

### ***Prayer Concerns***

First Responders	Donald R.
Victims of natural disasters	Susan W.
Those suffering from mental illness	Viola C.
	Barbara B.
Those affected by gun violence	Lois D.
Those who are homeless	Keith A.
Stephen Ministers	Sterling B.
Care Receivers	Nancy D.
Our condolences to the loved ones of Jan R. following her passing	Patty, lifted by Janis J.
Carol W.	Miriam, lifted by Janis J.
Jennifer G.	Victor, lifted by Reba Y.
Randall S.'s son	Selene, lifted by Carole A.
Sydney S. and family	Donna, sister of Carol N.
Alice and Tony, lifted by Claudia and Paul T.	Israel, Sarah J.'s student
Ron W.	Bev, lifted by Josh O.
Teresa, Michelle W.'s cousin	Steve, lifted by Mary Ellen M.
Josh O. and Guylene H.	Matthew F., USAF
Mary, lifted by Susan W.	Lt. Col. Bill G., USMC
Monica, lifted by Susan W.	Christopher Y., USAF
Betty Ann, sister of Mike B.	
Judy, lifted by Brenda F.	

### ***This Week's Birthdays***

December 13	Ray Plogger	December 17	Kristi Jackson
December 15	Floyd Andrews	December 17	Barbara Clough
December 16	Phoebe Tidmore	December 18	Hanna Moore

## **North Olmsted United Methodist Church**



Feeding the Community –  
Body, Mind, and Spirit  
4600 Dover Center Road,  
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070  
440-779-6634 + [www.noumc.org](http://www.noumc.org)  
Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm, Pastor

***3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*** December 12, 2021 + 10:30 am

***Theme for Advent: Come Home for Christmas***

***Welcome and Passing of the Peace***

***Celebration of Ministries and Missions***

***Prelude*** *From Heaven to Earth I Come* arr. Max Reger

***\*Old Testament Reading*** Zephaniah 3:14-20 John Vas

***\*Call to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Candles***

L: It's a reunion, every time we go home, every time we embrace those we love, no matter how long it has been. It feels like sunrise, like the clouds are parting and the rain has ended. It is joy, nothing less than pure joy to grab hold of those who are home for us, who make home for us. Whether we wake up to them every day, or travel many miles to see them again, it is joy to go home.

P: **The prophet Zephaniah tells us to rejoice at the thought of going home. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the**

grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then to live like that was our truth even now, even here. It is joy to go home.

L: John the Baptist reminds us, however, that it takes choices to live in this joy. It doesn't just happen; we choose to make life a joy by how we love others, by how we serve and give and care for others, by how we do the job we do and how we impact the world around us. We build joy as we build a home in this world and the next.

P: **We light these candles, the candle of hope, and of peace, and of joy, as a sign that we are on our way home, and we walk with a skip in our step because we can see the destination, and it is pure joy. It is time to go home.**

**\*Unison Prayer**

Lord, we have come to this place from a world of demands and schedules. We have sought hope and peace and have found them here. Now we seek the inner joy that only your presence can bring to our lives. Open our hearts and our spirits to your love. For we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

**\*Hymn**                      *In the Bleak Midwinter* (vv. 1, 3-4)                      UMH 221

**Prayers of the People**

**Prayer Concerns**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Unison Prayer of Confession**

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything but

rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**Words of Assurance**

The messenger has been sent to you, proclaiming that there is One who is Coming who will heal and lead you. Know that this is a great gift from God, who has always and will always love you.

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Anthem**                      *Gather Around the Christmas Tree*                      John Hopkins

**Invitation for the Offering**

**Offertory**                      *On Jordan's Banks*                      arr. Robert Lau

**\*Doxology**                      UMH 94

**Prayer for the Offering**

**Gospel Reading**                      Luke 3:7-18

**Hymn**                      *All Earth Is Waiting*                      UMH 210

**Sermon**                      "The Joy of Home"                      Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm

**\*Hymn**                      *Blessed Be the God of Israel*                      UMH 209

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude**                      *Lift Up Your Heads*                      arr. David Johnson

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Liturgist: John Vas                      Usher: Barb & Ron Clough  
Organist: Marlene Dirksen                      Greeters: Ellie & Jim Yager  
Choir Director: Gabriela Martinez                      Video Production: John Wolter  
Liturgist: John Vas                      Michelle Wolter, Phil Wolter