

First Church News

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First United Methodist Church

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First Church NEWS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Prepare the Way of the Lord!



A Note from the Pastor—Zoe Empowers at Christmas

"In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." —Acts 20:35

It's better to give than receive, we were all taught. That's one of the reasons I love our Christmas missions offering tradition! Over the last few years, we have seen radical generosity at work through these end-of-year offerings. We've supported refugees from Afghanistan and helped Coshocton Grace UMC to rebuild after their devastating fire. And last year, we began supporting a group of over 100 orphans in Zimbabwe in celebration of the loving gift of God's son!

These young people have been building businesses; raising chickens and goats, learning carpentry and catering, and growing crops like maize, beans, and sunflowers. Their business income then allows the oldest children in each family to support their younger siblings education. Many of the families have made critical repairs to their homes and farms, repairing roofs and kitchens and adding fences to their livestock yards. Now in year two of the program, profits will also be reinvested through raising additional livestock, building a personal savings account, and employing other children in their community to build their businesses.

The ZOE program also provides education around several key areas. Students learn about their businesses and agriculture, a key to the financial health of a family in rural Zimbabwe. They learn about health and hygiene, drug abuse and children's rights in their country. Last, students are partnered with local community leaders as mentors so they can learn their civic responsibilities and make the connections necessary to thrive into adulthood.

We have committed to support our ZOE cohort of around 100 orphans and vulnerable children for three years. Last year, we raised more than enough for our \$9,500 yearly commitment. Any additional funds raised over the \$9,500 will be allocated to support the local mission and ministry of First Church.

Check out ZOE's website at www.zoempowers.org for more information on their work and story after story of young people around the world who have been given the ability to lift themselves out of the cycles of poverty and contribute to their own community!

Please give prayerful consideration to how you might be able to help us reach this year's goal!

Blessings,

Pastor Jon



The Gift/Memorial Book is located in the parlor and is open to **Ruth Payne**.



Our Sympathies to the family of members Kathleen Petrone, who passed away on 10/23, Karen Taucher, who passed away on 10/27, Delphia Lowe, who passed away on 11/9, Jack Archer, who passed away on 11/22, and Becky Folsom (date unknown at this time).

Did You Know? We will be glad to publish (space allowing) milestone birthdays, anniversaries, births and other special events in your family if you send a note c/o Sarah Neri, call us at 330-923-5241 x212 or email sarahnerifallsumc@gmail.com.

Start looking ahead to 2025! Due to Christmas and the busy Advent season, the deadline for the January issue of the FCN is **Wednesday, December 12.**

Newsletter DEADLINE

DECEMBER 2024 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1
8:30 & 10:45am—Advent 1

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22
8:30 & 10:45am—Advent 4

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8
8:30 & 10:45am—Advent 2

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24
6:00 & *8:00pm—Christmas Eve

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15
8:30 & 10:45am—Advent 3

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29
**10:45am—Covenant Renewal

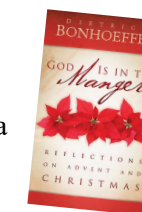
*All Epworth alumni are invited to sing. Please meet for rehearsal @7:30pm.

** There will only be one service @10:45am on 12/29/24



Advent Study

First United Methodist Church is hosting the Ecumenical Advent Study this year. The study is from the book *God is in the Manger* based on the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Contact FUMC 330-923-5241 to secure a copy of the book for \$10. The study will meet the first four Mondays in December (2, 9, 16, 23) @7:00pm.





First United Methodist Church Cuyahoga Falls

THE ARTS SERIES FALL CONCERTS 2024



Tuesday, December 3, @12:00pm-Dean Wagner Presents an Organ Advent Recital

This recital will take place at St. Sebastian's Catholic Church, 476 Mull Avenue, in Akron.

Sunday, December 8, @3:00pm-The Master's Singers Chorale

This community-based chorus is back under the new direction of Marc Weagraff and will feature Schubert's "Mass in E-Flat."

Sunday, December 15, @6:00pm-The Procession of the Nativity

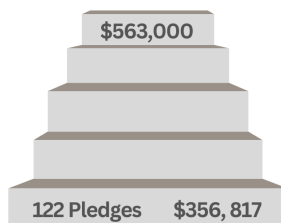
The beloved worship service/concert of music with processions of the prophet Isaiah, Gabriel, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and the Magi, returns with an almost new program of music, accompanied by orchestra, piano and organ.

Patron Information

We are excited to resume our concert series. You are encouraged to support our efforts to offer free concerts to the community by making your contribution to: First United Methodist Church, c/o Concert Series. Friend: \$5-\$24, Patron: \$25-\$49, Bronze: \$50-\$99, Silver: \$100-\$199, Gold: \$200-299, Platinum: \$300+

Advent Remembrance Service

On Wednesday, December 18, at 7:00 pm we will hold our Advent Remembrance Service in the Chapel. This event is a way we can remember those who have lost loved ones, or experienced other loss in the past year. If you plan to attend, please bring an ornament to hang on the Christmas tree in memory of your lost loved one(s). You may take the ornament home after the service ends. If you know someone who is grieving a relationship, a loss, or the death of a loved one, please invite them to attend.



Stewardship Update

If you haven't received a Stewardship packet by now, please make sure you contact the church office. This year, we have set two goals for our campaign as we make commitments to God to support the church through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness:

- increase pledges from 195 families in 2024, to 205 families in 2025
- increase in pledged giving from \$537,000 in 2024, to \$563,000 in 2025

Please prayerfully consider how you might be able to help us achieve these goals this year!

Altar Flowers 2025

We are taking orders for Altar Flowers for 2025. The cost is \$40 and the church takes care of ordering and delivery. If you would like to reserve a date contact Christy Meyers, 330-923-5241, or cmeyersfallsumc@gmail.com.



St. Nicholas Brunch & Shop

The St. Nicholas Brunch is returning in 2024 bigger and better! This brunch is open to everyone. The ever popular omelet station is back along with other favorites and a few new surprises. **Join us December 8, 9:30-12:30am in Wesley Hall.** The cost is \$7/adults, \$5/children 3-11, under 3 is free.

We will also be hosting a St. Nicholas Shop where parents can help their children select gifts for other family members. A limited number of Santa's Helpers will be available to help kids shop for parents as well.

And of course, St. Nicholas himself will be there. We will be accepting donations of hats, gloves, and scarves for our community. Questions or to Volunteer: melinda.chase@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing everyone!



Men's Time Out

All the men are invited! We'll meet from 8:30 to 9:30am on **Saturday, December 7,** in Ashbury Hall. Hope to see you for food and fellowship!

ROCK End of Season Updates

December 4 will be our Advent Event during the regular ROCK time of 5:30-6:30 p.m. After music rehearsals at 4:30 for Bells and Choir at 5:00, we have a snack supper, make a craft, prep the candles for Christmas Eve and begin our Advent celebration. **This will be the last 2024 ROCK session.**

There will be a music rehearsal December 11 and the children will sing in worship on December 15, and Christmas Eve (24). We'll resume our regular ROCK programming on January 8.



Many Thanks

Thank you to Linda Demeter, Jeanette Carlson, and Joe Demeter for setting up for our Charge Conference and Potluck. We appreciate your dedication to this congregation.

Holiday Nut Sale Continues

Holiday Nut Sale: Nut pre-order forms are available at the Welcome Center and the church office. In-person sales will take place Sundays in November and December, and in the office from 9-3pm/M-F. All proceeds from the sale benefit 2025 Work Camp.



Holiday Campaign

Open M Holiday Collection: Open M has begun their Christmas campaign "For the Love of Children." If you would like to donate towards the purchase of gifts for children in need, please mark "Open M Christmas" on your giving envelope. Any amount is appreciated. Open

M is also asking for volunteers to help with the holiday campaign. You can find more information on the flyer at the Welcome Center or fill our their volunteer form. <https://www.openm.org/christmas-volunteer-form>. Thank you for your consideration.

This month family promise is collecting Ramen Noodles (no cups) and Velveeta Shells & Cheese (or any brand, the type that doesn't require milk and butter). They could also use dishwashing liquid.

