
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

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

www.uccmedina.org



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LIVESTREAMING 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 “Improvisation on Savior of the Nations, Come” – Paul Manz 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.

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE The Nolan Family**

(written by the Rev. Jeff Nelson, on <http://www.coffeehousecontemplative.com/>)

Leader: Our journey through Advent is nearing its close. We’ve joined in hope, taught peace, and rejoiced with one another.

People: **Led by the Spirit, we have remembered some important truths revealed by the One whose birth we seek.**

Leader: The flame symbolizing love is the latest to mark our journey, and it is perhaps the brightest of all.

People: **Love seems to be the simplest, and yet is the most difficult. We take this moment to be reminded yet again.**

(Pause while the third Advent candle, the candle of Love is lit.)

Leader: The light of love illuminates the path ahead of us. It is the path that the One soon to be born will bid us follow.

People: **May God embolden our hearts to love others as God first loved us. May this time of worship strengthen us for this call.**

***RESPONSE**

"Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn"

4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though
cold the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less;
Love be our song and love our prayer, and love, our end - less
sto - ry, may God fill ev - ery day we share, and
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

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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***INVOCATION**

Ever-present God, we rejoice in the love and faithfulness that you have shown to us. We are aware of your invitation not only to receive this gift, but also to share it with others. We confess that it is hard to love some of the people who cross our life's path. We see the risk involved and are not sure how best to fulfill your calling. O God, grant us discerning hearts and generous spirits, that we may know the best way forward, ever guided by your light. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

"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.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

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,

ANTHEM "Shout Hallelujah!" – words by Fanny Crosby, music by Larry Shackley Chancel Choir

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Stacie Yates

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns, Silent Prayer, Pastoral Prayer

PRAYER RESPONSE

"What Child is This?"

What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 7:10-16 and Matthew 1:18-25

Dorothe Edinger, Liturgist

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**Offertory Invitation**

Not out of duty, but out of love we now give our mornings offering.

Offertory Music "Once in Royal David's City" – arr. David Cherwien Cathy Fafrak, Organist

***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**

May these be tangible signs of our love to you, Gracious Mystery; as well as to our neighbor. For the command to love you and our neighbor are the fulfilment of the law. These two things are what the prophets reminded us of. We now dedicate ourselves again and again to fulfilling your will. Amen.

SENDING HYMN*"Angels We Have Heard on High"**

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

***BENEDICTION**

Leader: We have been blessed to be a blessing.

People: Blessed to be a blessing by a hope forged in adversity;

Leader: By a peace that passes all understanding;

People: By a joy that goes beyond a moment's happiness;

Leader: By a love that can save the whole world.

People: To this we give our thanks and our praise!

Leader: To this, we are unleashed on an unsuspecting world

People: To bend the world toward blessing.

Leader: Go! Having been blessed by our Triune God for this service has ended,

People: And our service now begins. 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** "Angels We Have Heard on High" – arr. Humphrey Turner Cathy Fafrak, Organist

"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"

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*Those who are able please stand

***Ushers:** Dick Christy, Darlene Fazekas, Julie Gilliland, John Kavouras*

****Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service***
Today's coffee hour is hosted by **John & Kathi Kavouras.***

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PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Luke Lindon, Senior Pastor – email: luke@uccmedina.org

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - email: office@uccmedina.org
Kelly Charney, Financial Manager – email: financial@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education
Nicole Rubino, Co-Director of Youth
Jim Kiser, Director of Music
Cathy Fafrak, Organist
Rebecca Rosen, Nursery Supervisor
Xanthe Phillips, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool
Jack Sharpe, Maintenance

POINSETTIAS



NAME OF DONOR

IN MEMORY OF

<i>Bruce & Connie Anderson</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Bruce & Sally Bauer</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Syd & Pete Benson</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Mary Ann Blosser</i>	<i>My Son, Brian</i>
<i>Carol Brenneman</i>	<i>Willard H. Brenneman</i>
<i>Don & Marilyn Canfield</i>	<i>Grandparents</i>
<i>Dick & Dorie Christy</i>	<i>Our Grandparents</i>
<i>Jan Coleman</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Jack Post</i>
<i>Ken & Sue Dean</i>	<i>Our Son, George</i>
<i>Ruth Dunn</i>	<i>Jane Schmidt & Parents</i>
<i>Dorothie Edinger</i>	<i>David M. Edinger; Rudy & Mary Kutchever</i>
<i>Betty Einhart</i>	<i>My Husband, Jay Einhart</i>
<i>Myra Fabian</i>	<i>Wayne Fabian</i>
<i>Ed & Helen Farnham</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Ed & Helen Farnham</i>	<i>Our Sisters: Katherine, Carolyn, Carol</i>
<i>Beth & Craig Hari</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Pat Hofstetter</i>	<i>Jack Hofstetter</i>
<i>Diana Hunter</i>	<i>Howard Hunter</i>
<i>Arnold & Cheri Ingraham</i>	<i>Berneta Ingraham</i>
<i>The Johns Family</i>	<i>Jerry Johns</i>
<i>Jim Kiser</i>	<i>Barb Kiser</i>
<i>Marilyn Koehler</i>	<i>Donald R. Koehler</i>
<i>Dick & Joyce Komjati</i>	<i>Our Parents</i>
<i>Lynn Leckie</i>	<i>Kim Griffor & Jeff Leckie</i>
<i>Karen Leidy</i>	<i>Kitty & Bill Andrews</i>
<i>Karen Leidy</i>	<i>Thelma & Glenn Leidy</i>
<i>Karen Leidy</i>	<i>Sherry Fodor</i>
<i>Lou & Nancy Livengood</i>	<i>Tom Livengood</i>
<i>Peter E. & Alice A. Metzloff</i>	<i>Loved Ones</i>
<i>Carol Mitchell</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Al Kreger</i>
<i>Ellen & Jeff Nutter</i>	<i>Robert Mackenzie & Jerry Nutter</i>
<i>Earle & Medith Olson</i>	<i>Loved Ones</i>

NAME OF DONOR

*Betty Palmquist
Alan Parkhurst
Alan Parkhurst
Lori Price
Dennis & Allayne Reese
Barb Rosen
Jane & Lou Schaefer
Judy & Ken Smith
The Tollafield Family
The Tollafield Family
UCC Office Staff
Roger, Susan, Tim & Chris Whitaker
Dean & Beth Winquist*

IN MEMORY OF

*Parents & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Parkhurst
Floyd Mullet
Husband, Mother & Father
Our Parents
Husband Keith Rosen, Parents & Brother
Our Loved Ones
Perry Arenz
Alice & Ronald Tollafield
Lynne Tollafield
Dave Weber
Truman, Justine & Steve Whitaker
Our Grandparents*

NAME OF DONOR

*Bruce & Connie Anderson
Joe & Lori Donnelly
Walter & Virginia Hall
Brian & Diane Howard
The Johns Family
Jim Kiser
Bonnie Shuman*

IN HONOR OF

*Linda Rode, Friend
Elaine, Chase, Joey, Gavin & Olivia
Our Family
Our 7 Grandchildren
Our Friends & Family
The Chancel, Bell & Youth Bell Choirs
My Family*



THE PILGRIM MESSENGER DECEMBER 22, 2019

**“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 22 thru December 29, 2019

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun 4th 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 @ WMRC

Mon

Tues Christmas Offering

Office Closes at Noon

Christmas Eve Worship

6:00 pm Candlelight Service

9:00 pm Candlelight Service

Wed *Merry Christmas!* - Office Closed

Thu

Fri 1:30 pm JMM @ Evergreen

Sat

Sun 10:00 am
**SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE
ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY**

1:15 pm JMM @ Brookdale North

SAVE THE DATE

JANUARY 26TH, 2020

ALL CHURCH POTLUCK BRUNCH

The survey said: Potluck Brunch! We have scheduled the first one for the fourth Sunday in January following the Annual Meeting. Details to follow in early January.

Worship Highlights 8:15 am, 9:00 am & 10:30 am

Scripture: Isaiah 7:10-16 & Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon: “LOVE” - Rev. Luke Lindon

THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is a special mission offering administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Board. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy as well as lay employees are eligible. Your support of this mission offering will be received Sunday, December 22, 2019. Thank you for your generosity.

SERVICE OF REMEMBERING

DECEMBER 29TH at 10:00 am

On the last Sunday of the year we will remember those persons who have passed away this past year. By having the time of remembrance during a worship service, we encourage family members and others to come and share this time together. During the worship service, the names of the members of Medina UCC who have passed away during 2019 will be read. For each *member* a candle will be lighted and a chime will ring. We would also like to read the names of family members and loved ones who have passed away during this past year. If you have a loved one you would like remembered, please call the Church Office with the full name of the loved one, their relationship to you, and the day of their passing no later than Monday, December 23rd.

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. 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 with cash or by check payable to “UCC”. These cards make great gifts. Supplies are limited.

HELP US BUILD OUR 2020 BUDGET

Where or where are the last 70 or so 2020 Pledge Cards? Council will be reviewing the 2020 Budget in early January and at this point we are still about \$100,000 short in total. Questions or concerns can be addressed by Kelly weekdays in the office or via email at financial@uccmedina.org. Also please note that **all 2019 Contributions must be postmarked by December 31st, 2019 to be eligible for your 2019 Tax Deduction.**

BICENTENNIAL “TIME CAPSULE”

The yearlong observance of our 200th anniversary will culminate on Founders Day with the ceremonial dedication/deposition of the Time Capsule. Memory Cards will be distributed via bulletins, ushers, and will be available near the drop off collection box (not the actual time capsule box). Members are asked to fill out this form with pertinent family information, as well as favorite memories, stories, or experiences that connect you to this church. These forms are now available. They are printed on non-acetone paper so that the ink will not fade after the first 25 years. Please do not simply discard this form. Fill it out and drop into the box or return it to the table or to the usher to be distributed for someone else to write a memory. Cards will be collected through the last week of January.

SENIOR SPOT

Be prepared for an Ohio Winter:

Heat your home safely and dress warmly.
Keep sidewalks and steps clear if you go out.
Use extra caution to prevent falls.
Stay active and have someone check on you.

NEW MEMBER CLASS

Would you like to join our church family!? Join us for our next new member class! We are trying something new with our class to start the New Year! We will have only ONE class that will include covering all aspects of membership. It will also include filling out all your paperwork and having your photo taken in this one and only class. Please come expecting to have your picture taken!

Our one class will be held: **Monday, January 13th from 7 pm – 9 pm.** This class will also include a tour of the church and access to the many people who are involved in our Leadership Teams, Committees and activities in the church. You will have the chance to interact with them and ask questions to see what you might like to get involved in! Childcare is provided if needed. **New members will join the church on Sunday, January 26th.** Please contact the Church Office at 330-725-4559 if you are interested and let us know if you will be in need of childcare.

WHAT GOES UP, MUST ALSO COME DOWN

With Christmas nearly upon us, as we are enjoying the beautiful surroundings within our church walls, we need to take our time to reflect on the “Reason for the Season.” We thank our volunteer crew for setting up all the decorations, and now need to turn our thoughts to the times and dates when we can disassemble, package, label and tape the boxes for storage next year.

The plan: Sunday, January 5th at 11:30 after the traditional service. Please plan to stay after church to help with the “Un-Decorating” process. Blessings to you and thank you in advance.

Upcoming Youth Events:

- *December 29 – NO F.I.S.H.
- *January 5 – Youth Group – 4:00-6:00
- *January 12 – Confirmation 3:00-4:30
- *January 19 – Youth Group 4:00-6:00
- *January 24 – Confirmation Trip to Temple Israel
6:00 pm in church parking lot
- *January 26 – Confirmation 3:00-4:30

PILGRIM MESSENGER MAILING

We will not be mailing the Pilgrim Messenger for the next 2 weeks.

We will resume mailing again on Thursday, January 9th, 2020.

CHECK OUT THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE EAST ROOM HALLWAY!

We have several signup sheets on the bulletin board for you to check out! We have lots of open spaces on the **Flower Chart** for you to sign up to sponsor the altar flowers, you can sign up to be a Sunday worship greeter, volunteer to host a **coffee hour** or sign up to be a **liturgist!** There are several volunteer opportunities for you to check out. If you would like to find out more about any one of these things, you may call the church office at 330-725-4559. We also have **signup sheets for church activities** throughout the year hanging on this board so check them out!

GOSPEL GALLEY SETS SAIL JANUARY 5, 2020

Interested in writing for Gospel Galley Mediations? WRITER SIGN-UP for 2020 is posted on the bulletin board in the East Room Hallway.

Criteria: Topics are unlimited. Restrictions are minimal:

1. Try to keep wording of articles civil and clean.
2. Posting for the Sunday bulletin: the office requires articles be limited to 350 words maximum.
3. Article deadline to the office: by 5:00 pm the Sunday prior (this date will be listed in RED on the sign-up sheet). Note that this date is a **full week ahead** of the Sunday your article is to appear.

Thank you for signing up. *Alla grande scrittura!* To great writing!

SUGGEST HOW WE CLOSE OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR

Our 365 days of celebration began on Founder's Day 2019, and concludes on Founder's Day, February 23, 2020. On that Sunday our choir will premiere a specially-commissioned anthem with an easy-to-learn melody (hint, hint) and we will place a time capsule in a very well-remembered location as our fond bequest to a future generation who unlocks it 25 years from now.

What will they discover in that time capsule? For starters, a stack of archive-quality "Memory Cards" currently being collected by Jan Coleman, also a copy of our most recent photo directory, along with our congregational portrait taken last summer.

What else will our descendants discover? You are invited to submit your suggestion for that *One Item* which will lead them to being delightfully-flabbergasted and react with some familiar utterances: "Oooh..." and "Ah-ha!" and "Huh??" and *[gasp/sigh...]* "Awwwww..."

In early February we will post the results and conduct a congregational poll to prioritize your ideas. The "Bicentennial Time Capsule Suggestion Box" now in the East Room, is ready and waiting to receive your suggestions.

-Harry Buch (Mr. Bicentennial Guy)

WINTER WEATHER POLICY

Level 1: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Drive very cautiously.

**Scheduled Boards, Committees, Groups: Check with your chairperson, leader or facilitator of group.

**Worship Services: Will be held

Level 2: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roadways.

**NO Church meeting or gatherings and Church closed

**Worship Services: CANCELLED

Level 3: All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel.

**Church closed

**Worship Service: CANCELLED

THE SEASON OF DESCENT by Vicki Miller

Costa Rica Update

House 166 – we just learned that we will be building house 166 (this is the 166th house Mercy Homes has built). One of the high lights of the mission trip is finding out about the family we are building for. This week Maximo sent the email introducing us to our family. We are building for a family of 5 – a husband, wife and 3 girls. The girls are 17, 16 and 2. The two year old has Downs Syndrome. Many of you have seen pictures from past trips. The homes are very simple – usually two or three rooms, and by rooms I mean there is a dividing wall that is open at the top. If there is already running water and a septic tank we will build a bathroom. If not, the family will continue to use an outbuilding. Maximo also sent us pictures of the foundation being laid. In addition to building the house we work to make it a home. This means we bring down simple gifts for the family and house. We might bring some dishware or blankets. Maybe we will build a kitchen table or a bed. Over the next few weeks we will get a better understanding of what the family might need.



Add Your Name to the Congregational Portrait

- which our successors will pull from the Bicentennial Time Capsule in 2045.

Our 365 days of celebration began on Founders' Day 2019, and concludes on Founders' Day, February 23, 2020. On that Sunday our choir will premiere a specially-commissioned anthem with an easy-to-learn melody (hint, hint) and we will place a time capsule in a very well-remembered location as our fond bequest to a future generation who unlocks it 25 years from now.

What will they discover in that time capsule? For starters, a stack of archive-quality "Memory Cards" currently being collected by Jan Coleman, also a copy of our congregational portrait taken last summer.

Have you ever picked up an ancient snapshot taken at some event at which your "Larger Family" gathered (*including crazy old Uncle Jacques T.*)? Some of the faces look familiar, but their names have escaped your memory. You turn the photo over, hoping to find their names inscribed (probably in a Spenserian cursive, with unfaded black India ink). But--Alas!--there are no names at all.

??? *Who were those folks* ???

Well, that question won't be asked in 2045 when our congregational portrait is pulled out of the Time Capsule. Look for the table (probably in the East Room) that displays a copy of the congregational portrait, but with each person wearing a number (in India ink) that corresponds to a "roll-call" page upon which you are invited to add your signature (again in India ink) alongside the number you wear in the portrait. And if we find that some names are missing when Founders' Day draws near, we will ask for your help in identifying the stragglers and adding their name to the roster, and thank you kindly!

--Harry Buch (Mr. Bicentennial Guy)





Construction of the new entrance addition began in June of 2015 and proceeded throughout the summer and fall. During this time most of the parking lot was obstructed. Worship was held in the basement community room and classrooms, as there was only limited access to the Sanctuary and no access to Fellowship Hall.

The new elevator, which was delivered in pieces on December 11th, was completed, inspected and actually approved during the afternoon of the 24th for use at the Christmas Eve services, thanks to a lot of "expediting" by Building Committee Chairman Dave Weber with the builders and city inspectors. Everyone was excited to be able to worship in our Sanctuary again.

Bicentennial Tidbits



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*******

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER
 United Church of Christ,
 Congregational
 217 East Liberty Street
 Medina, OH 44256
 (330) 725-4559; www.uccmedina.org

Matthew 1:18-25

God with Us

Joseph is certainly one of the unsung heroes of the Bible. Engaged to be married to Mary, he learns that she is carrying a child. Joseph knows that he is not the biological father of this child. The usual punishment for such so-called "crimes," in Joseph's time and culture vary, but all would have ended in death for the young mother. Instead, Joseph conceives a plan to send Mary away quietly. But then he has a dream. And, instead of the expectations of his culture, he decides to follow his dream, which he recognizes as the voice of God. He marries his pregnant girlfriend.

Joseph's dream compels him to follow God on an unlikely path, one that is far from the expectations of his time and culture. He had been told how to get ahead, how to succeed, and he went another direction. Many of our clergy and church workers have done the same. Looking at what success means to the world, they have chosen instead a path of service and sacrifice.

We help impoverished retired and clergy, as well as those in difficult circumstances with the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund.

The Christmas Fund, as it is known, is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks. You can find out more about the Christmas Fund and how it is used here: <https://www.pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home/how-the-funds-are-used>.

4th Sunday of Advent - Prayer for Love

O come, O come Emmanuel!

In a world in which others turn their backs,

You call us to love.

Save us from hatred, and from its more virulent cousin, indifference.

Remind us that you are Love, and that you call us first of all to love.

Show us all the ways that

we can be your love in the world today and all days. Amen.