the Magi on Epiphany, the secular celebration of New Year's Eve / Day, and then once more with the Baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. Each one of these independently and all of them collectively provide us moments to get serious about our hopes and ambitions. They call us to make resolutions.

We are fine making these when it comes to physical, dietary, and even intellectual goals (maintaining them is a whole other story ...). When it comes to our faith journey and application of our faith to daily living, however, we don't even get close to making them let alone maintaining them. Instead, at best they match our annual parade of decorations. We get them out, dust them off, enjoy the mystery they lend to life, and then pack them away for another year. We fail to carry anything forward leaving the convictions and resolutions behind and blown out alongside of the candles on Christmas Eve.

This year let us use each of these different times and moments from the beginning of Advent to Christmas and beyond to recommit to and work for the change we seek for us and our world. All that we longed for, hoped for, and celebrate - the dawn of hope, peace, love and joy — let it be resolved with our lives and in our lives. Then, indeed, heaven and nature will sing joy to the world!

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Daven*

December Birthdays

- Robert Paddock 3
- Jean Ericson 5
- Diane Klenk..... 6
- Michael Keller..... 8
- Dave Wolf..... 11
- Geoff Hill..... 11
- Carol Ann Maltbie..... 12
- Betty Kreib..... 13
- Paula Kreib..... 29



January Birthdays

- * Marie Miller 1
- Barbara Critoph 2
- Tom Weaver 4
- Guy Ferrelli 5
- Dennis Scaringi 8
- Pam Lopez..... 9
- Lindsey Darling..... 10
- Bob Loesch..... 10
- Millie Staley 16
- Lucille Mooney..... 18
- Nichole Sciolino Ast 20
- Robert Lovell..... 23



December Anniversaries



- Michael & Patty Keller December 5, 1987
- Peter & Patricia Zaleski..... **65 years**..... December 23, 1960

January Anniversaries

NONE

We wish to extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Donna Loliger, stepmother of Brad Loliger, upon her death on October 19, 2025.

We wish to extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Dede Johnson upon the death of her father, Elzie Joe Foster in October 2025.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

YOU CAN HELP

REMINDER



If you use the liftavator (elevator) at the office entrance, please remember to close the gate when you leave on all levels. Leaving the gate open prevents the elevator from responding to the person needing it. Thank you!

CARDS FOR CARING



It's getting near that time of year when many happy wishes can be sent to your friends and loved ones. Whether it's holiday wishes or a special event we have what you're looking for! Stop by the display in the café and make your choices for those special messages!



Amherst Lions Club is always collecting used eyeglasses for reuse around the world—from prescription to readers. There is a collection box at the office entrance next to the Wesley room door.



Sunday Café Buffet

The Hospitality Team is reminding the congregation that the last Sunday of each month (**Café Buffet**) is dependent upon the congregation providing the goodies. The beverages will be provided and served by members of the team. Please stop by the Café after church on Sundays and enjoy the conversations and snacks.

When the opportunity arises to sign up for providing and serving the goodies the other Sundays, please do so. Thank you for helping!!!



Music and Meditation

Christ Church has offered a time during the seasons of Advent and Lent to quietly reflect and prepare. Currently this is a short, 30-minute, candlelight service on Friday evenings beginning at **5:30 pm on 12/5, 12/12, and 12/19**, following the style of Taizé (pronounced teh-zay'). A Taize service is a service of song and silence, prayer, and scripture, that hopes to lead participants to contemplate and celebrate their relationship with God and with one another. Music repeats many times. It begins with a simple melody that is sung together and can remain that way, builds as it progresses, and/or employ the addition of instruments or soloist. All fit together, even simply experiencing the music as an observer.

Texts are short and reflective. Taizé invites one to feel and interact with the readings and songs. Prayers are invitational and conversational to promote an experience of dialogue with the living present Christ.

Silence is intentional, opportunities to wonder or to consider the words or music heard. It is combined with a sense of the living presence of God in the flickering candles. All services are offered in person and will be available via Live stream through our Youtube channel and archived following the conclusion of that Live stream.



Christmas Eve



On this holiest of nights, we gather to be inspired and immersed in song and scripture. Being together to hear the Lessons and sing the Carols is a key facet of celebrating God's gift in Christ. Again, this year, we will share in this experience on **12/24, Christmas Eve, at 8 PM for a**

Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. It will be offered both in person and Live Stream through our Youtube Channel, which remains available anytime following the conclusion of the service online.

YouTube & Facebook

We encourage everyone to Like & Subscribe to our YouTube Channel and Facebook Page. This will help to alert you every time a new video or opportunity is added to that platform. Also, as we enter this season of Advent, we will have even more available in Advent Studies, devotionals, Music and Meditation, and Candlelight Christmas Eve worship. Don't miss out! Like and Subscribe today!

Calling all Carolers!



We are looking for eager voices to participate in Christmas caroling on Sunday, 12/14/25. We will travel to some of our shut-ins this holiday season who reside at various assisted living institutions in the area. Last year we had a fantastic turnout, and we are looking forward to another successful year! Please text Lianne Oskvig at (716)-903-6034 if you are interested in participating. We will leave church after Sunday services and will coordinate carpooling if needed. Don't forget that festive sweater and merry hat to make it a more jolly time!



Exploring Sunday Scriptures: posted on YouTube and an in person opportunity on Tuesdays at Noon - Join Rev. Oskvig in a conversation about the scriptures which will be explored in the sermon on the following Sunday.

Feasting on the Word with Rev. Oskvig – posted Wednesdays on our website: www.christchurchamherst.org

Second Sunday, Second Helping Offerings

December 2025: Center for Elder Law & Justice



The mission of CELJ is to improve the quality of life for older, disabled, and low-income adults through the provision of free legal services, primarily in Western New York. The goal of this not-for-profit agency is to use the legal system to ensure that our clients may live independently and with dignity. CELJ anticipates there will be a greater need for services in light of budget cuts to Medicaid and other public benefits, and your donations will allow CELJ to continue their mission for seniors in our community.

January 2026: United Methodist Committee on Relief



UMCOR is the global humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization of The United Methodist Church. It works in over 70 countries to alleviate human suffering by providing disaster response, recovery, and long-term support for issues like food security, health, and environmental sustainability. The organization responds to both natural disasters and human-caused crises, such as war and conflict. Your donations to UMCOR will help support these missions around the world.



Journey's End 40th Anniversary Celebration October 23
Pictures: group attending and Peg Bermudez giving a speech.

Congratulations to Peg who was honored at the dinner for her many years of service.



FINANCE TEAM

The 2nd Sunday offerings were as follows:

Harvest House: \$297.00

Journey's End: \$335.00

There are special offering envelopes for Thanksgiving – November 23 and for UM Student Day – November 30.

For those who have ordered Offering Envelopes for 2026, I have been assured that they have been working on them and we should have them at the latest by December 19.

Thanks to you all for your generous giving.
CUMC Finance Team

From Robert Lovell

As Chairperson of the Finance Committee I wish to provide a summary of the church's financial position as of the end of September 2025. All church financial obligations have been satisfied within 30 days and we have not had any interest or finance charges this year. Income YTD totals \$181,744. Total expenses YTD were \$195,074. The above results in a negative balance of \$13,330.

Significant efforts in controlling expenses have been made by our committee chairs and by Rev. Oskgiv. Everyone has focused on utilizing our funds to support our mission efforts in the community and beyond. Some memorial contributions have been utilized to support selected capital projects. The new electric door close to the parking lot is an example of prudent use of these memorial gifts.

The Finance Team is currently focused on building the 2026 operating budget.

A significant percentage of you, our congregation, have contributed to an individual retirement account (IRA) during your working years. Based on age you may be required by the IRS to take a required minimum contribution or RMD each year. You have an opportunity to strengthen CUMC's ministry and produce a tax saving for yourself. Pension protection legislation allows for tax-free use of RMD's for a charitable contribution to Christ United Methodist Church.

Please consider having your IRA make a contribution to your church as a means of satisfying the requirement for taking a RMD in 2025. If you need additional information regarding how you can take advantage of this tax savings mechanism, please call the church office at (716) 839-2460.

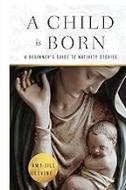
SPIRITUAL FORMATION TEAM

AOL: Adult Opportunities for Learning

Advent Study: Sundays - November 30 - December 21

A Child is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories

by Amy Jill Levine



“Discover the fascinating connections between ancient birth stories and the Nativity of Jesus in this captivating four-week Advent study. The book discusses the births of Isaac and Ishmael, Samson, and Samuel to reveal how they foreshadow and enrich the timeless Christmas story in the final chapter.”

Sundays - January 4 – Feb 15

The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times

by Jane Goodall

“Explore through intimate and thought-provoking dialogue one of the most sought after and least understood elements of human nature: hope. In *The Book of Hope*, Jane focuses on her "Four Reasons for Hope": The Amazing Human Intellect, The Resilience of Nature, The Power of Young People, and The Indomitable Human Spirit.”



Sundays following worship in the Wesley Room

Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez

Thirstaid - Thursdays, 1:00-2:30 pm on Zoom

Advent Study: Thursdays – December 4-18

A Child is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories

by Amy Jill Levine

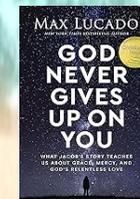


“Discover the fascinating connections between ancient birth stories and the Nativity of Jesus in this captivating Advent study. The book discusses the births of Isaac and Ishmael, Samson, and Samuel to reveal how they foreshadow and enrich the timeless Christmas story in the final chapter.”

Thursdays – January 8 – February 5

God Never Gives Up on You: What Jacob's Story Teaches Us About Grace, Mercy, and God's Relentless Love by Max Lucado

“For the strugglers among us and the fumbler within us, for those of us who are part saint, part scoundrel; we mean well, but we don't always do well. We have breakthroughs and breakdowns, often in the same hour. We need no reminder of our failures. No one is more suited to help assure you of God's grace than Jacob.”



Facilitator: Diane Klenk



United
Women
in Faith

THANK YOU!

Your 2025 pledges to United Women in Faith supported missions for women, children and youth globally, nationally and locally, including Gateway, Compass House, Jericho Road, Journey's End, the Giving Tree, and UMCOR. Your pledges also support book studies, guest speakers, special mission recognition pins, and gifts to mission in honor or in memory of those who serve or have served our community so faithfully. ***Pledges for 2026 are now being accepted.*** If you have not pledged already, please mail your pledge to Peggy Bermudez, 58 Gatewood Lane, Williamsville, NY 14221. Your pledges make life-changing missions possible!

Mark Your Calendars!



Niagara Frontier District UWF for 2026

Saturday, March 28, 9:30, Communion Breakfast and Memorial Service
Saturday, April 25, 9:30, Gift Day
May 15 – 17 – UWF Assembly in Indianapolis
Saturday, September 19, 9:30, District UWF Annual Meeting
Saturday, October 17 – Conference UWF Annual Meeting
Saturday, November 15, 9:30, Network of Leaders

Compass House Opportunity

You can make a difference!!



Bring a breakfast, lunch or dinner casserole to Compass House any day that suits you. Compass House protects, clothes and feeds at risk and homeless youth every day of the year. A donated meal is a welcome change for the youth and helps Compass House defray some of their costs. Their address is 370 Linwood Ave. There is an easily accessible parking lot next door. If you cannot bring your dish to Compass House, please contact someone from UWF or the Outreach Team and we will arrange for someone to deliver it. Make a difference!

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Creation Care

I am taking this opportunity to introduce everyone to this new committee which will begin serving January 1, 2026. The duties of Stewardship will now be taken over by Finance, which reflects the monetary piece of our commitment to stewardship. Our new group will continue to focus on being better stewards of God's creation and hope to share some new insights and ideas going forward.

This article will highlight some interesting facts about the food we eat and how we can have an impact by our choices:

Cattle that are grain-fed (meaning corn) require yearly plowing, planting, fertilizing, spraying, harvesting, drying and grinding. If this animal were eaten in the area it was raised it would produce 1.6 pounds of CO2 emissions per 12oz. steak. That same animal if grass-fed and shipped from say Fort Collins, CO to Boston would produce only 0.3 pounds of CO2 emissions. A staggering statistic, no?

We should all make an effort to reduce the amount of food we buy each week and serve smaller portions; don't make extra for leftovers if it's not a fan-favorite. Organic matter that is thrown away creates methane gas in landfills and is a "dead loss" of all the energy that went into growing, transporting and preparing it.

Avoid air-freighted and hot-house grown foods such as tomatoes. Seasonal varieties of other produce or tomatoes canned in season are significantly better choices.

While a vegetarian diet contributes less to climate change, a more practical option for most of us is eating less meat and cheese. Every choice you make matters.

In 2007 Bon Appetit Management Company Foundation developed an on-line calculator to help people make informed food decisions. To see what impact you can make by playing with your food choices visit <http://www.eatlowcarbon.org>

Every small step each one of us undertakes to lower our "carbon footprint" helps this place we all call home survive another day!

Sandy Cumming

A few thoughts on ways to diversify our food pantry giving

I was reading an article on some important items we can add to our Free Little Food Pantry.

Tuna is great but crackers are a treat.

Spices, salt & pepper are a gift.

Sugar and flour are special.

Boxed milk and evaporated milk a treasure.

Butter or margarine are ok during cold months.

Cooking oil – a luxury.

Tea & Coffee make people feel cared for.

We give canned goods ... but a can opener is needed.

And – during these colder months, hats, mittens and gloves are very helpful.

Kathy Weaver



Tigers Den is in need of:

Groceries

- Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Coffee
- Tea
- Hot chocolate

Personal Care Items

- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Shaving Supplies
- Hand Soap

Place your donations in the receptacles in the office hall. **Thank you** for supporting the people in need.

A Note of Thanks

Thanks to all of you who offered prayers and comfort while my stepmother, Donna Loliger, fought cancer, and who sent cards and words of encouragement after she passed away on October 19, 2025. It is so wonderful to be part of a church with so many wonderful people who care so deeply about me and my family. I truly appreciate all of you, and your thoughts and prayers helped me during a terribly difficult time. Once again, thank you.



Brad Loliger



CIRCLE NEWS

Elizabeth Circle will meet at church on Tuesday December 8th at 1p for our annual Christmas Brunch. Tuesday, January 13th at 1p, we will have a Game Day. Bring your favorite game to share.

Circle of Joy will meet Thursday, December 11 at 7:30p for The Niagara Frontier Chord Authority Concert at Trinity Old Lutheran Church. Thursday January 8 at 6p for a Potluck Dinner at Kathy Weaver's home.



Children's Ministry

1st and 3rd Sunday of every month 11a-Noon
Story Room 20 and Art Room 21

Our focus this season is on Faith in Action.
Hope to see you there!



Holiday time is a great time for buying (and reading) books! Books We Have Loved is a group for people who love stories and reading. The group meets on the first Friday of each month at 11 am in the Wesley Room. Come and share your current read, enjoy some refreshments and you may add some happiness and a book or two to your life!

At our gathering in December, you're invited to share Christmas themed books, poems and stories from your own life that give meaning to the season.

We look forward to seeing you at **BOOKS WE HAVE LOVED**.



Regional Charge Conference held at Christ Church October 22, 2025

Missions of the Month

Opportunities to share ourselves, our talents and our resources with others

Thank you, Makers!



Thank you to the makers of Christ Church! Whether you knit or crochet for others or sew and finish Teddy Bears or provide supplies to those who do, thank you for providing comfort to God's people.

Turkey Baskets



This year has been especially difficult for families experiencing food insecurity. Thank you for helping to fill the turkey baskets for our less fortunate neighbors. Your generosity provided Thanksgiving dinner to many who would have gone without. Sharing our blessings with a hungry world is a great way to share God's Love.

Giving Tree

The Giving Tree has made its appearance in the Family Room. Recipients include Compass House, the SPCA, Veterans, Gateway-Longview, and Haven House. Please take a tag from the tree, fulfill the wish and return your unwrapped gift to the tree by the date on the tag. Please consider bringing a pair of mittens or gloves, a hat, or an item for our Free Little Food Pantry when you drop off your gift. Thank you for generously brightening Christmas for members of our community!



Outreach Team Annual Cookie and Candy Sale



The Outreach Team will be hosting their Annual Cookie and Candy Sale on **Sunday December 7th**. Leave your holiday baking to us or bring a special treat to a friend! A delicious assortment of confections will be on sale. Contributions of sweet treats and candy are also welcome and should be brought to church before December 6th. All proceeds will benefit the many missions of our church. For more information, please see a member of the Outreach Team.

Thank you for your continued support of the many missions of Christ Church.

Missions of the Month

Opportunities to share ourselves, our talents and our resources with others

Human Relations Day – Sunday, January 18

Human Relations Day is a Special Sunday set aside to raise awareness and to further the development of better human relations. Celebrated on the Sunday before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, gifts received for this offering build King's vision of "the beloved community" through programs such as Community Developers and United Methodist Voluntary Services and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.

Save the Date - Souper-Bowl Sunday – February 8, 2026

Winter is the perfect time for a piping hot bowl of homemade soup. Our cooks will be busy preparing an array of soups and chilis that will be for sale on Super Bowl Sunday.



Hearts for the Homeless Mobile Food Pantry

Hearts for the Homeless Mobile Food Pantry needs your help. Please prayerfully consider helping for an hour or more on a Monday afternoon between the hours of 12:30pm and 4:30pm when the mobile food pantry is parked in front of Christ Church. Volunteers welcome and encourage shoppers and assist them in selecting and bagging groceries. If you can help with this ministry please see Toni Neidel.

Christ Church Free Little Food Pantry

Our Little Food Pantry is doing its job and needs your continued help in continuing to offer sustenance and hope to our neighbors. Please consider adding an extra item to your grocery list and bring it to church with you next week. The current needs are:



- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Canned Fruit | Canned Veggies |
| Canned Soups | Peanut Butter |
| Oatmeal Canisters | Juices |
| Pasta/Pasta Sauce | Gluten Free Pasta |
| Canned proteins: Tuna, Chicken, Ham | |
| Toothpaste | |
| Toilet Paper/Paper Products. | |

Thank you to all who participate in this ministry!