



## DECEMBER WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Worship and Sunday School at 9 and 11 AM

**December 4:** Second Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of peace.

- The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered to all. Dr. Brill's communion meditation, based on passages from Isaiah and Luke, is entitled, "Called to Be Peacemakers".
- **Service of Remembrance, 3 PM.** This service is designed for those people for whom the holiday season is difficult. We will share passages of scripture and other readings that both acknowledge sadness and offer genuine hope. New ornaments will be placed on the Tree of Remembrance. All are welcome.

**December 11:** Third Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of joy.

- At 9 AM, our children and youth will present this year's pageant, "Starbright," and the Children's Choir will sing.
- At 11 AM, our combined vocal choirs will present, "Appalachian Christmas", some familiar and some new music from the American folk tradition, accompanied, in part, by fiddle and hammer dulcimer.

**December 18:** Fourth Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of love.

- Dr. Brill's sermon, "God With Us," is based on Luke 1:26-38. The vocal group H3O (Cassidy, Corrine and Bella Harris) will be singing.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

- **5 PM:** Service designed especially for families with young children. The Celebration Bell Choir will ring. We will sing carols, and there is a Christmas story for children.
- **7 PM:** Multimedia service with carols and candlelight. Jim Kotora is leading music.
- **9 PM:** Service of lessons, carols and candlelight with music provided by the Sanctuary Singers and a meditation shared by Dr. Brill.
- **11 PM:** Lessons, carols, candlelight and communion, with music provided by the Chancel Choir and a meditation shared by Dr. Brill.

### December, 2011

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**December 25:** one service at 10 AM, in the Chapel. This informal service, for people of all ages, will be led by Dennis Fredriksen and Mary Fancher. Begin your celebration of Christmas Day in worship!

**January 1:** one service at 10 AM, in the Chapel. Kelly Brill and Mary Fancher will lead this service, ushering in the new year. Worshipers are invited to bring a brief inspirational reading to share.

(The regular worship schedule will resume January 8.)

## **DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS!**

Help put up the decorations and trim the tree...this Saturday, December 3, beginning at 8:30 AM!

## **A WORD FROM KELLY**

+ Every December several people ask me about year-end giving opportunities. Avon Lake UCC has a variety of permanent funds in place so that you may contribute in the way that you find most meaningful. Donations may be made to:

- The Pastoral Fund: providing assistance to church members in need.
- The Endowment Fund: the money is invested, the principal is preserved, and the interest income supports ongoing ministry and missions.
- The Memorial Fund: proceeds are used for special projects around the building and grounds.
- Gifts to the Endowment Fund and the Memorial Fund may be used at the church's discretion or specified for particular projects.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss a year-end gift to the church.

+ And on the topic of money: Dave Witzigreuter and I are compiling a list of names of people who have made provisions in their will to leave money to the church. We will be inviting all of the people on the list to be a part of a Legacy Society (if they so choose) so that we can better inform the congregation about the myriad ways to make gifts that will support the church beyond our lifetimes. If you have made the church a beneficiary of your estate, please let me or Dave know.

+ Our Audio/Visual team of volunteers has been working hard as we make the transition to broadcasting our services on both Time Warner Cable and WOW. There are several kinks to work out in this new system. If you are watching a broadcast at home and notice problems with the sound or the picture, please drop a note to the church, letting us know what day you were watching, what time, and on which system. Your report will help us troubleshoot.

+ Please join me for Christmas caroling on Sunday afternoon, December 18, at 3 PM. We'll meet at the church and divide into groups to carol for our homebound members. The more, the merrier! I hope that each small group includes a couple of children...they brighten every visit. We'll be finished in an hour.

+ All women of the church are invited to participate in the women's retreat in January; it's a wonderful way to get to know other women. The Jesuit Retreat House in Parma is a peaceful setting with good food and private accommodations. Pick up a registration form at the Welcome Center or download one from the church website.

+ I am looking forward to our celebrations of Advent and Christmas, am grateful to our hardworking staff who is preparing the facility, the bulletins, the children, the choirs...and on behalf of all of the church staff, I wish you a Merry Christmas!

**DECEMBER DRUMMER DEADLINE** is Tuesday, **DECEMBER 20**. If you would like any information included in the next monthly newsletter, please send to the church office by email ( [office@thealucc.org](mailto:office@thealucc.org)) or be sure to bring your items in by this date. News items/reminders may also be submitted for Kelly's weekly email updates. (If you are not receiving the weekly email updates, please send your email address to [pastor@thealucc.org](mailto:pastor@thealucc.org).)

## **JACK & JILL REGISTRATION**

Jack & Jill Nursery School will be accepting registrations for the 2012-2013 school year (classes beginning in September) from Church members and those families presently enrolled in the school on Monday, December 12th. Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis beginning December 12th in the school lobby from 6:00-7:30 PM. Classes are available for 3, 4, and 5 year old children. Open enrollment for the community will be held on January 12<sup>th</sup> in the evening. Some classes fill very quickly. If you have any questions, please call Melody Rice at 933-7946.

## **PRIME TIMERS' DECEMBER SCHEDULE**

**IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU REGISTER!** Sign up at the Welcome Center or contact: Judy or Bob Reich (930-5370 or [bjreich@oh.rr.com](mailto:bjreich@oh.rr.com))

- **Saturday, December 17,** - 5:15 dinner at Athena's in Avon Lake; 7:30 TruNorth Annual Christmas Concert, French Creek Nature Center. Buy your own ticket (\$12.50) at FCNC or reserve by phone (440) 949-5200. Sign up at the Welcome Center for dinner and/or concert, or with Reiches - (440) 930-5370 or [bjreich@wowway.com](mailto:bjreich@wowway.com) Transportation available.
- **Saturday, December 31,** - New Year's Eve Party in the Gathering Space! 6pm Potluck - Bring a dish to share and table service; @7pm - games, bingo, movie - bring a white elephant prize in a brown bag. Sign up at the Welcome Center for the potluck and/or party, or with Reiches - (440)930-5370 or [bjreich@wowway.com](mailto:bjreich@wowway.com). Transportation available.

**SIGN UP SHEETS @ Welcome Center. QUESTIONS? RESERVATIONS.** Transportation available.

**ALL PROGRAMS OPEN TO ALL - NO AGE RESTRICTIONS**

## **PARISH NURSE NEWS:**

- **Parish Nurse Hours:** Wednesday 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.; evenings by appointment. Contact by email: [cherylupdegraff@oh.rr.com](mailto:cherylupdegraff@oh.rr.com) or 440-933-3833
- **Service of Remembrance:** Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the Gathering Space. This service of prayer, scripture, readings and a brief meditation is designed to help those who are grieving enter the Advent and Christmas seasons with a sense of hope. As a part of this service, you are invited to place an ornament on the memorial Christmas tree.
- **Diabetic Support Group:** Annual Christmas Dinner December 14 at 6 PM.

## **MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS**

- **Seamstress Needed for Bell Choir:** Due to the wonderful feedback about the sashes worn by the Bell Choir for the recent services, the choir members are wondering if there is anyone in the congregation with the skills to make 15 sashes for them. (The ones they wore were on loan ) If you have the time and the talent, Sharon would love to hear from you! She can be contacted at: [Sdixon0714@sbglobal.net](mailto:Sdixon0714@sbglobal.net). Thanks!
- **Musicians Needed for December 25 and January 1:** Christmas and New Years Day will fall on Sundays this year, so rather than asking the choirs to sing on those days, the Music Committee is looking for anyone who might be interested in providing the special music ( solos, duets, instrumental music) for one of those days. There will be only 1 service at 10:00 on both Sundays and the services will be more casual than usual. If you are interested, please contact Mary Fancher. Thanks for your interest!

**ALUCC WINTER RETREAT IS COMING!!** Sign up now for the ALUCC Winter Retreat February 10-12, 2012. Join your church family for a weekend of fun and relaxation at beautiful Pilgrim Hills. Invite your friends, bring the entire family or just come yourself and gear up for some great fellowship and lots of fun! Registration packets available at the Welcome Center. Deadline to register is January 22. This is the perfect event to reconnect with your families, get back to nature and refuel your spiritual life. The time to do these things is now. Don't forget - the days may be long, but the years are short. Make memories with your families - memories are the longest lasting gifts of all!

**Avon Lake United  
Church of Christ**

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*Growing People to  
Serve God and Others*

We are on the Web:  
[thealucc.org](http://thealucc.org)

**DID YOU KNOW...**that you can contribute to the church through an Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)? Many people like to pay their bills automatically. It's convenient for you, and the church appreciates the steady income throughout the seasons. Contact Valerie Tanzilli in the church office for more information.

**RIDES TO AIRPORT OFFERED:** Jim Wise will provide transportation to and from the airport to any member, in exchange for a donation to the church. If you ever need a ride to the airport, and/or a pick-up, please call Jim at 440-933-3120 (home phone) or 216-337-8537 (cell phone.)

**JACK AND JILL NEWS**

A few openings remain for the 2011-2012 school year at Jack & Jill Nursery School. Afternoon classes for 3, 4, and 5 year olds all have openings. There are also a few openings for the two-day morning 3 year old class. Please contact Melody Rice, Director: 933-7946.

**PRAYER LIST**

We update this list at the beginning of each month. Please contact the church office by phone (933-3241) or email ([pastor@thealucc.org](mailto:pastor@thealucc.org)) to send an update or to add a name.

**New on the Prayer List:** Bob & Nancy Hook (former members) retired teachers from Avon Lake & North Olmsted, both dealing with cancer. Dave Davis and Hill Meade, hospitalized. Nancy Fifer, Former Jack & Jill Aid) with health issues.

**Recuperating:** Alice Bailey, Joann Hodge, Mary Elizabeth Schober, Emmett Weaver

**Receiving Hospice Care:** Luanne Varndell

**Members with Health Concerns:** Joann Ames, Clara Gumble, Krystal Holstein, Marilyn Luce, Ellie Mental, Eileen Zakel.

**Members Receiving Treatment for Cancer:** Linda Brown, Sherry Odle.

**Friends and Relatives Receiving Treatment for Cancer:** Linda Norman, Don Bayley, Karen Beech, Tom Brunner, Rita Flaim, Kristi Foster, Mary Harold, Kristie Jarrett, Kris McLeod, Dan McGough, Jim Neibes, Sharon O'Donnell, Michelle Peterlin, Heidi Peck, Joy Petit, Kelly Rashedi, Maura Roberts, Lynne Sarr, Emily Stephens, Sylvia Weaver, Elmer Wilhelm, Werner Wittman.

**Friends and Relatives of Members:** Jeter Ball, Mary Anne Berlot, Lisa Bolthouse, Hayden Briggs, Alex Burbules, Kay Cracas, John Dase, Joyce Dorbish, Brandon Hiller, Mick Haddox, Cody Jones, Stella Klasch, Toni Kulma, David Mange, Dale Menning, Lillian Piggott, Thomas Trefts, Michael Yuhas, Julie Weaver.

**Sympathy to** Carolyn Coy on the death of her grandmother, Alice Wolfe, November 6; Patty Knip on the death of her mother November 7; the family & friends of Hugh Sudro who passed away November 16; and to Sandy Garrett & her family on the death of her husband, Pat, November 21.

**Serving Overseas:** Matt Roesel, Tadd Schultz, Wes Wiblin.

Please remember our members who are homebound and in rehab or nursing home care.

**REMINDER:** If you or a loved one are in the hospital and wish prayers or visits from the church, please call the church office. Otherwise, we may not know you're there!

**LIBRARY NEWS**

*What is more important in a library than anything else? Then everything else? The fact that it exists!*

Here's what's new in your church library:

Veggie Tales - *Toy That Saved Christmas*

Children's Book: *Faith the Cow*

*A New Kind of Christianity*

For Christmas - new on our shelf:

*The Christmas Promise*

*Beyond Bethlehem*

*The Journey - Road to Bethlehem*

DVD: *Cotton Patch Gospel*

*Large Print Daily Guidepost 2011*

*Family Survival Guide*

Fiction: *The Christmas Secret*

Children's: *The Little Drummer Boy*

Adult: *The True Saint Nicholas*

*The Journey - Season of Reflections*

## FROM THE MODERATOR

As the year comes to a close, this will be my last body building letter. I started this project to promote the idea that our faith community is a body that grows stronger when each of its members contribute to our mission and ministry. I wrote about a different body part each month starting at the top with the brain, working my way to the feet, pondering the need for flexibility and now discussing endurance.

As the end of the year approaches, I look back on all that has taken place in my first year as moderator. I have been to numerous meetings and events and have been endlessly impressed with how many people contribute their time and talent to our programs. Each month at Council, the boards make their reports and I hear the steady drumbeat of programs that we run year after year to meet the continuing needs of our members and our community in Christian Education and Mission work. Nate completes another round of confirmation classes, youth group activities and mission trips. Stewardship completes another year of balancing our budget, making sure our needs are met and our financial house is in order. The Trustees keep our facilities running and well maintained. Membership offers support to new and existing members. The Deacons plan for ushers, greeters, communion and coffee hour week after week. And in between all of that activity, is a steady stream of individual acts of kindness and support for people walking a grief journey, struggling with illness or job loss, or just needing to know someone is there for them...that they are not alone or forgotten.

All of that repetition might start to sound a little boring, but to me the result is a place I can count on week in and week out to help me make my way through the chaos that life seems to throw at me on a regular basis. Lately the mantra repeating in my head has been "the only thing constant is change," and the daily barrage of change can wear me down. My oldest child is leaving for college next year. My job is in an industry undergoing radical shifts and predicting how I should position myself to adapt is a constant source of stress. Health challenges of family and friends, the death of loved ones, all provide moments of dramatic change in responsibilities and relationships. It often seems that the ground is constantly shifting beneath my feet, which is a very unsettling feeling.

And then, I come to church. I am greeted by old friends and meet new ones. I take comfort in the rituals of the service. I hear the wisdom of the scripture and the music. I find my spiritual footing. I find the things that help me walk the next mile on my journey, and it all happens because of the willingness of others to donate their time and talents, year after year. I am forever grateful for all they have done and continue to do to keep this faith community strong. So my final message ends with this note. We are many parts. We have different talents. We have different schedules. We have different needs. And each of us has something to contribute, each of us has something to gain by adding our strengths to this one faith community.

Maureen Johnson, Moderator, [mjalucc@gmail.com](mailto:mjalucc@gmail.com)

### **Inquirers' Classes for prospective members**

Class I: February 5 at  
12:15

Class II: February 19 at  
12:15

To sign up or receive more information on ALUCC

### **THANK YOU NOTE**

Dear Friends,  
We thank you for the beautiful sympathy cards, kind words and memorials for our mother, *We never lose the ones we love; for even though they're gone. Within the hearts of those who care their memory lingers on.*

The Helen Bendau Family

### **PAINTING? HELP YOURSELF AND YOUR CHURCH SIMULTANEOUSLY!**

ALUCC is now enrolled in the Sherwin-Williams Neighbor-to-Neighbor program. This program offers you a 20% discount (5% off sale items) at Sherwin-Williams and ALUCC receives a cash back bonus. You do need a Neighbor-to-Neighbor card and they are available at the Welcome Center. Remember to take this card next time you shop for paint. Together you save, the church earns and we support a local business - it's a win win!

## CHRISTIAN ED NEWS FROM JULIE

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT DECEMBER 11 AT 9:00** - The Christmas Pageant will be Sunday, December 11 during the 9:00 service. A group of our amazing and talented teenagers will be putting on a cute Christmas comedy skit. Each Sunday School class will be performing a song or recitation with their class during the pageant. The children will be rehearsing their pieces during Sunday School. All children participating in the pageant will need to **arrive at the church by 8:45 on Sunday, December 11**, find their class in the sanctuary, and they will sit with their teachers during the service. The children will not be wearing costumes, so they should come dressed in their holiday best. Any questions, please contact Julie Reimer, Director of Christian Education.



**PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN:** Come and meet other ALUCC families with young children as we share lunch and make Christmas crafts on Sunday, Dec. 18 from 12-1:30pm. Children are invited to this event! RSVP to Julie Reimer, Director of Christian Education at [christianed@thealucc.org](mailto:christianed@thealucc.org), by Tuesday, December 13, so she can order enough food and get craft supplies.

**ALUCC BOOK CLUB:** The next meeting will be Tues. Jan 24 at 7pm in the library. At that meeting, the ALUCC Book Club will be choosing our book selections for 2012, and discussing the book which we will read between now and then: *ZEITOUN* by David Eggers - a true account of one man's compassion, kindness and expression of justice and responsibility during Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath.

## HAVEN CENTER UPDATE

Each month a dedicated group of volunteers continues to prepare a delicious meal for the persons living at the Haven Center, Lorain County's homeless shelter. Every Christmas we try to give a special meal to the 68 people housed at Haven. Several church members have agreed to cover the cost of "extras" such as cheesy potatoes. We could use monetary donations to cover the cost of the stuffed pork chops. Also, we are collecting water bottles and lunch boxes (don't need to be new) for the shelter residents who work so they may carry their lunches from the shelter. We also like to take Christmas cookies and goodies to the folks as this is a tough time of year not to have a place to call home. If you can help with any of these needs please call Mary Pease (440-864-9170) before December 10 or Valerie in the church office.

## CHORAL SPECTRUM CONCERT, DECEMBER 8, 7:30 PM

The Choral Spectrum, an Oberlin-based community chorus celebrating forty-five years of performing, will present a concert of Christmas selections entitled *Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming* at two venues. The first concert will be given at Avon Lake United Church of Christ, on Thursday, December 8 at 7:30 PM. Admission for this concert is \$9.00 with half of the concert proceeds benefiting the Haven Center Christmas. The second concert will be a dinner concert presented at the Rose Café in Lakeview Park, Lorain on Friday, December 9 at 6:30 PM. The two concerts are under the direction of Dr. Ted S. Williams and will feature the seven variations on *Lo How a Rose* by Hugo Distler.

## PATROITS SYMPHONIC BAND CONCERT, DECEMBER 10, 7:30 PM

The Patriots Symphonic Band Christmas Magic Concert will be at Stocker Arts Center on December 10, at 7:30 PM. This annual concert tradition will bring all of your favorite holiday carols and some fun new arrangements of familiar Christmas songs. The concert will also mark the premier performance of *Festival Espanol*, a new composition dedicated to the Patriots Band by composer, Gene Milford. The Band also welcomes Loras John Schissel, conductor of the Blossom Festival Band. Vocalists Lorrie Coughlin and Brian Walsh will also be featured on several selections. Tickets are available through the Stocker Box Office, 440-366-4040 or at the door: Adults - \$12; Seniors - \$10; Students - \$6; children 12 & under - free.