

December 2017/January 2018

# The Cornerstone

Christ Church United Methodist  
700 S. Marshall Road, Middletown OH 45044  
513-422-7364 (telephone) • 513-422-2161 (fax) • [www.christum.com](http://www.christum.com)

“Impacting the  
Community for CHRIST”



## Staff

Norman H. Coleman III, Senior Pastor  
Jen Grams, Director of Children's Ministries  
Debbie Alexander, Director of Music Worship  
Betsy Balger, Accompanist  
Julie Coleman, Office Manager

## Sunday Worship Services

8:30 am - Traditional Worship  
10:45 am - Children's Worship,  
Christ Cinema (Rm. 22)  
11:00 am - Contemporary Worship

## Group Study

### Sunday Adult Classes

Room 113: *Calvary Class*  
Room 115: *Sojourners Class*  
Room 118: *Searchers Class*  
Library: *ReachOut*

### Nursery Care

8:30 am - noon, Ages 0-Pre-K, Rm. 27 & 29

### Sunday Children's Classes

11:00 am - K & Up, Rm. 23

## MERRY CHRISTMAS . . .

# Christmas Eve

**Sunday, December 24**

**Morning Worship**

**8:30 am and 11:00 am**

**Candlelight Services**

**8:00 pm and 10:00 pm**

## New Year's Eve

**Sunday, December 31**

**Morning Worship**

**8:30 am and 11:00 am**

## AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR!

# Letter from the Pastor



Dear Church Family and Friends,

Merry Christmas! It is something that we have grown accustomed to over the years, but are increasingly hearing it less. The new phrase "Happy Holidays" embraces the signs of the times in

which any reference to God is being removed from society. Even Christmas has lost much of its true meaning having given way to "Black Fridays," "Cyber Mondays," sales, family gatherings, the newest electronic gadgets, parades and sporting events. Why has this happened? Perhaps a more important question for us as Christ followers is what will each of us do individually to bring this "Holy Day" back into focus in our lives? I share the following passages with you that we might return once again to God in the midst of this season of celebration.

*"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*  
Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV)

*"In the fields outside of Bethlehem that night some shepherds were tending their sheep. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared in their midst, and the glory of the Lord shone radiantly. The whole field lit up with his presence. The shepherds were petrified! 'Stop being afraid,' the angel said. 'I have come to bring you good news which will bring great joy to all people of the world. The Messiah has come! Your Savior was born today in Bethlehem, the town of David! You will know you have found him when you discover a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.' Suddenly, an army of heavenly hosts appeared with the angel, filling the sky. They raised their voices in song:*

*'Glory to God in the highest Heaven! And on earth, peace to those with whom God is pleased!' Then, as quickly as they appeared, the angels were gone into heaven. 'This is too good to miss,' the shepherds said to one another. 'Let's go straight to Bethlehem now. Let's see for ourselves what the Lord has announced to us.' They raced into town as fast as they could and found their way to Mary and Joseph and, as they had been told, the baby lying in a manger. Trembling with excitement at seeing the baby, the shepherds poured out the story the angel had told them about this child. All the people listened, astonished. As for Mary, she treasured it all in her heart and kept thinking about it, but said nothing. The shepherds eventually returned to their flock, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as they had been told."* (The Story of Christmas, Meridian Publication, World Bible Publishers)

This Christmas, it is my humble prayer that we will each take the time to reflect on that night when the greatest gift, then and forever, was given to humanity in the form of a baby. This One who is Jesus is the true reason for all our celebrating no matter the times and seasons. May we never forget nor get lost in what the world offers and miss the opportunity of eternity.

Again, Merry Christmas and may God bless!

In Jesus,  
*Pastor Norm*

## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The office will be closed:

**December 25 - January 1 for Christmas and  
New Year's  
January 15 for Martin Luther King Day**



Received from Puerto Rico  
November 13, 2017 . . .

Dave, Wilma and all our family in  
Ohio . . .

Hello. We hope you are fine. We want to “THANK YOU” for your response to us!!! We really appreciate your batteries. We have shared them, and we still have for a while. The problem of “energy” is serious here. It also affects having water in our houses. Thank God we have enjoyed having it, after 40 long days. It is not constant but at least we don’t have to go out of our houses looking for it.

“Maria” has changed our lives. We even have to wash our clothes by hand. The communication is also having problems. A lot of people without houses. It has really been a strong experience.

Don’t stop praying for Puerto Rico. God is our hope and strength!!!

Love to all,  
Betsy

## SHALOM

SHALOM is a community of local churches from various denominations that host and minister to the homeless in the Middletown area overnight during the cold winter months. Christ Church has been a part of the SHALOM network since its inception in 2002.

Christ Church will be hosting SHALOM from December 31 through January 7 and again from January 28 through February 3. During the week of December 31, we still need volunteers to supervise our guests from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. There are also still some snack and breakfast items needed. Monetary donations are always welcome as there will be items that will need to be purchased to assist our guests.

Sign-up sheets can be found in the lobby. Thank you for your continued commitment and contributions to this incredible ministry.

## Art for All People

The United Methodist Women invited Sarah Hellman, Director of Art for All People, to come and teach an art class in November. Pictured below are our resident artists with their class project.



Thank you to everyone who has been donating Campbell Soup and Box Tops for Education labels to Red Bird Mission. Christ

Church has donated a total of 658 points thus far this year. If you have any remaining Box Tops for Education labels you wish to donate in 2017, please turn your labels in by December 24.

Also, please be aware that Red Bird Mission is **no longer** accepting Campbell Soup labels.



(A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR, STEVEN J. SCHMIDT)

“Since the beginning of Love Packages our one purpose has been to equip and strengthen the Church overseas. Thanks to your support in 2017, we have been able to ship 1,028 tons from our Butler, Illinois operation and 322 tons from our Alabama operation. Love Packages are enabling missionaries and workers around the world to reach the lost, plant churches, train leaders, disciple believers, and serve the poor. Today there are millions of people all over the world who are reading, watching and listening to Love Packages materials.”

If you would like to donate any used and/or new Christian literature, please leave the materials in the library marked “Love Packages.” Since the inception of the Love Packages program in our church, we have donated 351.8 pounds of material. Thank you Christ Church.

**La Comedia**  
DINNER THEATRE  
Springboro, Ohio

**SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2018**  
Ticket Price: \$44  
To reserve your seat, contact Cindy Buckey at (513) 217-0347 by December 31, 2017  
To guarantee ticket purchase, Cindy's deadline for receiving payment is January 7, 2018

**Mittens and Hats for Creekview Elementary**

ReachOut is collecting winter hats and gloves for students at Creekview Elementary this winter. Donations can be placed under the mitten and hat tree in the lobby until Christmas. Following Christmas, hats and mittens can be placed in the ReachOut bins in the lobby.  
Thank you!



In conjunction with the American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation, the Crafty Ladies will be crocheting little red hats which will be given to newborns throughout the month of February in celebration of American Heart Month. Donations of red yarn would be appreciated and can be left in the ReachOut bins in the lobby. The yarn must be either cotton or acrylic, medium to heavy weight and machine washable and dryable.

**It's back...**

**COMEDY**  
for a Cause

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2018**

Featuring comedian  
  
Jeff Jena

**CHRIST CHURCH 6 - 8PM**  
UNITED METHODIST



- Night of Fun and Laughter
- Live Auction
- Silent Auction
- Food and Fellowship

*All proceeds from "Comedy for a Cause" will benefit the 2018 mission efforts of our Impact Guatemala Team.*

# THE NEXT SERIES...

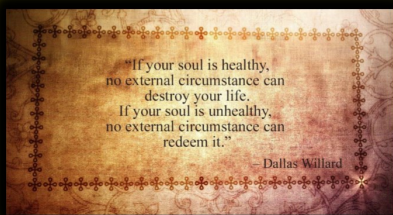


BEGINS 01/07/2018

## Join a Group!

Study Guides

Available December 31st!



thank you!

To My Christ Church Family,

Thank you for the visits, cards, calls and well wishes as I have missed church with a number of nagging issues over the last

couple of months. I hope to get back to church in the near future. Thank you again.

Minnie Watt

Heartfelt Sympathy

Kevin and Barb Strait and Family upon the death of Barb's mother, Pat Wirth, on December 19



The United Methodist Women will meet Thursday, January 18, at 10:00 am in Room 113

Program Speaker will be Allen Nelson who will be sharing helpful information about transitioning loved ones from home to a care facility

## Financial Update

(As of 11/30/17)

	<u>Month of November</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$28,844	\$301,205
Expenses	(\$30,530)	(\$306,529)
Income/(Loss)	(\$ 1,686)	(\$ 5,324)

Notes:

Numbers above represent our operating expenses, our connectional expenses (monies to support the greater United Methodist Church) and our building mortgage. In 2015 and 2016, we paid 100% of our connectional giving, but due to the decreased giving in 2017, the Administrative Team voted in June to suspend our connectional giving unless someone actually designated their giving for connectional. The Admin Team will decide prior to the end of the year if any additional payments will be made toward our connectional giving for 2017. While we do have some cash on hand and had monthly connectional payments been made, we would be out of cash and still be behind in our connectional giving. The important thing to understand is that if year over year giving continues to decrease, it will not be too long until we will need to cut spending in other critical areas (staff, building repairs, heat and air, etc.). While the November giving increased slightly over October, our expenses also increased at a faster rate resulting in a deficit for the month. To date, we have made our mortgage payment in full and timely.

The above loss of \$5,300 for the first eleven months of 2017 does not include the major building repairs/maintenance made to date totaling \$28,500. These repairs have been paid out of some reserve funds that were not designated for any ministry or program. Currently, we are aware of only another \$1,000 in major building repairs facing us.

Per the information above, on an average weekly basis, our expenses are approximately \$6,400 while our income is only \$6,300.

If you have any questions, please contact Barb Martin.

# January

1/1	OFFICE CLOSED - HAPPY NEW YEAR SHALOM	1/16	3:45 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:30 pm Links Theological University, 115
1/2	SHALOM 6:30 pm Links Theological University, Kitchenette	1/17	10:00 am Pastor's Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 5:00 pm Men's Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Girl Scouts, NLC, 23 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary
1/3	SHALOM 10:00 am Pastor's Bible Study, Pastor's Office 12:30 pm NAMI, Pastor's Office 5:00 pm Men's Choir, Sanctuary 5:30 PM Girl Scout Leaders, 23 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 7:00 pm Girl Scout Service Unit, Kitchenette 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary	1/18	10:00 am UMW, 113
1/4	SHALOM 6:15 pm Girl Scout Meeting, Christ Cinema	1/20	9:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library
1/5	SHALOM	1/22	12:00 pm Crafty Ladies, 115 12:00 pm Yoga, 24
1/6	SHALOM 9:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Kitchenette 3:00 pm Children's Roller Skating Party, Skateway Middletown	1/23	3:45 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:30 pm Links Theological University, 115
1/8	12:00 pm Crafty Ladies, 115 12:00 pm Yoga, 24	1/24	10:00 am Pastor's Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 6:00 pm Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Girl Scouts, NLC, 23 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary
1/9	3:45 pm Whiz Kids, 117 6:00 pm Admin Team, 113 6:30 pm Links Theological University, 115	1/27	9:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library 12:00 pm Myers/Mattingly Baby Shower, NLC
1/10	10:00 am Pastor's Bible Study, 113 12:30 pm NAMI, Library 6:00 pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Girl Scouts, NLC, 23 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary	1/28	SHALOM
1/13	9:00 am Emmaus Share Group, Library	1/29	SHALOM 12:00 pm Crafty Ladies, 114 12:00 pm Yoga, 24
1/15	OFFICE CLOSED - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY 12:00 pm Crafty Ladies, 115 12:00 pm Yoga, 24 5:00 pm Congregational Care, Library	1/30	SHALOM 3:45 pm Whiz Kids 6:30 pm Links Theological University, Kitchenette
		1/31	SHALOM 10:00 am Pastor's Bible Study, Pastor's Office 12:30 pm NAMI, Pastor's Office 6:00 pm Choir, Sanctuary 6:00 pm Girl Scouts, 23 6:30 pm Bible Study, Library 7:30 pm Praise Team, Sanctuary

# December Birthdays

- 1 Joan Peterson
- 14 Carole Robinson
- 17 David Thaeler, Sr.
- 18 Jen Grams
- 20 Paul Radabaugh
- 22 Kathy Stitsinger
- 24 Carol Hoskins
- 27 Tom Streiff
- 28 Tim Hezlep
- Beverly Hill
- 29 Melody Grams
- Diane Neal
- 30 Kevin Strait

# January Birthdays

- 3 Brooke McGuire
- 4 Mike Forrester
- 5 Nancy DeSerisy
- Dottie Wasem
- 6 Kay Ellison
- Linda Knapp
- 8 Patty Streiff
- David Teeters
- 9 Deona Bethart
- 10 Caty O'Hara
- Gail Rose
- 14 Linda Beekman
- 15 Norman Coleman
- 16 Beth Ditmyer
- 20 Marge Forrester
- 21 Norman Gibbs
- Don Smith
- 22 Suzi DelGrosso
- Cindy Minter
- Jake Earl
- 23 Amy Pretty
- Deanna Sellers
- 24 Teresa Banks
- 29 Andrea Jackson
- 31 Sherrie Robertson

# December Anniversaries

- 3 Thomas and Diana Hayes
- 4 Norman and Karen Gibbs
- 7 Bob and Ann Baber
- 21 Denny and Kathy Stitsinger
- 27 Michael and Wendy Minor

# January Anniversaries

- 20 Wallace and Joy Michael
- 24 Carl and Shirley Heismann
- 27 Mike and Marge Forrester



We want to thank the United Methodist Women, ReachOut and the Searchers Sunday School class for the beautiful

gift of carpet that has been laid in the library. The carpet was installed by Rainbow Carpets in November.

Rainbow Carpets also installed new carpet in the sitting area in the women's restroom, and work is ongoing to update the furnishings in this area.

## *It's a Girl... Congratulations*

Rex and Debbie Lawson upon the birth of their first grandchild, Hanna Marie Clements, on December 12. Blessed parents are Michael and Abigail Clements.

Christ Church United Methodist  
700 South Marshall Road  
Middletown, OH 45044

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## SKATEWAY - MIDDLETOWN

**Saturday, January 6**  
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Inviting all children! Permission slips are needed.  
Meeting at the church at 3:00 pm.  
Please contact Jen Grams if your child will be  
going roller skating.

**TENTATIVE - Children's Ice Skating Outing**  
Sunday, January 14  
(Watch the Sunday bulletin for details.)

*Glory to God*  
in the highest  
and on earth  
*peace, good will*  
toward men  
Luke 2:14