



Cross Talk

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by loving, engaging, and serving our neighbors

Advent: Celebrating the Incarnation

"In my prayer life, I have come to know a God who is personal, accessible, and loving. I know a God who is compassionate toward all creation and who seeks a relationship with each one of us."

CHURCH STAFF

PASTOR:

Reverend J. Harlen Rife

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Some years ago, I was leading a small group for people considering joining my local United Methodist Church. One of the participants asked a poignant question. She said that, when she interacted with Christians, they were quick to offer reasons why they believed in God in general, but had a harder time saying why they believed in the Christian understanding of God specifically. So, she asked us, "out of all the different understandings of God available in the world, why does this one capture our hearts?" Before you read the rest of my article, take a second and answer that one for yourself.

For me, the answer was the incarnation. In my prayer life, I have come to know a God who is personal, accessible, and loving. I know a God who is compassionate toward all creation and who seeks a relationship with each one of us. The incarnation offers us a glimpse into precisely that kind of love. Our God was not content to remain at a distance. Instead, the Lord of all creation chose to walk among us as Jesus of Nazareth. That kind of bond can never be broken and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God is still present with us each day. The God I know is a God of love and presence, and there can be no greater example of those than Jesus.

It reminds me of a sermon illustration I heard from my childhood pastor, Rev. Ken Ehrman. On a cold winter day, a farmer looked out of his window and saw some birds shivering in the snow. His heart was moved and he wanted to help. He put on his coat and boots, went outside, and opened the door to his barn. It would be warm in there and the birds could take shelter. He went back inside and watched. The birds waited in the snow. The barn was dark and full of unfamiliar sounds and smells. The man went back outside and tried to herd the birds into the barn. They were frightened of him and they flew away. The man looked at the birds and at his barn. He wished that, even for a moment, he could be a bird. He knew if he could be a bird, he could fly into the barn and show them it was safe and warm. He wished to be a bird.

When we were shivering in the cold, our God asked to be one of us. That is a window into the personality of God. Our God wants to do things with and through us, rather than to and for us. Our God wants us to follow out of love and faith rather than out of fear. Our God wants to know us on a personal level. Our God does not despise our physical bodies, but rather carried one himself. That is the faith that resonates with my soul.

On Good Friday, we celebrate Christ's atoning work on the cross. On Easter, we celebrate His triumph over sin and death in the resurrection. On Christmas we celebrate the incarnation – an event with deep theological significance of its own. So, as we journey together through Advent, keep this in mind. When we say, "Emmanuel, God is with us," we are making a radical statement about how we understand our creator and all of creation. I hope it's one that resonates with you. I hope it's one that answers some of your poignant questions, as it does mine. **Amen.**

Merry Christmas,
Rev. J. Harlen Rife



Bed Brigade News

The mission continues to grow. We are partnering with Jackson and Green Local Schools, Summit DD, OPEN-M, and Harmony House to identify people in need of beds. To date all but one of the frames have been delivered; the last one has been requested and may be delivered by the time you read this.

We are partnering with the PLCC Building Trades program and Broc Bidlick (from Dalton) to build frames.

It is time to devote another morning assembling frames and bedding for the (over 80 useable) mattresses that we received this summer so we are ready to deliver beds when they are requested.

So, I invite you to take part in one or more of the following ways.

1. Continue to pray that God will lead us and we will hear and follow His direction.
2. Donate bedding (new mattress covers, sheets and pillow cases, blankets, pillows, etc.) or money to purchase needed supplies.
3. Join us in the gym on Saturday, Jan.7th from 9 to noon for our next build activity. We plan to build 20 frames!!!

This GOOD NEWS to those who will receive the beds and those who build them. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely, Dick Stratton and the Bed Brigade Team

- 1 Mitch Booth
- 2 Bill Lyle
Todd Wendling
- 3 Janice Hackathorn
Nicholas Keller
- 4 Mike Trinko
- 8 Mike Kopriver
- 10 Harlen Rife
- 11 Shirley Wander
- 14 Kaden Smesko
- 17 Grant Kuwatch
- 18 Dan Koontz
- 22 Dorothey Cormany
- 24 Charlotte Borland
Roy Witsaman Jr.
- 25 Patty Scarbrough
- 27 Michael Witsaman

Green Good Neighbors is in need of grocery gift cards. We can use Acme, ALDI, or Giant Eagle cards in the sums of \$5.00, \$10.00, or \$25.00. Depending on the size of the family, we give \$25.00, \$35.00, \$45.00 or \$55.00. You can turn them into the office or to Pat directly. We give them out December 7, 14, and 21. Thank you for helping us. Pat Stiles

SPECIAL THANKS to our “2022 Church Lawn Mowing Team” of Mike Trinko, Dick Stratton, John Myers, Pete Peterson, Roger Herbst and Vince Lehman. And thanks to Roy Witsaman for the mower care and to Kevin Hodges as a sub. Our lawn has looked wonderful this past year and your 3+ hours a week of volunteering your time was appreciated. Please pray if THIS is an area of ministry you could help with next year! We could use some new hands to help! Training on the equipment is offered each year by Roy too!

SUNDAY, DEC 4TH—ONE SERVICE

JOIN US IN THE SANCTUARY AT 10AM FOR SERVICE AND FOLLOWING A HOLIDAY LUNCHEON IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. BRING YOUR FAVORITE DESERT TO SHARE. MONETARY DONATIONS ARE WELCOME.



- 3rd Eugene & Josefina
Hetsou
- 5th Matt & Erin
Hartong

FUNDING THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF GUMC

OPERATING BUDGET	Giving General	Actual Expenses	Budgeted Expenses
October 2022	\$ 22,406.29	\$ 23,330.98	\$ 22,834.50
Year to Date	\$ 196,067.91	\$227,112.09	\$ 234,186.00

FAMILY AND CHILDREN MINISTRY—

November has been a busy month for us! We finished learning about the foundations of our faith and what we believe. We also spent a few weeks talking about being thankful and about giving. We decided to give to the foundation Heifer International and to try and raise \$20 to buy a flock of chicks to help a family. At the time of this writing we already have \$40! These kids are generous givers and have such kind hearts! We are so proud of them! Thank you to Pastor David for offering to match out donations! Check back next month to see how many flocks we are able to donate.

On November 27 we welcomed all children and caregivers to join us for a birthday party for Jesus! Thank you Marilyn Cogsparger for donating a birthday cake for us to enjoy! NO GUM Club on Sunday, Dec. 4th because of 10am Service.

December brings Advent and Christmas. The kids will learn about the “shy.” Why the prophets? Why INN Bethlehem? Why those Shepherds? Why a manger?

G.U.M. Club will not be meeting on December 4th, 25th or January 1.

Have a blessed Christmas Happy New Year!

Miss Amy, Miss Beth, and Pastor David



HAPPENINGS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!



Greensburg
United
Methodist Church
invites you to
celebrate the
Christmas Season

Sunday, December 4th—ONE SERVICE
“10am” Contemporary Service in Sanctuary with Luncheon following in Fellowship Hall -No Sunday School Classes Bring Your Favorite Dessert to Share!*

Sunday, December 11th
9am Contemporary & 11am Traditional

Sunday, December 18th
9am Contemporary & 11am Traditional

Saturday, December 24th—Christmas Eve
5pm Family Service & 7pm Traditional

Sunday, December 25th
11am Traditional Service

Sunday, January 1st
11am Traditional Service

**Donations can be made to the church and indicate “Holiday Luncheon” in your memo*

Save the Date



“Christmas Bells” - all at 3:00

Dec. 3 - Hudson UMC, Hudson, OH
Dec. 4 - Uniontown UMC, Uniontown, OH
Dec. 11 - St. Joseph Catholic, Massillon
Dec. 17 - St. Stephen Martyr Lutheran, Canton

Greensburg UMC

2161 Greensburg Rd,
North Canton, OH 44720

330.896.1936
www.greensburgumc.net

LOVE, ENGAGE, SERVE OPPORTUNITIES: COME BE PART OF THE GUMC COMMUNITY!

PARENTS!!!

If you have a child(ren) attending college/university this year the church would appreciate hearing from you. Please email us their name, along with current address, and school attending along with year of school they are in.

Email: office@greensburgumc.net

NOTICE:

Church Office will be CLOSED between Christmas and the New Year! The phones will be monitored for necessary needs.

Have a Blessed Christmas!

WALKING GROUP!



Come join the 9 AM Saturday Walking group under the portico at the office entrance. We walk local parks & metro parks during the fall hiking spree. After walking, we go to McDonald's for coffee & visiting. During bad weather we walk inside the church. Its good fun & a healthy activity. We'd love to have you join us!

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY— 9AM TO 1PM / TUESDAY AND THURSDAY—9AM TO 3PM

IF YOU NEED TO STOP BY THE OFFICE, PLEASE CALL AHEAD!

330.896.1936