



# ***THE CHIMES***

***January 2024***

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**Christ United Methodist Church  
470 East Broadway Street  
Alliance, OH 44601-2698  
Reverend John Partridge  
Church: 330-823-7136**

**Our Mission is to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ and to  
Serve God by Sharing Compassion Hope and Love**

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E-Mail: [secretary@cumcalliance.org](mailto:secretary@cumcalliance.org)

Web Page: [www.cumcalliance.org](http://www.cumcalliance.org)

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# ***THE CHIMES***

**January 2024**

## VISION STATEMENT

- COURAGEOUSLY REACH OUT AND WELCOME
- PASSIONATELY WORSHIP AND PRAY
- INTENTIONALLY NURTURE AND ENCOURAGE
- LOVINGLY SHARE AND SERVE.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**OUR MISSION IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST (MATTHEW 28:19-20) AND TO SERVE  
GOD BY SHARING COMPASSION, HOPE, AND LOVE.**

## Challenging the Comfortable

Years ago, I was told that the job of a pastor is to “Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.” While that’s used jokingly, it is often true. We need to be comforted when we hurt, but often get stuck when we’re comfortable and need someone to give us a shove if we hope to move forward again. Those of us who have changed jobs, moved to new communities, started businesses, gone back to school, or otherwise made changes to our lives can attest to that. Sometimes getting something that we want, or something better than what we have, requires that we leave behind some of what we know, some of the things that make us comfortable, and launch out into the unknown and the uncomfortable.

Similarly, it has been said that “Ships in harbor are safe, but that’s not what ships were built for.” Sometimes launching out on a new adventure is something that we choose for ourselves, but other times we get drafted and dragged into those adventures kicking and screaming all the way. This past year has seen some of that for us at Christ Church. We are doing some things differently, and with different people, simply because some of the people who have always done them are no longer with us. In the last few years, people have moved away, gone to college, found other churches, or passed from this life and into the next. But we are also having conversations about other changes that we might choose for our future.

I saw a quote this week from the book *Fusion*, by Nelson Searcy, which suggests three markers to measure your church’s “guest flow.” It said that a church in “Maintenance mode” needed three first-time guests for every one hundred in worship attendance just to stay in the same place in worship attendance. To be in “Growth mode” required five first-time guests for every one hundred, and “Rapid-growth mode” required seven first-time guests for every one hundred. That’s a lot, and I’m not sure that I believe that the numbers are that high (especially if those are weekly figures) ... as long as at least some of those visitors can be attracted to stay. But even so, our experience says that there is some truth to it. In the last few years, we’ve had more visitors, and each year more of those visitors have decided to stay. For each of the last several years we’ve been bringing in a few new members. But we haven’t... yet... been able to bring in more new members than we have lost.

I emphasize the word “yet” because I see change happening. Our worship attendance, since the Covid-19 shutdowns, is once again increasing. And, as we move forward into a New Year, we are, at least occasionally, doing things to move out of our comfort zones and try new things. And that brings me to my challenge for the people of Christ Church. I challenge you to be uncomfortable... at least occasionally. I challenge you to have conversations with friends, neighbors, family, coworkers, and yes, even strangers, about your faith and what it means to you. I challenge you to tell them why you come here and why you like it and invite some of those people to sit with you on Sunday morning, or volunteer and work with you on one of our work projects. I challenge our Sunday school teachers to teach a series on how to share your faith and how to have those kinds of conversations.

We all know that Christ Church is a great church family and is full of compassionate, loving people. But we don’t always do a good job of telling our neighbors about who we are and what we do. And we don’t always do as much as we might do to help the people around us. And so, my challenge is not only to invite people, but to continue pushing ourselves to be a little uncomfortable. To keep trying new things and finding new ways to reach out to the people in our community. God has put us in this place, at this moment, to be his hands and feet to the people of Alliance and beyond. Let us listen to his voice and consider where God is leading us.

Staying in the harbor, and doing what we’ve always done, is safe.

But that isn’t what God built churches to do.

Blessings,

*Pastor John*

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH UPDATE:**



**United  
Women  
in Faith**

**January 2024 – NO UNIT MEETING**

**Circle Meetings – optional**

**We will resume in the New Year with a February ZOOM only Unit meeting!**

**Our meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend.**

**If you'd like to "Zoom in", contact Nancy Pruefer at [pruefer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pruefer@sbcglobal.net) for an invitation.**

**IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER WINTER SOUP SALE!**

In **January** we will offer **Chicken Noodle Soup** - \$7 quart – pickup on January 28

In **February** we will offer **15 Bean and Ham Soup** - \$7 quart – pickup on February 25

Pre-order is required / watch for our display in the lounge.

**FOOD, FAITH, AND FELLOWSHIP**

*"Let him lead me to the banquet hall, and let his banner over me be love."*

*Song of Songs 2:4 (NIV)*

The theme of the 2024 United Women in Faith Program book is food and fellowship as we learn more about what it means to break bread together. This means going beyond what's on the plate and showing respect not just for the ingredients and the hands that prepared them, but also for the local community and heritage. When we gather, we gather not just with those present at the table with us, but with all who had a hand in our meal.

Eating is part of what gives us life and part of life in general. That's why we see so many references in the Bible about food. Whether it's manna for the Israelites or the feeding of thousands by Jesus, food is a central part of our day-to-day life.

This year all United Women in Faith are invited to gather around the table. You are invited if you are an adventurous eater, traditional, gluten-free, dairy-free, nut-free, or free to be free. You are invited if you grew up eating at the family table, at a TV tray, or wherever you could find time, space, and resources. You are invited regardless of who you are, just as you are, and because of all you are!

All are welcome and invited to gather at the United Women in Faith table in 2024!  
See a list of Circles you can join!

*See you at dinner!*

**United Women in Faith** always welcomes guests and new members.

Please call Jamie Greiner at (412) 601-4275 or any Executive Board Officer, if interested.

**The Unit** meets on most 1st Tuesdays at 7pm in the Dussel Room

- ❖ **Peg Williams Circle** meets at 1:00pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at Copeland Oaks, Williamsburg Lounge
  - ❖ **M & M Circle** meets at 7pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays in the Dussel Room
  - ❖ **May Smyth Circle** meets at 10:30am on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays in the Dussel Room
  - ❖ **Susie Buckel Circle** meets at 7pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays in the Dussel Room

*Happy New Year!*

# 2023 Year-end Finance/Stewardship Report

Thank you for your financial support to CUMC for this past year. Because of your generosity, we were able to meet all of our financial obligations, including apportionments. Our recent Stewardship Campaign resulted in 47 pledges for 2024, totaling \$178,295. Of these pledges, 19 were increases and 3 were new. This successful campaign provides an encouraging outlook for CUMC to carry out our missions in 2024. I'd like to give a special thank you to Chrissy Shields for heading up our recent Stewardship Campaign. Again, thank you all for your support.

Bill Prueter



**Hello Church family!** The stewardship committee would like to say thank you for your faithful response to the stewardship campaign. Thank you to Mike Greiner and Victor Lee for sharing with us about two important ministries of our church and all of the people who help make it happen. Thank you to our children for their contributions to our worship!

We are grateful for those of you who made pledges as well! We received 47pledges this year. The total pledged is \$178,295, which is a slight decrease from last year. However, we had 19 who's pledges increased from last year!! We are grateful for your faithful generosity!

Thank you again to all who continue to support the church through your pledges and giving.

Your Stewardship Committee.

## UMW Soup Order Form

UMW SOUP ORDER FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this form to order your soup.

QTY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Noodle Soup \$7 per quart \_\_\_\_\_

**CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP:** Place your order by January 21<sup>st</sup>. Pickup will be on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Soup will be frozen. You may pay for your soup when you pick it up. Thank you for your support!

# Outreach Mission Programs Over the Years

As the year comes to an end, I invite you to review and celebrate with me the Outreach Mission programs of Christ UMC. I joined the Christian Outreach Committee around 2010, when Susie Buckel was our chair, our cheerleader, and our heart. Her spirit remains. Christian Outreach has tried to maintain traditions, but to evolve as needed. That applies to our Christmastime programs:

- Congregational Christmas card (photos added in 2020, during pandemic isolation)
- Salvation Army bell ringing (from Thorne's to Walgreen's to Giant Eagle)
- Salvation Army Gift Tree (but no more mittens?)

Here is how our programs have evolved in three areas:

**Children and Their Families:** For decades, we held a **children's summer reading program**. Each weekday over several weeks, schoolkids paired up with adult volunteers to read books. That program faded, as fewer children signed up. From 2010 to 2022, the **Community Carnival** in our parking lot offered games, free food, and laughter. Originally in the afternoon, we moved to the evening for everyone's greater comfort. This year, we replaced the carnival with a family-friendly **movie**.

**Food and Hunger:** For many years, our monthly **Salvation Army Chuckwagon** has collected canned food and cash, going towards care packages for families in need. A few years after the Community Pantry opened in 2010, we began an annual **drive to collect food and non-food supplies for the Pantry**. In 2014, Christ UMC took over hosting **Tuesday night community dinners** from the Alliance Neighborhood Center. We provided cash support for **Feed My Sheep** when they were served weekly meals. In 2017, we let First Immanuel church use our kitchen and fellowship hall for their **Thanksgiving Day meal ministry**. The following year, we took over the program.

**International Missions:** Around 2012, we began support for **Beatrice Gbanga**, a nurse working with women and children in Sierra Leone. An ebola outbreak in 2014 disrupted mission work in the region. We shifted our support to the **Manjama Health Center** which Susan Haddox had visited on a mission trip in 2013. The Manjama Health Center closed in 2018; we moved our support to Methodist-affiliated **Mercy Hospital in Sierra Leone's** second largest city. That same year, John Partridge became our pastor. Pastor John had an ongoing mission relationship in neighboring **Liberia**. We're now supporting **school programs** in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

What has persisted is the dedication of the people of Christ United Methodist Church to serve our community and people in need everywhere. How we do that changes over time. The world around us changes, and we ourselves change. I'm confident that Christ UMC will continue its tradition of Christian outreach, and look forward to seeing what shape that will take in the years to come.

~ Victor Lee, Christian Outreach Committee

## 2023 Peanut Brittle



This was the 57th year (since 1967) of making peanut brittle (73,121 cans-to-date). The Friendship II Sunday School class, the Youth Alumni and the Explorers Class continued the peanut brittle making tradition this year.

Thanks to the thirty-two different cooks and the many, many sellers and buyers, both members of the SS classes and friends of the project.

### Production Report

	Friendship II <u>46 years and counting</u>	Youth 45 years and counting	Explorers <u>6 years and counting</u>	Crusaders 30 years	Builders <u>15 years</u>	Total
1967-1981					9,466	9,466
1978-1990	14,637			10,413		25,050
1979-1990		2,332				2,332
1991-2000	7,443	972		7,999		16,414
2001-2007				3,400		3,400
2001-2010	6,783	1,100				7,883
2011-2020	5,283	1,047				6,330
2018-2020			506			506
2021	319	81	158			558
2022	306	75	159			540
2023	329	39	274			642
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,100</b>	<b>5,646</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>21,812</b>	<b>9,466</b>	<b>73,121</b>

Please start saving metal one pound coffee cans now,  
and bring them to the church for next year.

Dick Diser  
12/10/2023

## **Needed: Volunteers to Host for Tuesday Neighborhood Dinners**

Four local churches and Mount Union College are preparing and serving a 'Tuesday Dinner' each month. The 'Host volunteer' we are seeking is a CUMC volunteer to provide 'local knowledge' and 'expertise.' (One time in training will make you an 'Expert.')

Starting in January, meals will be served each Tuesday in Fellowship Hall.

Please consider joining the CUMC team of 'Host Volunteers' one Tuesday per month or as substitute contact the Church office (330-823-7136) or make your wishes known to any member of the Christian Outreach Committee.

Thank you



**THANK YOU!**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people that have helped me this past year in the office. Sue Burden for helping to get the Chimes ready to take to post office. Pat Helsel for proofreading the Chimes and making the needed corrections. Lew Shields for proofreading the Bulletin every week. Lucinda Feess, Julie Greiner and Lynn Goldrick for helping in any way they could. I also appreciate working with Pastor John Partridge – it is a pleasure.

Dolores Lawrence

## **UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH OFFICERS (Elected by Membership)**

President: Jamie Greiner

Secretary: Nancy Prueter

Vice President: Ruth Eva Willaims

Treasurer: Jill Greiner

Program Resources: Julie Greiner

Media Coordinator: Jan Essick

Spiritual Leader: Karen Locke

Social Action: Jamie Greiner



## Thanksgiving 2023 Report

This year was our biggest year for the Thanksgiving meal program since we took over in 2018, with 1240 meals served. It wasn't the biggest for Christ UMC, however, because First Christian Church has been providing about half the meals since 2020. This year CUMC served about 660 meals, whereas in 2019 we served a whopping 1100. We have enough data from previous years that we now can make a good prediction 10 days out for how many orders we will end up with by Thanksgiving.

For our 660 meals, we had at least 15 CUMC members plus about 10 others from the community helping with food preparation on Thanksgiving morning, some starting before 7 am. We had 15 delivery drivers. A few thank yous for people who helped before Thanksgiving:

- Dolores Lawrence for handling an increased number of phone orders and meticulously entering them into a spreadsheet, so that we can count orders and check addresses promptly.
- Lucinda Feess for taking flyers to a dozen agencies around town. That may have been a big factor in our growth this year,
- Jamie Greiner for selecting and organizing a new dessert that's not only delicious, but easier to pack and keep fresh. Having tried the pumpkin spice blondie, I can attest to it being an excellent choice.
- Bruce Helsel, Pat Helsel, and Jim Greiner for picking up bulk food supplies, acquiring our cardboard boxes for deliveries, and finding us a better supplier for dinner rolls.
- All those who helped set up the day before (you and I know who you are).

I think the program size is about where it naturally should be, and we have the logistical knowledge and community support to continue this for years to come.

Victor Lee, Christian Outreach Committee





# WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR JANUARY

## USHERS - Team #1

Dick Diser – Captain  
Dan Feess                      John Innerst  
Todd Skivolocki              Bob Travis

## LITURGISTS

7      Ellen Sol  
14     Victor Lee  
21     Pat Helsel  
28     Bill Sol

## WELCOME CENTER GREETERS

7      Karen Locke  
14     Cathy Morris & Boys  
21     Nancy Prueter  
28     Sheila Gard & Justis Conley

## SANCTUARY GREETERS

7      Bill Sol  
14     Ellen Sol  
21     Patti Travs  
28     Jill Greiner

## JANUARY TELLERS

8      Bill Prueter/Dick Diser  
15     Pat Helsel/Marilyn Ruff  
22     Mark Locke/Bruce Helsel  
29     Donna Essick/Jill Greiner

## VISITATION MEMBERS

7      June Luca, Alliance  
14     Mary Aufrance, Alliance  
21     Marilyn Young, Alliance  
28     Craig Post, N. Canton

## BIRTHDAYS

1	Leann Austin	19	Cheri Rodefer
4	Jason Handy	21	Jennifer Brooks
6	Greg Ruff	22	Marilyn Young
6	Chris Helsel	24	Will Kinser
8	Andrew Shuster	25	Michael Schafer
10	Jenni-Jo Kinser	25	Patti Travis
14	Ben Shuster	28	Donna Webster
16	Brandon Handy	29	Benjamin Kirk
18	David Feess		

## ANNIVERSARIES

# 2024 LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

## CHRIST UNITED METHODIST - ALLIANCE, OHIO

### THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Bruce Helsel (Chair)	Jan Essick (Treasurer)	Donna Essick
Nancy Prueter, Secretary	Larry Pyers	Mike Greiner
Rhys Sampson	Andy Magda	Moddie Carte (Custodian)
Bill Sol		

### THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Christian Shields	Gene Stroia	Nancy Castellucci (chair)
Jim Greiner	Marilyn Ruff	Bill Prueter
	Pat Stone	Rhys Sampson

### Additional Committee Members - ex officio (by virtue of office)

Ruth Williams (Treasurer)	Julie Greiner (Financial Secretary)	
Dick Diser (Ad. Council)	Sara Sherer (SPR)	Susan Haddox (Lay Leader, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference)
Christian Shields (Stewardship)	Jan Essick (Trustees)	

### ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Dick Diser (Chair)	John Partridge (Pastor)
Pat Helsel (Secretary)	Susan Haddox (Lay Leader, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference)

Ruth Williams	(Church Treasurer)	Julie Greiner	(Financial Secretary)
Bruce Helsel	(Trustees)	Nancy Castellucci	(Finance)
Sara Sherer	(Staff Parish Relations)	Ian Sherer/Lucinda Feess	(Christian Outreach)
Cindi Martin	(Christian Education)	Jill Greiner	(Congregational Care)
Susan Haddox	(Worship Committee)	Dick Diser	(Church History and Records)
Dolores Lawrence	(Membership Secretary)	Jamie Greiner	(United Women of Faith)

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Pat Helsel	_____	Bill Prueter
_____	_____	Kathy Stroia
Ellen Sol	_____	Jim Greiner

### STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Mark Locke	Patti Travis	Kathy Stroia
Sara Sherer (chair)	Cindy Magda	John Christian
Sue Burden	Beryl Peine	Amy Starkey
Susan Haddox (Lay Leader, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference)		

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Chairperson Cindi Martin)

Peggy Rodefer	Rebecca Innerst	Jo Ann Springer
Cindy Magda	Amy Starkey	

## **CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE (Co-Chairs Ian Sherer and Lucinda Fees)**

### Class of 2024

Dick Diser  
Jean Webster  
Carolyn Miller

### Class of 2025

Victor Lee  
Lucinda Fees  
Jamie Greiner

### Class of 2026

Ian Sherer  
Jane Helwig  
Michael Shields

## **CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE**

Jill Greiner (chair)

Connie Pyers

John Partridge (Pastor)

Betty-Jo Sutherin

Sue Burden (Prayer Chain)

Kathy Stroia (Flowers)

L. Chris Martin (Minister of Visitation)

Bill Sol

Carolyn Miller

Denise Aeling

Dolores Lawrence

## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

### Class of 2024

Ellen Sol  
Julie Greiner

### Class of 2025

Susan Haddox (Chair)  
Betty Sheetz  
Chris Martin

### Class of 2026

Patti Travis  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Additional Committee Members - Ex-Officio (by virtue of office)**

Reverend John Partridge (Pastor)

Bill Prueter (Head Usher)

## **Music Staff - Ex-officio**

Lewis Shields

Christian Shields

Carolyn Wallace

Kimberly Handy

## **LAY LEADERSHIP (NOMINATING) COMMITTEE**

Reverend John Partridge (Chair)

Susan Haddox (Lay Leader)

### Class of 2024

Ellen Sol  
Dick Diser  
Jamie Greiner

### Class of 2025

Mark Locke  
Nancy Prueter  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Class of 2026

Kim Handy  
Sharon Riddle  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **CHURCH HISTORY AND RECORDS COMMITTEE**

Dick Diser, Chair

Susan Diser

Jim Greiner

Jill Greiner

Ruth Williams

Betty-Jo Sutherin

## **LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

Pat Stone

Ellen Sol

Sue Burden

Betty Jo Sutherin

Jessica Gard Conley

## **MAHAN COMMITTEE**

Jim Greiner (Convenor)

Betty Sheetz

Dave Williams

## **LIVING MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Julie Greiner (Financial Secretary - Ex-officio) Jan Essick (Trustees) Susan Diser

## **CASKEY YOUTH ENDOWMENT FUND**

Julie Greiner (Financial Secretary -Ex-officio) Jan Essick (Trustees) Larry Pyers



# 2024

**\*Sunday** Worship & Program  
 9-9:30 am Sunday School  
 10:15 am Worship service

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 5:00 Community Dinner inside	<b>3</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:30 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Baptism of the Lord  Epiphany Sunday  *See Sunday Schedule	<b>8</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>9</b> 5:00 Community Dinner inside 6:30p Finance 7:00p Adm. Council	<b>10</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:30 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</i>  *See Sunday Schedule  Human Relations Day	<b>15</b> 6:30p Scouts Martin Luther King Day 	<b>16</b> 5:00 Community Dinner inside 7:00 Susie Buckel Circle	<b>17</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:30 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany</i>  *See Sunday Schedule	<b>22</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>23</b> 5:00 Community Dinner inside 6:30p Trustees	<b>24</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:30 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany</i>  *See Sunday Schedule	<b>29</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>30</b> 5:00 Community Dinner inside Hosted by CUMC	<b>31</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:30 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal			