

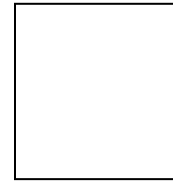


THE CHIMES

January 2025

Volume Number 1

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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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THE CHIMES

January 2025

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

. Making Your World Bigger

Several times this past year, I was reminded of one of my favorite quotes. In his book, *The Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain once said,

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime.”

Despite not traveling anywhere notable this year, I was reminded of this on several occasions when I heard, or read, people self-righteously offering opinions about people they had never met or places that they had never visited. But whenever that happens, I remember a trip that I took to Honduras, courtesy of the United States Army. At the time, I was in my early twenties and still in college, or maybe just barely out of college. And, while we didn't interact much with the local population, that trip forever changed my views on poverty, the third world, and world missions.

Reading about the poor is one thing. But watching a family of five being fed on one soldier's uneaten lunch is a different experience entirely. It was common for children to approach us and beg for handouts, but the order of their requests was almost always the same. First, they would beg for food, second for candy, and third for pencils. The first two made sense, but we were puzzled by the third until we asked the civil affairs guys that arrived shortly before our departure. They explained that the government schools provided teachers but not school supplies. And as such, many children could not go to school because their families could not afford luxuries... like pencils.

Again, while I didn't do any traveling, I felt similar emotions this year when I heard some of the opinions expressed about immigrants and immigration, the poor, the homeless, and others about whom political commentators, and internet bloggers like to pontificate. Of course, it's okay for people to disagree, but often in these sorts of things, while the speakers and writers have lots of opinions, few of them have any actual experience with the people they are talking about.

And so, with these things in mind, I want to offer a challenge for the new year. I've never really liked the concept of making resolutions and since so few people keep their resolutions, please don't think that this is what I am suggesting. Instead, in the spirit of Mark Twain, I encourage you to make your world bigger. I want you to challenge your opinions and preconceived notions about the people around you.

Instead of simply assuming things about the people around you, I encourage you to commit time (do not just resolve) weekly or monthly, to meeting, interacting, and helping those people. Rather than assuming that the poor and the homeless are in that situation because they are lazy, I encourage you to volunteer at a food pantry, at our bread ministry, Tuesday dinner, at the Clothed in Righteousness ministry outreach on Main Street, or someplace similar. Again, don't just show up once for an hour to make yourself feel good, but commit to being there often enough to build relationships with the people there, learn about them, and hear their stories.

Instead of believing some of the nonsense that is spewed on television and the internet about immigrants and immigration, commit to volunteering weekly, or monthly, with ministries or agencies that work with immigrants. Again, spend enough time there to build relationships, make friends, and know them as people rather than as the caricatures that are often depicted in the media.

Of course, my invitation isn't exclusive to these few examples. It could apply to any number of other groups of people from Scouting America (formerly the Boy Scouts) to university students and many others. You could take the time to visit our friends at Red Bird mission in the Kentucky mountains and meet some of our friends there, or travel with a group from our East Ohio Conference to Liberia, or Mexico, or any one of our other overseas missions.

While Mark Twain's quote about travel is one of my favorites, I think that a part of it is wrong. Yes, I believe that travel can be fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, but not by itself. I know too many people who are prejudiced, bigoted, and narrow minded despite having traveled extensively. The key is not just the act of traveling; it is in having conversations and building relationships during your travels. The change inside of yourself occurs when you can no longer refer to Africans, or the poor, the homeless, immigrants, or any other group of people without thinking about the names and faces of the friends that you have made.

And that is why my challenge for 2025 is to get out of your comfort zone and commit to spending an hour a week, or even just an hour a month, volunteering and being present with people that you might have previously thought of only as a group. This is a challenge to confront your biases, or just to get out of the house and expand your horizons. Because whenever you spend enough time with people to build relationships...

...**that** is when your world gets bigger.

Blessings,

Pastor John

Thank you very much

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Thanksgiving meals. We had a record breaking year with over 1400 meals. Our volunteers stepped up to provide more turkeys and desserts.

The operations on Thanksgiving morning went smoothly. We finished earlier than we have in the past despite doing more meals.

Thank you
Victor Lee, Christian Outreach Committee



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH UPDATE:



United
Women
in Faith

January 2025 – 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 Prueter at prueter@sbcglobal.net for an invitation.

IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER WINTER SOUP SALE!

In **January** we will offer **Unstuffed Pepper Soup** - \$8 quart – pickup on January 26

In **February** we will offer **15 Bean and Ham Soup** - \$8 quart – pickup on February 23

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

CARRYING OUR FAITH FORWARD

By: **Faye Wilson & Nora Asedillo Cuningham**

Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another. – Proverbs 27:19

"The purpose of the **2025 Program Resource** is to explore an intergenerational conversation about what it looks like to carry our faith forward in an expanding or new context. As with the path of water, our faith stories reflect a push and pull, peaks and waterfalls, and stagnant pools and storms. We use the memory of Paul who wrote to Timothy saying, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you" (2 Timothy 1:5). This verse provides a template for us to recall what faith means to us – to define our faith and to remember who conveyed faith to us. Each program will offer video clips of conversations between family members and friends sharing their walk, challenges, turning points, and hopes for the church. These interviewees share authentically and vulnerably about topics that we often struggle to discuss as a church. The conversations and the individual programs will pave the way for us to recall and remember our faith journeys. This new program resource calls us to live out our faith in vibrant ways and will hopefully help each of us grow in our vision of how to share our faith within our own spheres of influence. The new Program Book is divided as follows: First Quarter – Water as Reflective, Second Quarter – Water as a Stagnant Pond, Third Quarter – Water as a Storm, and Fourth Quarter – Water as Hospitality."

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

Happy New Year

2024 Year-end Finance/Stewardship Report

Hello church family,

The Stewardship committee would like to thank you all for your response to this year's Stewardship campaign, and your dedication to our church!

This year we received 44 pledge cards, with 16 Increased pledges, 18 that stayed the same, and 6 new pledges. The total pledged so far this year is \$179,380. That is a slight increase from last Year Pledges of \$178,295 with 47 pledges. We also expect to see giving from some who didn't turn in a pledge card. As we enter the new year, we are thankful for your generosity and commitment to our Church community!

Thank you,
The Stewardship committee



UMW Soup Order Form

UMW SOUP ORDER FORM

Date: _____

Please fill out this form to order your soup.

QTY

NAME _____ Unstuffed Pepper Soup \$8 per quart _____

UNSTUFFED PEPPER SOUP: Place your order by January 19th. Pickup will be on January 26th.

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



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.')

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 the 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, Lynn Goldrick, Denise Aeling and Cindy Winner 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

Vice President: Open

Secretary: Nancy Prueter

Treasurer: Jill Greiner

Program Resources: Julie Greiner

Media Coordinator: Jan Essick

Spiritual Leader: Karen Locke

Social Action: Jamie Greiner



2024 Peanut Brittle

This was the 58th year (since 1967) of making peanut brittle (73,712 cans-to-date). The Friendship II Sunday School class and the Explorers Sunday School Class continued the peanut brittle making tradition this year.

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

Production Report

	Friendship II 47 years <u>and counting</u>	Youth 45 years	Explorers 7 years <u>and counting</u>	Crusaders 30 years	<u>Builders 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
2024	326		265			591
Total	35,426	5,646	1,362	21,812	9,466	73,712

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

Dick Diser
12/12/2024





WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR JANUARY

USHERS - Team #3

		5
	Bruce Helsel – Captain	12
Karen Locke	Mark Locke	19
Bill Prueter		26

LITURGISTS

Schedule to follow by email

WELCOME CENTER GREETERS

5	Nancy Castellucci
12	Nancy Prueter
19	Peg Rodefer
26	Karen Locke

SANCTUARY GREETERS

5	Bill Sol
12	Ellen Sol
19	Dick Diser
26	Jill Greiner

JANUARY TELLERS

5	Jim Greiner/Nancy Prueter
12	Bill Prueter/Dick Diser
19	Pat Helsel/Marilyn Ruff
26	Mark Locke/Bruce Helsel

VISITATION MEMBERS

5	June Luca, Alliance
12	Mary Aufrance, Alliance
19	Mary Louise Ford, Sebring
26	Craig Post, N. Canton

BIRTHDAYS

1	Leann Austin	19	Cheri Rodefer
4	Jason Handy	21	Jennifer Brooks
6	Greg Ruff		
6	Chris Helsel	24	Will Kinser
8	Andrew Shuster	24	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



2025

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
5 Epiphany Sunday *See Sunday Schedule	6 6:30p Scouts	7 5p Community Dinner	8 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Vocal	9	10	11
12 Baptism of the Lord *See Sunday Schedule	13 6:30p Scouts	14 5p Community Dinner 6:30p Finance 7p Adm. Council	15 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Vocal	16	17	18
19 2 nd Sunday after Epiphany *See Sunday Schedule Human Relations Day	20 6:30p Scouts Martin Luther King Day 	21 5p Community Dinner	22 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Vocal	23	24	25
26 3 rd Sunday after the Epiphany *See Sunday Schedule	27 6:30p Scouts	28 5p Community Dinner 6:30p Trustees	29 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Vocal	30	31	