
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio 44256 330-725-4559

www.uccmedina.org



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LIVE STREAMING OF THE SANCTUARY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE AT UCCMEDINA.ORG

“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS”

Please take a moment to sign the attendance pads, (located at the end of each pew) so that you know who is worshipping near you and you may greet them by name.

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

PRELUDE “Creator of the Stars of Night” with “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” – Curt Oliver
Cathy Fafrak, Organist

***VISIONING PRAYER** by Sharon Alberson

God, help us to be welcoming. God, help us to be loving.
God, help us to see that serving you can lead us to
A place full of grace with no limits where we can be free...
To open our hands, welcoming. To open our hearts, loving
To be more than church on Sunday, to live in the light from above;
To celebrate in service and love.

LITANY OF LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF JOY Confirmands

Leader One: We move from one task to another, from one responsibility to another. The holidays may wear us out with worries about preparations, about family relationships, about money, about presents!

People: We are scattered and busy about too many things.

Leader Two: We call out in our fatigue:

People: Where is your joy, O God? Where is your gift of presence in our lives?

Leader One: We remind ourselves of Paul’s ancient advice:

People: Celebrate God all day...revel in God!

Help everyone see that the Master is about to arrive!

Don’t fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray.

Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God’s wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It is wonderful when that happens; when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

*(Philippians 4: 4-7 adapted from **The Message** © 2002 Eugene H. Peterson; reproduced with permission)*

Leader Two: Let us light this third candle of Advent, a candle of Joy.

In its light, let us turn our worries into prayers for God to be present to us right now, as we prepare for the coming of Christ.

[Candle of Joy is lit]

Leader One: Let this candle of Advent Joy shine in our hearts all week and remind us to pray and praise and place Christ at the center this season.

*** OPENING HYMN "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"**

Martin Luther, c. 1535

Luke 2:1-14

St. 1-2, transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1855; alt.

St. 3-5, transl. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978; alt.

1 "From heav-en un - to earth I come to bear good news to ev - ery - one!
2 "To you, this night, is born a child of Mar - y, cho - sen moth-er mild;
3 O dear-est Je - sus, ho - ly child, pre-pare a bed, soft, un - de - filed,
4 My heart for ver - y joy now leaps; my voice no long - er si - lence keeps;
5 "Glo - ry to God," the an-gels sing, "and peace on earth," let heav-en ring.

Glad tid-ings of great joy I bring where-of I now will glad-ly sing:
This lit - tle child, in Jo-seph's arms, with joy shall con-quer all earth's harms."
A ho - ly shrine, with-in my heart, that you and I need nev - er part.
I too must join the an - gel throng to sing this joy-ous cra - dle song.
With voic-es raised we greet the birth: a glad new year to all the earth.

Martin Luther used a singing-game song as the model for the first stanza of this hymn, then added fourteen more stanzas. The hymn was written for his family's Christmas Eve celebration in 1534, and published the following year.

Tune: VOM HIMMEL HOCH L.M.
Valentin Schumann's Geistliche Lieder, 1539
Harm. Hans Leo Hassler in Kirchengesäng,
Psalmen und Geistliche Lieder, Nürnberg, 1608

Children's Christmas Pageant



by Charles M. Shultz

Scene 1 - It's Christmas Time

Song: "Christmas Time is Here" - Youth Choir

Scene 2 - Christmas Has Gone Commercial

Song: "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" - Whole Cast

Song: "Deck the Halls" - Whole Cast

Scene 3 - What Christmas is All About

Song: "Away in a Manger" - Cherub Choir

Song: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" - Whole Cast

"Joy to the World"

Joy to the World, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

CONGREGATION JOIN IN vs. 2 & 3

**Joy to the World, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders, of His love.**

CAST

Charlie Brown - Joel DeSario
Lucy - Carleigh Johns
Linus - Elliott Avalon
Sally - Ruby Gabrielsen
Snoopy - Eve Lindon
Violet - Nora Nolan
Patti - Dublyn Alt
Freida - Nellie Alber
Pig Pen - Noah Spence
Shermy - Laura Medley

Innkeepers:

Nellie Alber
Noah Spence

Narrators:

Maggie Bixler
Noah Spence
Leah Medley
Katherine Johns
Nora Nolan
Dublyn Alt
Maxine Pettit

Wisemen:

Grant Bixler
Camden Cochrane
Sammy Ockunzzi

Mary - Natalie Spence
Joseph - Bobby Nolan

Shepherds:

Bennett Alt
Laura Medley
Charlie Welday

Angels:

Colin Bixler
Jimmy Cervenak
Parker Cochrane
Sam Lindon
Ava Rosen
Lily Rosen

Thank you

Thank you to all the parents for your help and support with this program.

Thank you to Matt Yates and Alex Gabrielsen for all their technical help.

Thank you to Cathy Fafrak for giving your time and talent to accompany the music.

Thank you to Alice Metzloff for helping with the costumes.

A huge thank you to Tracy Gabrielsen for your help in directing this pageant.

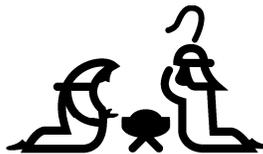
I couldn't have done it without you.

And finally, a BIG thank you to all the youth who participated in the pageant.

What a blessing to us all!

God Bless You and Merry Christmas

Stacie Yates



MERRY CHRISTMAS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns, Silent Prayer, Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAISE RESPONSE

"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" (vs. 2)

2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, whose hum - ble song is
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing.
Mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing
kind - ness, the thun - der of the an - thems roll to
shat - ter all hate and in - jus - tice.

Liturgical composer Marty Haugen wrote both words and music for this Advent hymn with the twofold aim of providing an easy congregational chorale and utilizing the images of the Isaiah passages.

Tune: REJOICE, REJOICE 9.8.9.8.8.7.8.9.
Marty Haugen, 1983

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OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

Offertory Invitation

We have the opportunity to participate with God in turning things around in this world. The effort to do so requires a sharing of the gifts God has placed in our hands. Consider now, what part you wish to play in the work of creation.

*Doxology Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

We present to you, O God, our gifts. May they be used to make a difference in the lives of people where hope is scarce. May our gifts be a reminder, to those who receive them, of your love. Amen.

*SENDING HYMN

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
2. Fling wide the portals of your heart;
3. Re - deem - er, come, with us a - bide;
4. Thy Ho - ly Spir - it lead us on

be - hold, the King of glo - ry waits;
make it a tem - ple, set a - part
our hearts to thee we o - pen wide;
un - til our glo - rious goal is won;

the King of kings is draw - ing near;
from earth - ly use for heaven's em - ploy,
let us thy in - ner pres - ence feel;
e - ter - nal praise, e - ter - nal fame

the Sav - ior of the world is here!
a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
thy grace and love in us re - veal.
be of - fered, Sav - ior, to thy name!

***BENEDICTION**

Leader: We thank you that the wait is almost over.

People: We thank you for the joy of the children this day!

Leader: For creativity.

People: Anticipation.

Leader: Expectation.

People: We go from here having been blessed to be a blessing to our world. Amen!

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE "God Be with You"**

God be with you 'til we meet again; By His counsels guide uphold you;

With His sheep securely fold you; God be with you 'til we meet again.

***POSTLUDE "From Heaven Above" – arr. John Leavitt**

Cathy Fafrak, Organist

"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"

+++++

* Those who are able are asked to please stand

***Ushers:** Julie Gilliland, Dick Christy, Ron Greinke, Pete Benson*

**** Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service****

Today's coffee hour is hosted by the DELTs.

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - email: luke@uccmedina.org

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - email: office@uccmedina.org

Kelly Charnley, Financial Manager - email: financial@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education

Michelle Lisco, Co-Director of Youth

Jim Kiser, Director of Music

Cathy Fafrak, Organist

Rebecca Rosen, Nursery Supervisor

Xanthe Phillips, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

DECEMBER 16, 2018

**“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS.
MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY!”**

Live streaming of the Sanctuary Service is available at uccmedina.org

December 16, 2018 thru December 23, 2018

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Traditional Worship
Children's Christmas Pageant
11:45 am Mission Team
2:00 pm JMM @ Medina Meadows
3:00 pm JMM @ Brookdale North –
 Hymn Sing
4:00 pm Youth Group –
 Christmas Dinner & Parties

Mon 1:00 pm Breadmakers
 1:30 pm Flower Committee Meeting

Tues

Wed 10:30 am Quilters
 7:00 pm Discipleship & Education Team
 7:15 pm Youth Bell Choir
 7:45 pm Youth Choir

Thu **Garfield Deliveries**

Fri

Sat 3:00 pm Christmas Caroling
 & Chili Dinner

Sun **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
9:15 am Choir practice
10:30 am Traditional Worship –
2:00 pm JMM @ Medina Meadows
 Sing-a-long
7:00 pm JMM @ Western Reserve
 Masonic Home

Worship Highlights: 8:15 & 9:00 am

Scripture: Isaiah 12: 2-6 & Luke 1: 39-45

Sermon: “Joy” Rev. Luke Lindon

10:30 am “A Charlie Brown Christmas”
The Children's Christmas Program

Altar Flowers: The altar flowers are given by Jan Wagner Russell & William Wagner in memory of their parents Bill & Ellen Wagner.

Upcoming Youth Events:

***December 16** – Christmas Pageant 10:30 service
 Confirmants light the Advent Wreath

***December 16** – Youth Group Christmas Parties 4-6

***December 23** – **NO F.I.S.H.** MERRY CHRISTMAS!

 One Room Sunday School

***December 30** – **NO F.I.S.H.** –HAPPY NEW YEAR!

***January 6** – Third Grade Bible Parent Meeting –
 10:00 in the Library

***January 6** – Youth Group 4-6 pm

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS
PROGRAM TODAY!**
“A Charlie Brown Christmas”
10:30 am Worship

THIRD GRADE BIBLE PARENT MEETING

January 6th at 10:00 am

There will be a meeting for all parents of third graders who wish to receive their bible. We will meet in the library at 10:00 am. Please see Stacie Yates if you have any questions.

SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD

Reach out to older members and friends of the church – send a Christmas card. When you are making your Christmas card list, could you include those on our Circle of Caring Visitation list? Lists with addresses are on a poster in the hall by the office. Thank You!

EXTRA GIFT CARDS ON HAND FOR PURCHASE

Extra Gift Cards Available for Christmas Gifts:

\$10—Chipotle, \$10—Panera, \$10—Starbucks,
\$25—Speedway and \$25—Target
and \$10.50—Regal Premiere Movie Ticket

Please contact Kelly weekdays in the office or via email financial@uccmedina.org if you would like to purchase any of these cards. You may pay cash or by check payable to UCC. These cards make great gifts. Supplies are limited.

2019 BICENTENNIAL CALENDARS

As our Bicentennial year approaches, we have several exciting things planned to celebrate the upcoming year!

We have compiled a usable working wall calendar for 2019 with all the special church events listed along with some beautiful photos of the church. Of course, things will be subject to change and we will keep you posted throughout the year, but it is a great way to keep track of what will be happening so you can save the dates!

Calendars will be available beginning Sunday, December 2nd for a \$5 donation that will go towards our Bicentennial Celebrations.

SHARE THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Spread some Christmas cheer to our older members and friends of the Medina UCC by making a visit and delivering a Christmas craft made at the Advent Family Fun Night. Each craft has the name, phone number and address on it. Please call the person and arrange your visit before Christmas. Crafts are displayed in the East Room ready for pick up.

COSTA RICA PANELS

We are raising funds to build a house in the East Room! Well, a model of a house that will be built in Costa Rica. Each panel costs \$375. We hope that we can build a full model of the house which will be built in January with Mercy Homes, our mission partner in Costa Rica. **We have currently raised \$2310.00, enough for 6 panels!** Any amount helps. Thanks for helping

ALTAR FLOWERS

The 2019 Flower Chart is now hanging on the bulletin board in the East Room hallway. Please sign up to sponsor the Altar Flowers. This is a wonderful way to honor or remember someone, or to celebrate a special occasion.

Please fill in your name and write “church” or “self” to let us know if you would like the church to order the flowers for you or if you will be ordering them yourself. The cost of the flowers ordered through the church office is \$22.50.

Also, please write what you would like printed in the Messenger and if you want to claim your flowers after the 10:30 service.

GARFIELD HYGIENE PROGRAM NEW ITEMS NEEDED!

Thank you for the generous contribution of toiletries for the Hygiene Program to assist the children at Garfield School. We are now asking for your contributions of **ear muffs and body lotion** in addition to the hygiene items. Socks are always appreciated. Please place your contributions in the box at the bottom of the staircase.

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED

Please consider signing up to host a Coffee Hour after the 10:30 service in January, February, or March. Sign-up sheets are in the East Room. Please remember this is supposed to be a snack with coffee or punch. Doughnut holes, cheese and crackers, fresh fruit or anything you like may be served. **KEEP IT SIMPLE.** Thank you and if there are questions, please contact Beth Hari @ 330-242-1807.

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

The light is surely coming! Please give generously this holiday season to **THE CHRISTMAS FUND FOR VETERANS OF THE CROSS**, the unique UCC Special Mission Offering recognizing and honoring our beloved ministers and their spouses who dedicate their careers and so much of their lives to the church. For over a century, these offerings have been a tangible expression of God's love and light in the world. Year after year, United Church of Christ members and congregations have reached out in kindness, compassion, and gratitude to those who have faithfully shepherded our Church in the past and who now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs. This ministry cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ. Your gift will also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to lower-income retirees.

KEY FOUND FOR A BUICK

A Buick key was found in the kitchen sometime around the Youth Group Thanksgiving Potluck or Candlelight Walk. Please claim it if it is yours.



CHRISTMAS TREE, 1916

MIAMI UNIVERSITY CHEEZIES

Kyle Root and The Miami University Cheezies are doing a home town tour this winter and will be making a stop right here at the church on **January 16, 2019**. They are thrilled to offer an evening of fun a *cappella* selections as well as guest performances by several members of the church. The performance will start at **7:30 the evening of the 16th** and will conclude with a reception so you can meet some of the talented performers. How much does this cost? It is 100% FREE! Come enjoy the music and we will offer a donation plate if you think it was amazing!

GIFT TO ENDOWMENT FUND

Gift time is close approaching, and often, we are seeking a gift for the person who "has everything" or the person who says they "need nothing". Please consider making a GIFT OF GRATITUDE for the life of that person by making a gift to the ENDOWMENT FUND in their name. The Fund is here to do good things. The fund is here to underwrite projects, programs and needs that emerge from the life of the church. Your loved one will be honored – and it is the perfect size and perfect color!

Bicentennial Tidbits

In 1909, the Medina Congregational Church had 700 members, out of a community with a population of 2800 or 25% - this was believed to be the largest congregational church percentage in the country.



“...And they will call him Emmanuel, which means ‘God with us’...” Matthew 1:23

“...And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters...” Genesis 1:2

“...I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you.” John 14:18

Right from the beginning, The Bible reveals that God is not far away but very close. We don't see references to Zeus up on Mount Olympus throwing lightning bolts to make his creation. Instead, God is very close to his creation, intimately brooding over the waters of the ancient earth.

He wants to be close. In the times of Moses, he was in the center of the camp. His temple was set up in the midst of the nation of Israel. The prophets and psalmists reveal that God is grieved when we ignore him or distance ourselves from him, but he loves us and keeps coming closer – seeking his lost children.

Eventually he came here and walked side by side with us, even through suffering and death. But that was still not close enough. He promised to come right into our very hearts by his Spirit, if we will only make room for him.

What does that mean? What does that do? Maybe we can learn if we draw close, too.

The deadline for submission of articles for NEXT Sunday's *Messenger* is this Sunday at 11:30 am.

Please submit articles to the church office at office@uccmedina.org

*******CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm MONDAY THRU FRIDAY*******

Luke 3:7-18

Look Forward

John the Baptist, good old bug-eating and camel's-hair-wearing John the Baptist, gets in the face of his congregation, calling them, "A brood of vipers." You probably wouldn't be too thrilled if your pastor did that, would you? Now, what could have gotten him so riled up?

John was angry because he saw that his people were relying on their national identity as a get-into-God's-good-graces card. Instead of repentance, the people were expecting special favor for being "children of Abraham." It's as if someone today thought that being a citizen of the United States got them special pure and moral status in the world. As if being an American was such a worthy state God would bestow blessings without a second thought. This kind of nativism made John very angry. In response, the crowds around him wanted to know what they should do. In a word, John's answer was, "Share." Share everything you have that's extra, he said, don't take more than you need. Share with everybody.

Of course, over the centuries, waves of immigrants have come to this country eventually enriching our world. And, in all that time, we have not always been welcoming. We have made those who were here before us feel like aliens on their own land; we have vilified nationalities - the Irish, the Italians, the Polish; and, we have brought whole peoples here against their will. It seems we have not assimilated as well as we thought because there is today so much acrimony and cruelty and disregard for people who are different, people who wear head scarves and turbans and all those who do not appear "white." Most of those who have come here of their own volition came because our country means something good and safe and represents a home where their children can learn and grow. Why did your forebears come to America? What does it mean to call oneself an American? How do we respond to John's call to share?

Shadow Rock UCC in Phoenix, Arizona is establishing something they are calling "Hope Station Nogales" in Sonora, Mexico. It will be a ministry of hospitality and justice created for those in this country we call "Dreamers." Built as a place for healing for these people who came to the US as children and have spent most of their lives in our country and may now be deported. It will be for those individuals who have family here, who have an attorney, who are not criminals, and who need a place to be among people who care for them and where they will find shelter and safe lodging and assistance. "The core of the Gospel is new life," said the Rev. Bill Lyons, Southwest Conference Minister. "Hope Station gives deportees a chance at new life near the border." If you want to find out more about Shadow Rock and the Sanctuary Movement in Phoenix go to: shadowrockucc.org.