



# ***THE CHIMES***

***January 2026***

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Christ United Methodist Church  
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**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 2026***

### **VISION STATEMENT**

- courageously reach out and welcome;
- passionately worship and pray
- intentionally nurture and encourage; and
- 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.

## Relearning What Our Grandparent Knew

I have said this many times, announced it at church, blogged, and even preached about it, but the future of our church (and every other church) depends upon our congregation re-learning how to invite others. Historically, prior to World War Two, churches did a better job of teaching how to be a friend and how to share Jesus with the people around them. But then the war ended, and the baby boom happened and, suddenly, the average family size exploded, along with the number of children that were coming to church. Where before churches understood that their survival and growth depended upon evangelism, which is just a church-y way of describing the way they invite others, during and after the baby boom, churches had a full-time job just keeping up with the influx of their member's progeny. Instead of teaching evangelism, churches were now worried about how they were going to pay for a new education wing to accommodate the children that they already had.

But those children grew up, our culture shifted, many of them stopped going to church, and the ones that did came less often than their parents. The generations that followed the Boomers come to church even less often, if at all. But along the way, the church has forgotten what our grandparents knew and took for granted. That church growth must come from sharing the excitement that we have for the things that we like about our church and about our faith.

This past December, I assigned "homework" and asked every person in attendance during the season of Advent, to invite at least five of their friends to our Christmas Eve service. I do not know how many did, but I know that there were people in attendance on Christmas Eve who said that they were there because one of our members invited them (and I know that some of our members invited twenty or more). Our church created a Facebook "event" online, and I asked every member with a Facebook account to share that event and invite their friends. A dozen did. But we also paid Facebook ten dollars to share that event with other people in our community, and our event appeared on over thirteen hundred computer screens around Alliance. At least one person discovered our church for the first time and came to our Christmas Eve service because they saw our Facebook event online.

If even one person attended our Christmas Eve service because of the invitation of one of our members and decides to attend our church, we grow. If that person brings their family, we grow more. But we do not need to wait until Christmas Eve or Easter to invite others. We need to get into the habit of inviting people all the time. While our church is currently healthy, our attendance has been declining for two or three decades (or more). Like it or not, we are, like many churches in the western world, an aging population. Demographics are against us. If nothing changes, our church will not be able to financially sustain itself in ten more years.

Relearning how to invite the people around us is not only important for our church...

...it is necessary for our survival.

Pastor John Partridge

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH UPDATE:**



**United  
Women  
in Faith**

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**THERE WILL BE NO JANUARY UNIT MEETING**

**JANUARY CIRCLE MEETINGS WILL BE DECIDED BY THE CIRCLE - WEATHER DEPENDENT**

**FEBRUARY 3– UNIT MEETING via ZOOM\*\***

**\*\*Program offered via Zoom only\*\***

**Program to be announced**

**Installation of Officers will be held**

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.

### **GOOD TO KNOW:**

January's Winter Soup Sale selection is **CORN CHOWDER** – cost is \$8 per quart

**January 4** - we'll offer a taste in the lounge after church

**\*\*Please note this soup contains bacon fat and bacon.**

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

Please contact Chairman Pat Helsel at 330-257-5777 or any Unit Officer for more information.

**The Unit** meets on 1st Tuesdays at 7pm in the Dussel Room – except January, July and August

**Peg Williams Circle** meets at 1pm on 3rd Mondays at Copeland Oaks in Bennet Auditorium in January

**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

**UWF Executive Board Meetings are held most months on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday at 6:30pm.**

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## **UWF SOUP ORDER FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CORN CHOWDER (with bacon) / \$8 quart QTY \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_

Place your order by January 18 -- Pickup on January 25 after church -- Soup will be frozen

Place order in the pot in the lounge or contact Pat Helsel 330-257-5777. Pay when you pick it up.

Thank you for your support.

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The **UWF WINTER SOUP SALE** will continue in January by offering Corn Chowder with bacon. On January 4 there will be a tasting in the lounge after church. Please place your orders by Sunday, January 18 and frozen soup will be available for pick up on January 25.

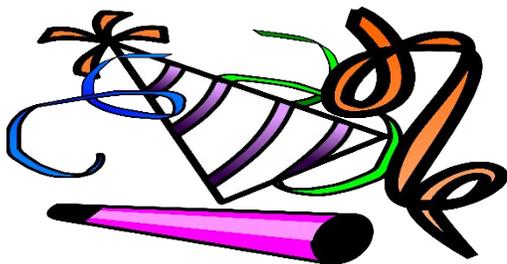


Dear Church Family,

I want to say a big Thank you to everyone who has helped me settle into being the secretary. I know there have been a few bumps in the road, but everyone gave me grace. This year will be better. I am so grateful to be a part of this family. I am very grateful.

Let this next year be full of memories and smiles! Thank you!

*AylaMarie*



Happy New Year!

# 2025 Peanut Brittle

This was the 59th year (since 1967) of making peanut brittle (74,322 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

	<u>Friendship II</u> 48 years <u>and counting</u>	Youth 45 years	<u>Explorers</u> 8 years <u>and counting</u>	Crusaders 30 years	<u>Builders</u> 15 years	Total 59 years
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
2025	325		285			610
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,751</b>	<b>5,646</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>21,812</b>	<b>9,466</b>	<b>74,322</b>

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

# WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR JANUARY

## USHERS - Team # 3

Bruce Helsel  
Karen Locke                      Mark Locke  
Bill Prueter

## LITURGISTS

4    Susan Haddox  
11   Victor Lee  
18   Pat Helsel  
25   Judith Hookway

## WELCOME CENTER

4    Peg Rodefer  
11   Nancy Prueter  
18   Kathy Stroia  
25   Karen Locke

## SANCTUARY GREETERS

4    Bill Sol  
11   Pattie Travis  
18   Ellen Sol  
25   Jill Greiner

## JANUARY TELLERS

4    Pat Helsel/ Marilyn Ruff  
11   Mark Locke/ Bruce Helsel  
18   Donna Essick/ Jill Greiner  
25   Jim Greiner/ Nancy Prueter

## VISITATION MEMBERS

4    June Luca, Alliance  
11   Mary AuFrance, Alliance  
18   Craig Post, N. Canton  
25   Faye Heim, Alliance



## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES



## January Birthdays

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



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

# 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					2	3
<b>4</b> Epiphany Sunday	<b>5</b> 1pm Peg Williams 6:30p Scouts 7pm M&M Circle	<b>6</b> 5:00 Community Dinner	<b>7</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Baptism of the Lord	<b>12</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>13</b> 5:00 Community Dinner	<b>14</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany  Human Relations Day	<b>19</b> 6:30p Scouts Martin Luther King Day 	<b>20</b> 10:30am May Smyth 5:00 Community Dinner 7pm Susie Buckel	<b>21</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany	<b>26</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>27</b> 5:00 Community Dinner 6:30p Trustees	<b>28</b> 5:30 Halleluia Bells 6:15p Brass Ens 6:45 Chancel Bells 7:30 Chancel Vocal	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 3pm Mount Union Sleepover	<b>31</b>