November 2026

The Good News

The monthly newsletter of **Christ United Church**

Christ United Church

A federated church
of the Presbyterian Church
(USA) and the
United Church of Christ

**With Christ
as our heart
and God's love
as our fire,
we learn, we love,
we care for all
people.**

A Word from Pastor Janis

This summer has reminded me how much being with family can be a balm for my soul. Oftentimes we think in terms of "Well that's too far away," or "We don't have time for that." But this summer we made the time to travel to Maryland to visit with my mom's family, a family that has been blended into one so beautifully that even when the biological sibling is missing, the spouse and family are still members of the family.

For the first time ever, my kids got to experience the larger family that they have only heard about. Joel was able to watch as my family gathered and celebrated with nothing hanging in the balance. It was beautiful watching cousins meet and having aunts and uncles ask if they had gotten together before with how close they were. It's a reminder that while blood is thicker than water, family is what you make of it, and even if there is trauma, it's still a part of who you are. And I am so thankful I was able to share that small bit with my kids this summer.



We are already planning a couple of other visits with them for the coming months so that we don't forget what it is to be present with one another, to be part of that extended family. I also learned that even though our faith beliefs might not be the same, some of my extended family (which does include a VERY Southern Baptist), watch our services from time to time. So even when we don't see it or know it, we are connected and being lifted up by so many others than we can ever realize.

Walk in Balance, Pastor Janis



Governing Board Update

Starting this month, the Governing Board will submit a brief summary of our monthly meeting in each newsletter. Here is our first update:

Attendance: In attendance were Co-Moderators Rev. Janis Montgomery and Dennis Stocker; members Bonnie Crall, Brian Rickel, Jeff Smith, Kathy Smith, Rich Spinner, Chris Szabo, Bobbi White, and Janet Winzenburger; as well as Treasurer Chris Landers and Stan Vozar.

Financial Update: Finances remain strong, with giving ahead of projections and expenses under budget

Budget Planning for 2027 has officially begun. In accordance with the Manual of Operations, a Budget Team will be formed to review expected pledges and expenses. They will prepare a recommended budget for the Governing Board to present to the congregation at the January Congregational Meeting. Key considerations for the upcoming budget include: incorporating funding for North Church, Second Mile Outreach, and AFDA directly into the church budget (CUC will continue its current 3-year grant cycle.) and creating an opportunity for our youth to direct a mission donation to Heifer International.

Board Actions & Updates:

- ✞ A motion passed to host the Presbytery Meeting at CUC on November 23.
- ✞ Acknowledgements: CUC received notes of thanks for our contributions to the LGBT Community of Greater Cleveland, the Christmas Joy Offering, and One Great Hour of Sharing.
- ✞ Governing Board liaisons shared individual team updates. Key highlights include:
  - Sunday school: Resumed with a new curriculum.
  - Serviceberry Project: Started by Rev. Joel.
  - North Church: Next meal service scheduled for November 8.
  - Memorial Garden: Improvements are underway. Go check it out! ✞



Building and Grounds

More people from outside the congregation are crossing our doorstep. The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) has come back to our building. They offered three classes that were well attended. We hope they will continue to use our facility in the future.

The Memorial Garden is entering its next phase from our new design by Dahlia Gypsy Farms. As you know, we dropped a 20-ton rooftop furnace into the garden area. It is not very conducive to a spiritual atmosphere. So, we are putting up a privacy fence around it and in front of the electrical box. There will be a trellis between the posts that will be used to grow flowering vines. If you have had success in growing vines in Northeast Ohio, please contact Rich Spinner.

There is a new look for the west entrance. Perhaps you have noticed white dots on the glass in the westside entry. Our resident artist, Pete Szabo, has been putting each dot in its appropriate place. It may not be the Sistine Chapel, but the dots will hopefully prevent birds from flying into the glass. Also, thanks to Pete, the hole in the soffit where birds were nesting has also been covered. ✞

Martha Circle

Martha Circle will be lunching at Olive Garden on **November 11 at 11:30.** All CUC women and their guests are welcome. The address is 17500 Bagley Rd., Middleburg Hts. Please RSVP to Corky (grammacats@cox.net/ 440-243-2667) by Monday, November 9th. Please join us. ✞

Interpreting the Lord's Prayer

In a recent Children's Time, Della Barclay shared her version of making the Lord's prayer relevant for her.

Our Father who art in heaven

Creative Spirit who is everywhere

Hallowed be thy name

Your creation is sacred

Thy Kingdom come

The beauty of creation is right here among us

Thy will be done

Because that is what is supposed to be

On earth as it is in heaven

Everywhere, not just in my neighborhood

Give us this day our daily bread and

Everyone is supposed to have enough to eat

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us

But because we can be selfish and greedy, we are tempted to hoard things for ourselves

Lead us not into temptation

Protect us from our own selfish nature

But deliver us from evil

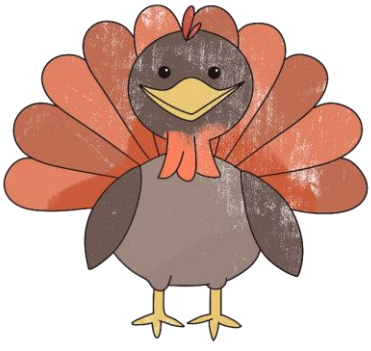
Show us how to correct our mistakes

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

For creation if forever

Amen.

How might you write the Lord's Prayer for yourself? ✞



5th Sunday Offering

On November 29, we will receive an additional offering to support Berea Animal Rescue's pet food bank which provides pet food to families struggling to feed their pets.

Fellowship and Discuss

For November 2026

The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out. Proverbs 18:15

Fellowship and Discuss will gather on **Thursday, November 12, at 7 pm** to continue the study of the Old Testament by virtue of Bethel Bible Study. Our 9th study, "Empowered for a Destiny," references the book of Leviticus. Israel lived in a world where evil was a reality. Preoccupied with their own burdens, they could not be a blessing to others. Atonement was necessary.



This study is open to anyone interested in broadening their understanding of God's word. Corinne Wilson will lead the study, with Bonnie Crall assisting. Please let Bonnie know by November 9th, if you plan to attend, in order to prepare enough printed materials for everyone in attendance.

Come to the Crall home located at 6459 East Vancey Dr., Brook Park. Bonnie's home phone number is 440-234-2202 and her email is bcrall@ameritech.net. Parking is available on the west and north sides of the street and in the driveway. ✞

Cans for Cats and Canines!

The Berea Animal Rescue Shelter (aka ARF) accepts aluminum cans (or just pop tops) which they sell to the scrap yard for cash. They also need food donations and towels and blankets. No quilts or comforters, please, they are too big to launder onsite. There is a donation shed close to the shelter which is at 10015 East River Road, Columbia Station. The animals thank you! ✞



Happy Birthday November

2	Tim Mercier
4	Amy Marke
4	Marijo Rickel
5	Shirley Gerecke
5	Katie Spinner
7	Bobbi Perkins-White
7	Joan Wiborg
9	Chris Szabo
10	Joan Kamper
16	Beverly Maxwell
21	Byron Nyregran
21	Dale Van Zante
27	Diana Craig
29	Sara Barnett



Community Outreach Task Force

Here's what your Community Outreach Task Force has been working on for the past month. We tend to get more requests in the fall especially with higher prices and the holidays. If you become aware of anyone in Olmsted Falls or Berea that is having trouble, please let us know.

The hot area for the past month is heating. As summer closes out, it seems more people are focusing on their past due gas bills. We have helped several families avoid having their gas turned off. ✞



Yard Signs

` There are several "Vote w/Love" yard signs available for the low, low price of only $13. If you would like one, please contact the church office. Leaving a message if calling is helpful. They can be used for any election.✞

Faith & Film:

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

Friday, November 27; 6:30 p.m.

Sometimes the greatest gift is making room.

The Thanksgiving leftovers are in the fridge, the holiday travel is (hopefully) behind us, and Faith & Film is hitting the road with the classic 1987 comedy *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*, starring Steve Martin and John Candy!

All Neal Page wants is to get home for Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, fate—and an endlessly talkative shower curtain ring salesman named Del Griffith—have other plans. What follows is a hilariously disastrous journey involving missed connections, unexpected detours, and two strangers who discover that getting where you're going isn't always as important as who travels alongside you.

As we wrap up our exploration of *The Serviceberry*, this Thanksgiving favorite invites us to consider the gifts we find in unexpected places. What happens when inconvenience becomes opportunity, strangers become neighbors, and generosity means making room for someone we never expected to welcome?

Come for pizza, laughter, and conversation as we celebrate the messy, marvelous gift of community. After all, there's always room for one more!

Please note: This film is rated R, primarily for strong language.



Advent Season Decorating

The season of Advent is just around the corner and all friends and members are invited to gather on Saturday, **November 28, 10 AM to 1 PM** to help with decorating as we prepare our sanctuary and church building for the season. Donuts and hot chocolate will be provided; all are welcome! We will begin our advent worship services the following day with our first Sunday of Advent, November 29. ✞



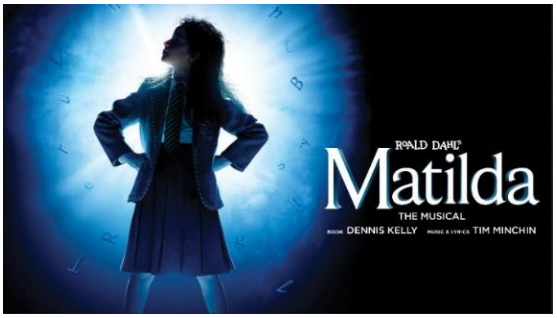
Festive Wear for the Christmas Season

Discipleship Team has designated December 13th as "fun and festive Christmas wear" Sunday. You are encouraged to wear your ugly Christmas sweater to worship that morning. No worries if you don't have an ugly sweater. You are welcome to wear something festive or simply Christmas colors. Let's have some fun this holiday season!



AFDA Showcase

On November 15 after worship, AFDA will once again share some excerpts from the upcoming show Matilda during Friendship Time. They will bring pastries and there will be coffee available. Please come.



The Good News

The monthly publication of
Christ United Church
440-234-0150
23114 West Road
Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138
Office@ChristUnited.Church
Sunday Worship 10:00 AM
Also on our web page.
Judy Mitchell, Editor
Betsy Clark, Associate Editor

Church Personnel

Rev. Janis Montgomery, Pastor
(PastorJanis@ChristUnited.Church)
Rev. Joel Montgomery, Associate Pastor
(PastorJoel@ChristUnited.Church)
Bryan Bowser, Director of Music
Joshua Arkangel, Assistant Director of Music
Betsy Clark, Office Manager

The first Sunday of Advent is **November 29**. Watch your email for more details on our Advent theme for this season.

