



CHRIST CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FEBRUARY
2025

THE VISITOR

CELEBRATE “HERSTORY”!

The Fellowship Committee is hosting the annual Daughters Event on March 1, 2025 at 5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. The theme this year, to kick off Women’s Week and celebrate all the wonderful ladies and girls in our congregation, will be HERstory. Throughout the evening, we will be looking at the changes in women’s roles through the years, as well as commemorating all things great about women!

Keeping with tradition, we will be collecting items for CAMO baby bundles and then assembling them at the event. These bundles will be supporting new mothers and their babies in Central America. Look for items needed on cards posted in the Gathering Area.

The event this year will include dinner which will consist of catered chicken, a baked potato bar, salads and desserts. There will be activities for all ages, and this year, instead of dancing, the committee has a special presentation to culminate the evening. If you are willing to participate and be on camera, be on the lookout for Jennifer Howell and Mollie Curie on Sunday, February 9th, where they will be interviewing congregation members.

We will be celebrating all women so the attire for the event is, “wear whatever you feel good in”. Maybe you want to wear that one special dress that’s been hanging in your closet for 20 years, or maybe jeans are your favorite go to fashion piece OR maybe wear your tiara because you are a queen! Wear what you love and come celebrate!

Tickets will be on sale February 9th, 16th, and 23rd before and after church or the last three weeks of February in the church office. Adults \$10, children 6-11 \$6, children 0-5 free.

The logo for 'HerStory' is centered. 'Her' is in a pink-to-orange gradient font, and 'Story' is in a dark blue serif font. The logo is framed by thick black lines: two vertical lines on the left and two horizontal lines on the right, forming a partial border. A red bar is at the bottom of the page.

HerStory.

Pastor's Reflections

Early last month on a cold snowy morning youth from Christ UCC and their Mentors traveled to Chagrin Falls for a Retreat. I was blessed to accompany them and challenged by their discussion topic of Environmental Justice. The leader was Rev. Michael Howard, Minister of Faith in Action for our Living Water Association.

Retreats often begin with some sort of “get to know you” activity. I appreciated this because I still don't feel that I know the youth from church well enough. We started with a ball of yarn and created a web. I've done this before in other settings and always note that when someone, anyone, tugs on their yarn the entire web is affected.

I remembered the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said in his Letters from Birmingham Jail, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

King's “Letter from Birmingham Jail” is important to the long philosophical tradition concerned with defining the concept of justice. In this important passage from early in the letter, King argues that justice cannot exist when people permit injustice to persist.

We are all woven together like this web, and if one person in a society is suffering, we all feel the tension. No matter the laws or customs that exist, there is no escaping these important human connections; if one person in a society is harmed directly, others will suffer indirectly from this harm. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s argument is a powerful explanation of why injustice should be a concern for all, not just a limited or finite few. So, what is justice?

Lisa Yeagley spent time and a late-night conversation trying to help the youth and mentors define “What is justice?” and they focused it on the Orrville community - specifically around the topic of food insecurity. They talked about who in the Orrville community is included and who is not. They talked about who makes justice in our community happen?

The youth were engaged in some tough questions and statements that were presented and discussed. Some bullet points that were shared by our leader included:

- If justice work robs someone of dignity it is not justice work.
- Ask yourself, was a situation you sense being wrong made by God or humanity? If you can't tell, that's what justice looks like.
- Justice is love made public.

The youth were divided into discussion groups where they made presentations that were videotaped, and Kaylene Holderman is working on getting these into a format that can be shared with the congregation.

I hope you will also wrestle with these questions and statements. I know that I am. My thoughts turn to the prophet Amos in chapter 5 selected verses. The Lord says:

Seek good and not evil, that you may live, and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you.

Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate.

Let justice roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

I shared these thoughts at church council in January and had each person name a justice issue that they were compassionate and concerned about. These included: climate change, food insecurity, our political climate, child safety, immigration, mass incarceration, and more.

Personally, I think it is hard to define justice. But when I hear and see things that my gut tells me are wrong, I know that we have work to do in God's name if we want to live.

MLK says, on taking a position against The Vietnam War 1967:

“Cowardice asks the question, ‘Is it safe?’ Expediency asks the question, ‘Is it politic?’ Vanity asks the question, ‘Is it popular?’ But conscience asks the question, ‘Is it right?’ And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but s/he must take it because conscience tells her/him that it is right.”

Blessings,
Rev. Joyce Schroer



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

January 2025

Church Council Meeting Summary from January 14, 2025

Spiritual Reflection and Prayer: Rev. Schroer shared several stories about the youth mentor retreat with the topic of environmental justice. Council reflected on justice and injustice in the world today.

Minutes were approved from the December 10 meeting.

Treasurer's Report was discussed. Brian Amstutz made a recommendation to move the surplus funds from 2024 to facilities reserve, disaster relief, and memorial funds. Julie Finney made a motion to propose this movement of funds from surplus to the appropriate funds and Jason Ayers seconded. Vote was approved. Treasurer's report was approved subject to audit. The full report is on file.

Council will be asking the congregation to support a goal of \$2,500 for March Special Offering for California Fire relief.

Pastor and Staff reports are on file. Pastor Joyce will be out March 9th and March 16th, and we will need pulpit supply.

Committee Reports:

Worship/Faith – Terri was not present. Kid's Club will take a break between holidays.

Care/Community – Julie ICU has 5 new members. Merry Cooks did 3 meals in December. The Fellowship Committee has begun preparations for the Daughters' Dinner (March 1) around the theme of HER story.

Mission/Outreach – Mollie Has been working on building the committee. Salvation Army has 8 beds. 6 additional beds were delivered to Salvation Army January 2025. Another bed build will be scheduled, possibly in April 2025. The Wayne County Health Department is looking for a possible site for a pop-up market. Mollie has contacted them to let them know our parking lot is available.

Administration/Resources – The company repairing the bell tower has completed the bracing and are just waiting on the weather to break to finish. Joe is contacting Wayne Siding regarding the South entrance.

New Business:

The revised "Bridge Pastor Contract/Covenant Agreement for 2025" has been completed and signed.

Julie and Dwaine will be leading the committee to review the Constitution and By-Laws that is done every 5 years.

Discussion was had regarding door security. Jason to look into adding cameras onto exterior doors. Jason to also look into changing the locks. Once information is gathered, we can discuss a roll out plan to the congregation.

The annual report will need finalized and published for the congregation by end of February.

Next meeting is February 11, 7 PM.

Memorial Gifts

*In Memory of Bruce & Pearl Weaver
and Kenny & Marge Gerber*

Joan Fiscus

In Memory of Eleanor Roth

Anita Greene

Mike Finney

Linda Combs

Ralph Wyss

Donald Hatt

Darlene Osterhage

Gaynelle Predmore

Dale Scott

William Arnold

In Memory of Lee Wade

Mike Finney

In Memory of Lee Nussbaum

Mike Finney

Charlotte Shelton

Dale Scott

Ruth Harrington

Treasurer's Report

December 31, 2024

Current Fund	Month of Dec. 2024	Year-to-Date	Last Year
Sunday Offerings	\$ 27,857	\$252,966	\$237,349
Other Income	\$ 2,924	\$ 12,809	\$ 17,100
Expenses	\$ 19,238	\$218,704	\$254,414
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 11,543	\$ 47,071	\$ 34
Benevolent Fund	\$ 3,258	\$ 35,388	\$ 35,476
Christmas Fund/ Vets of the Cross	\$ 1,721	\$ 1,746	\$ 1,607
Advent/Salvation Army	\$ 415	\$ 415	\$ 360
Samaritan Fund (Formerly PEF)	\$ 564	\$ 5,674	\$ 7,270

Samaritan (Formerly Pastor Emergency) Fund Balance is \$2,474.

THANK YOU for your faithful and generous donations through the year for current expenses, benevolent, and special offerings!

Brian Amstutz, Treasurer

YOUTH NEWS

Kids Club (K-5th grades):

Kids Club will continue to meet every Wednesday in February. Just a reminder that if Orrville city schools are closed on a Wednesday, there will be no Kids Club or Carol Choir that evening.



Youth Fellowship (6th -12th grades):

2/2: 6:00-8:00pm at the church
2/9: 6:00pm Super Bowl party at the Yeagley's
2/16: 6:00-8:00pm at the church
2/23: 6:00-8:00pm at the church

Biggs & Littles

Biggs and Littles is excited to invite you to our annual Valentine's Day party on Tuesday, February 11th! We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall from 6-7pm for a story and Bible lesson, crafts, activities, and a snack. Everyone ages Kindergarten and younger with an adult is welcome to attend! Can't make it this month? Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 11th.



Art & Soul

Art and Soul will gather on Thursday, February 20th to paint barn quilts! Come hear a devotion and craft your very own quilt to hang in your house or gift to a friend. No sewing required! Sign up outside the office if you know you're coming or just drop in. Art and Soul starts at 6:30 in the Pole Room.

Camp Sunday

Did you know that there will still be summer camp offered through the UCC Heartland Conference this year? Come hear about all of the camps offered for every age (adults too!) on Camp Sunday! We'll gather in the fellowship hall for an all-church Sunday School at 9 am on February 16th. So pack your camping gear and get ready for a morning of camp songs, games, crafts, and snacks! After Sunday School we'll head up to worship together and hear more about what makes camp important. And the best part? Jill Frey, director of Outdoor Ministries, will be with us to answer any questions and provide more information about the camps and locations available this summer.



It's time to update contact information!

Addresses may change occasionally, but phone numbers and e-mail addresses change frequently and sometimes the church is the last to know! If you have made any change(s) in the past few years, please contact the Church Office and check the directory. Thank you!

Women's Retreat:

How do we travel? What signs do we follow? What inspires us to set out into unfamiliar terrain in our life? How do we know what gifts to offer and where to offer them? Whose company do we travel in? Where do we find sustenance along the way?

At women's retreat we'll try to answer these questions and reflect on the roads in our lives that led us to where we are. We'll dream about where we're going and share stories about where we've been.

So, what are you waiting for? Let's go!

This year's retreat will be held at The Mohican Lodge.

We'll plan to carpool from the church and arrive at Mohican at 9AM on February 22nd and depart at 11AM on February 23rd.

Cost is \$60 per person.



A Big Thanks!

The Arizona Mission Trip Group would like to give a HUGE thank you to everyone who purchased tickets, attended, and gave donations to our Taco Fundraiser! We are so thankful for the love and support that our congregation has shown for us and look forward to the life-changing experiences ahead of us in March.

What a blessing it is to be a part of such a caring, mission minded, church!



Thank you to everyone who ordered Christ Church apparel from our youth fundraiser! Your generosity has allowed us to add \$604.00 to our youth mission fund. Our fundraisers for this account allow us to pay for the mission trips for our youth at no cost to them. We also take some money from our fundraisers as a donation to our host organization each year. Your kindness, and support help us spread God's love to individuals all over the United States!

The next **Church Potluck** will be on Sunday, February 16th. See you then!



Join the **Ladies of Light** Saturday 2/1 at 9 am at B's Deli and Cafe (inside Heartland Point) for a cozy time of coffee (or tea!), connection, and uplifting conversation.

Birthdays

2/01 Mark Clark	2/12 Logan Boggs
2/01 Saylor Ballentine	2/12 Maverick Curtis
2/02 Linda Smucker	2/12 Fiona Curie
2/02 Greg Bumgardner	2/13 Russ Davidson
2/02 Tom Baer	2/13 Cindy Zimmerman
2/03 Jim Nelson	2/14 Judy Miller
2/03 Richard Blondeaux	2/14 Laura Allard
2/03 Scott Swinehart	2/14 Lillian Louanglath
2/04 Dorothy Hahn	2/15 Kurtis Sprowls
2/05 Jameson Gardner	2/16 Kimberly Hopsecger
2/05 Andy Stocker	2/17 Gordon Maupin
2/06 Sandy Amstutz	2/17 Sue Ritchie
2/06 Brian Orosz	2/17 Josh Smith
2/06 Elliot Brown	2/19 Krista Musser
2/07 James Hahn	2/19 Grant Curtis
2/08 Randy Gehres	2/21 Audra Simmavanh
2/09 Paula Kohler	2/22 Ruth Harrington
2/10 Corey Midura	2/22 Robert Weeman
2/11 Ellen Clark	2/23 Zola Craver
2/12 Richard Jones	2/25 Carol Jones
2/12 Traci Williams	2/26 Colin Abel
2/12 Jaron Browne	2/27 Mark Gehres
2/12 Antonio Mangano	2/27 Katelyn Malcuit



Anniversaries

2/01 Bruce & Rhonda Weeman
2/12 Al & Carol Yeagley
2/13 Bob & Linda Ballentine
2/14 Robert & Karen Markley
2/19 David & Judy Browne
2/28 Jeremy & Chelsey Fry



Christ Church Policy Review

An Ad Hoc Committee spent much of 2024 reviewing and updating policies and procedures for Christ Church to align with the revised constitution. The Church Council would like to share some of these updated policies with the congregation. We are beginning with the weather-related policy:

1. Youth programs are cancelled if Orrville City Schools are closed.
2. If Wayne County is on a Level 2 Alert, all church programming will be cancelled for that day. This includes worship services, Sunday school classes, and any other church activities.
3. If a Level 2 Alert occurs on a weekday, the church offices will be closed.
4. A message will be sent through "The Chat" updating members of closures. Members wishing to receive "The Chat" may contact the church office.



February Special Offering

Homeward Bound - Homeward Bound of Wooster and Wayne County is a Day Center/ Severe Weather Shelter, open 365 days of the year. They provide meals, hot showers, laundry services, toiletry items, overnight stays, packed lunches and more. They are located at 981 Grosjean Rd. in Wooster. To learn more about them, opportunities they have to volunteer and/or to shop their Amazon wish lists visit: <https://linktr.ee/HomewardBoundWWC>

Donations Needed

The Good Shepherd UCC in Sahuarita, AZ (where our mission trippers are traveling in March) has made us aware of some items that they are low on and/or have an extreme need for at the immigration shelters at the border. The items are:

ladies' underwear- sizes 5-6

men's underwear- sizes small and medium

socks - men's and women's

We would love to be able to either bring these items with us or send them ahead of us. A basket will be placed in the gathering area for donations or money can be donated to the office and Kaylene will go out and purchase the items for you. Thank you!



Bundle Up for Baby Bundles!

The Daughters Dinner is almost here, and we need YOUR help to make our Baby Bundles shine! Let's come together to collect the sweetest essentials for newborns in need.

What are we looking for?

- *Diaper pins
- *Cloth diapers
- *Newborn t-shirts (not onesies—keep it classic!)
- *Baby lotion and soap (any size!)
- *Cozy baby blankets (not knitted or crocheted)
- *Tiny combs and brushes

Here's how it works:

1. Head to the Gathering Area and grab a tag with an item listed.
2. Shop for the item on your tag (have fun with it!).
3. Return your item to the church by February 23—easy peasy!

Let's make this Daughters Dinner tradition a success once again and show these little ones (and their families) some BIG love.

Thank you for being amazing!



The Endowment Team is preparing to meet in a few weeks to discuss disbursement of the annual allocation of the endowment fund income earned through United Church Funds. As in past years, the funds are disbursed with 1/3 to Wider Missions (i.e. Disaster Relief -UCC, Back Bay Mission, S.A.R.A. gummy vitamin program, etc.); 1/3 to Local Missions (i.e. People to People Ministries, Memory Cafe, Augsburg Lutheran Church Brown Bag Lunch, etc.); and the balance to local CUCC for Church Council to disburse.

Please provide your suggestions of agencies/programs that the Endowment Team should consider when distributing the funds. Forms to provide suggestions are available on the table in the Gathering Area. Please complete the form and leave it in the church office or Caitlin's mailbox.

The Endowment Team consists of Julie Finney, Ruth Harrington, Joi Hemphill, Bryan Troyer and Jacob Weyrauch. Please contact one of us if you have any questions.

