Agape

Greek for "Love without Limits"



A Publication of North Olmsted United Methodist Church

Vol. 51 Issue 10

December 2017

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A Youth Work Mission Fundraiser...

Breakfast with Santa!

Saturday, December 16 at NOUMC \$3.00 for children, \$5.00 for adults Breakfast & photos with Santa 9 - 11 am Pet photos with Santa - 11 am to noon!









Christmas Worship Schedule

Church Staff

Reverend Mark L. Steiger 440-779-6634, ext. 16

Admin. Assistant: Sharon Werner 440-779-6634, ext. 10

Christian Education: Wendy Cooper 440-779-6634, ext. 13

Organist: Marlene Dirksen Choir Director: Gabriela Martinez

Stephen Ministry: 440-779-6634, ext. 12

Nursery Caregiver: Claire Taller

Tuesday, December 19th at 7:00 pm

Blue Christmas: A Service of Comfort & Hope

Christmas Eve ~ Sunday, December 24th

10:30 am ~ Traditional Worship

11:30 am ~ Fellowship

8:00 pm ~ Candlelight Service with Chancel Choir

Sunday, December 31st

10:30 am ~ Traditional Worship with Carol Sing

11:30 am ~ Fellowship, Cookie Sunday





News and Notes from NOUMC



Adult Sunday School Advent Study

The Adult Sunday School class led by Craig Mueller will resume on Sunday, Dec. 3rd at 9:00 am! They will be viewing and discussing the Advent DVD, "Faithful" by Adam Hamilton. The study looks at Christmas through Joseph's eyes and encouraging us to accept and glorify God's will even when our situation makes it difficult to do so. You are welcome to attend whenever you are able.

Yoga for Wellness, Yoga for ALL



Yoga class will meet at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, Dec. 6th and then take the rest of December off. If you have questions, please call Claudia.

Facilities Manager Needed...

Our Administrative Assistant, Sharon Werner, is seeking to reduce her hours. After conversations with Sharon, our SPRC Chair Greg Lavelle,



and myself, it was decided that Sharon will continue to work three days/week. We will split facility management out of her job and create a new, one day/week position. This position will be responsible for maintaining the building schedule, rental contracts and payments, tracking maintenance supplies and paper products, overseeing set-ups and maintenance needs in addition to answering phones, acting as receptionist and doing general office work. If you or someone you know is interested in a one day/five hour per week position, a complete job description is available in the church office. Resumes may be sent to the church.

Estimates of Giving...

Our "Estimates of Giving" are extremely important to our church. Our financial commitment is particularly important to "Our Faithful Journey", our Long Range Plan for the next several years.

If we are to maintain fiscal responsibility, our plans must be rooted in a sound budget. If you have not yet turned in your "Estimate of Giving" card, please consider doing so in the next weeks. You may put your card in the offering plate in a sealed envelope or mail it to the church. If you need a card, you can contact the church office or our Financial Secretary, Ed Brewster. Thanks you for your attention to this important matter.



At NOUMC on January 4, 2018!

Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, is pleased to offer a preventive health event at North Olmsted United Methodist Church on 1/4/2018. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete.

There are three ways to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call toll-free 1-888-653-6441 or text the word "circle" to 797979

End the Violence - Prayer and Action... **Rev. Mark Steiger**

On Sunday, November 5th twenty-six people were murdered while they worshiped and prayed in stands alone in the Western a small Baptist church in Sutherland Springs, Texas. I personally had a clergy friend, now deceased, who was shot and his secretary was murdered while they were working in their church office several years ago. They were shot by a teenager who was acting on a dare from another student. It now seems almost weekly that we hear about another senseless shooting in our country.

I believe in the power of prayer, and I pray daily for peace in our nation and for an end to the violence. I pray for the victims of violence, and I pray for the perpetrators of violence; for I truly believe the perpetrators are troubled individuals who have not come to know the love that God has from them.

I also believe that we must do more than pray. We must act, and contrary to the stand of the NRA, I tell you the answer is not to arm more people. I stand opposed to ordinary citizens routinely carrying weapons, and I stand opposed to concealed carry laws. I stand opposed to them for several reasons; but primarily I am opposed for two reasons: 1) Every gun that is purchased by a private individual increased the chances that the gun will fall into the wrong hands – found by children or stolen by criminals; and, 2) humans are emotional beings - in the heat of an argument, it becomes too easy for someone to grab an gun and shoot, only to regret it later.

The United States World as a country with an exceedingly high incidence of gun violence. Other countries have denser populations. Other countries have equally high incidence of mental illness. Other countries have equally



high incidence of domestic abuse. The only reason other countries don't suffer the same high incidence of gun violence is their stricter gun control.

Understand, I fully support gun ownership for sport and hunting. While I am not a hunter, I strongly support hunting. It is the only means we have to control growing animal populations. But no one has yet convinced me that a sport shooter needs a high powered, high capacity, semiautomatic rifle for sport. Where is "the sport" in that? Where's the sport in high capacity handguns?

So, I pray. I pray for an end to the violence; and I pray for direction. I pray that God would lead my actions; and that God will lead our country, that we, as citizens of this great nation might truly "beat our swords into plow shears." Will you join me in praying that God will lead us to the actions that will truly end the violence? Will you join me in praying daily for peace?

See you in church,

Rev. Mark

Our Faithful Journey



Our Guiding Principles

- We appreciate and invest in our youth.
- We actively serve our neighbors in the North Olmsted community and the wider world.
- We provide varied opportunities for people to grow in their faith.
- We welcome and nurture a diverse congregation who become extended family.
- We foster lasting personal relationships, which are especially important in a digital world.

Christian Education

by Wendy Cooper (sundayschool@noumc.org)



Our youth would like to thank all who purchased gourmet popcorn on Sunday November 19th! They raised \$88.00 from the sale! All proceeds will be donated as part of their Sunday School Hurricane Relief Mission Project through UMCOR to help those left in desperate need in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. Thank you also to Anita, Jean and Sharon for bringing their awesome popcorn poppers

29 BAGS!!!! That's how many birthday bags the youth were able to assemble, thanks to your very generous donations! The kids filled the bags with cake mixes, tubs of frosting, plates and napkins, decorations, candles and horns, crayons and small toys. In November, Tammy, Amy and I took these birthday bags to the North Olmsted Oxcart Food Pantry, where they will be given out to families in need. These items are often the last thing on the list when a family is worried about where their next meal will come from, but our youth want to make sure that all kids get to celebrate their birthday! The people at the food pantry were so excited when we brought the bags into the pantry....they said they had never before had such colorful and thoughtful donations! Our youth would like to thank our congregation for their generous donations of items to fill the birthday bags!

Thank you for helping our youth discover what it means to be a disciple of Christ!

Poinsettias and Christmas Cactus Sale

Our annual Christmas flower sale in underway! The youth are taking orders for Poinsettias and Christmas Cacti that will be placed on the altar for our Christmas Eve services. Order forms for these flowers are available in Fellowship Hall (please put your orders in the purple box), or you may call the church office to place your order. Poinsettias are available in Red, White, Pink, Variegated, or Burgundy. All plants are in 6" pots, and sell for \$10.00. Proceeds from the sale will go towards this years Sunday School Hurricane Relief Mission Project. Deadline to order is Monday, Dec. 4th.

Next Sunday School Service Project

Although we have not set a date yet, the youth will be working on another service project after the holidays in January or February. The youth will be collecting socks for the homeless! Socks are one of the most needed but least donated articles of clothing in homeless shelters. Clean, dry socks are important to those who spend much of their time walking around outside from place to place. They are especially needed at this time of the year, when feet can become cold and wet very quickly. The youth are requesting donations of new, clean socks in men's, women's and children's sizes. If you would rather make a monetary donation and let us shop for the socks, we would welcome that too!

We will donate whatever we receive to the City Mission.

Craft Idea!



Share the good news of Jesus' birth with this creative Christmas card.

What you need:

- Construction paper (two pieces, including one white)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Pens
- Glue stick

What you do:

- 1. Neatly fold the white paper in half, short side to short side.
- 2. Draw two parallel lines (at least 2 inches apart) from the fold to about halfway to the edge. Cut along the lines.
- 3. Fold the cut section back and forth so it pops up.
- 4. Push the section up so it pops up inside the folded paper. Draw a nativity scene on the pop-up box.
- 5. Fold the colored paper in half, short side to short side. Place the white paper inside it and glue the white paper down, being careful not to glue the pop-up box.
- 6. Write a Christmas message and give or send the card to someone.

The Youth Page



Pancake Breakfast

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Youth

Work Mission Pancake Breakfast!! The youth collected \$209.85 toward their trip this year! Our tremendous thanks to Jean, Mike, Sydney and Guylene! And to our dynamic youth—Alyssa, Amy, Derek, Makena, Makenzie, Morgan, Shane, Sydney and Zoe!!!! Job well done!!!!!



Facebook

Are you on Facebook?
So are we! Please "Like" our church Facebook page.....

NORTH OLMSTED UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Check it for updates, announcements, reminders and other events.







Saturday, December 16 at NOUMC \$3.00 for children, \$5.00 for adults Breakfast & photos with Santa 9 - 11 am Pet photos with Santa - 11 am to noon!

Our Youth Work Mission team is serving Breakfast with Santa Claus!! Join us on Saturday, December 16 at NOUMC. The missionaries will be making pancakes, French toast and sausage--\$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children, between 9:00 – 11:00 am. Join us for a merry breakfast and a photo of St. Nick and other fun. Pet photos will be available between 11:00 – 12:00.

Please invite your family and friends!!!

If you would like to help with the planning or serving, please see Tammy or Chris .

Adult Activities



Open Table Worship & Communion Service

Sunday, December 3rd, 2017 @ 5pm

We are excited to have this event hosted by: Faith UMC 300 Ninth Street, North Canton, Ohio 44720 Communion service presided by Bishop Tracy Malone.

Open Table services are specifically organized to provide a service of witness to the ideal of Christ that all are welcome at the table. The worship service, message, and Sacrament of Communion all serve as reminders of the love of God and its inclusive nature. East Ohio Reconciling Methodists invite you to attend this Open Table Worship and Communion Service lovingly created to honor full inclusion of all of God's children in our church.

4-5 p.m. RMN Leadership Planning Meeting ~ The Leadership of East Ohio RMN gather before our services to discuss ways in which we can continue to raise awareness and advocacy across our connection. If you have a desire to become more involved with our group or simply wish to provide some input please know that all are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings!

Child care is provided but please note that Children are also welcome to remain and participate in the service.

All are welcomed and invited to attend this Open Table Worship Service

LUNCH WITH FRIENDS



is our new special group at NOUMC. We started out as a monthly get together - a social time to connect with others who would like to go to lunch, movie or any social activity but don't want to go alone. The response

was great as we continue to share food, personal experiences, and plans to add more activities.

ALL are welcome to join us whenever you wish. We meet the 2nd Thursday of the month at 11:30 am (We will choose a different restaurant each month so look for the details in the church bulletin.)

December 14th LUNCH WITH FRIENDS will be at Denny's Restaurant on Lorain Rd. RSVP to Carole Bettinger.



Adult Council is sponsoring a Caroling Party on Saturday, December 16th!

Bring the whole family!

We will gather at the Church at 2:30 pm then proceed to Westlake Village to sing some carols for the residents. Afterwards we can head to Panera for some warm beverages!

Cookie Sunday is Back!



Remember how we looked forward to those homemade goodies on Cookie Sunday?

We are bringing it back on Sunday, Dec. 31st after worship!

If you can provide a couple of dozen cookies, please contact Tammy Moore.

Stephen Ministry

A note from Rev. Alice

Blue Christmas: A Service of Comfort & Hope

Tuesday, December 19th at 7:00 pm

"Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart."

-- UMH # 196

What does it mean to have a "longing heart" in today's world? If you're like me, this has been a year of longing:

Longing for Peace...

Longing for Comfort...

Longing for Strength...

Longing for Loved Ones...

Longing for Family/Community...

Longing for Freedom...

Longing for Security...

Longing for Rest...

Longing for Hope...

Longing for Love...

Longing for Joy...



Many of the things that represent Christmas for us are tied up in the 'longings' that are present in our hearts... an emptiness that only God, through the newborn Christ Child, can fill.

On Tuesday, December 19th, we will have our 4th annual Blue Christmas service. It will be a quiet service of scripture readings, prayers, candles, and music lead by Rev. Alice and your Stephen Ministers. It will be an opportunity for each of us to contemplate the longings we each carry... our individual needs for the presence of the Christ Child in our lives.

Whether your heart is grieving the loss of a loved one or longing for the peace that passes all understanding that only Christ can offer, you are welcome to this service. Light refreshments will also be provided so that we may be in community and fellowship during this holy season.

We're at our busy season. First of all, the Christmas stockings will be filled on December 10 at 9:00 am. If possible we would appreciate getting as many of the supplies as possible before then. We will probably be doing fewer stockings this year, but we were happy to share some of our goodies with Dr. Lenore for her Haiti trip. The youth will help with the filling of the stockings on the tenth.

When I pointed out that we would only have one or two weeks to get our Adopt-A-Family gifts in, Georgia and Chris were good enough to give us an extra week. About two-thirds of our people's requests were on the board in fellowship hall November 26. The other four clients will have their re-



quests posted on Sunday, Dec. 3. The gifts are due in on December 17 to be delivered on the 18th to the food pantry. It still doesn't leave us a lot of time but better than the original due date of December 10. We know you'll come through again to make twelve clients' Christmas one to remember.

Our food donations continue to be wonderful. There were 120 packages of stuffing and sweet potatoes added to the Thanksgiving bags. We'll be taking cleaning supplies over along with the stockings, and we go back to our usual rotation and will need to get our donations of fruit in by January 14.

Stocking Shopping List

- Christmas stockings
- shampoo
- conditioner
- wrapped candy
- deodorant
- toothpaste
- toothbrush
- soap
- skin cream/lotion
- lip balm
- combs
- razors
- nail clippers
- nail files
- pens & pencils
 small gift items for all ages such as:
- toy cars & trucks
- small stuffed animals
- small dolls
- hair items
- small coloring books
- puzzle books
- crayons
- iewelry
- cosmetics
- small tools



Oxcart Pantry Items

December - Cleaning Products & Laundry Detergent January - Canned Fruit (also low or no sugar fruit, natural juices and jellies)



December Penny Sunday

Our December 17th collection will support Flat Rock Care Center in Flat Rock, Ohio. Flat Rock Homes mission is to care for severely intellectually and developmentally disabled children and adults with co-occurring behavioral issues. There are many institutions that can not or would not care for the multitude of diagnoses



that many of Flat Rock's residents have. It is staffed with qualified individuals, including medical professionals. They operate a 36 Bed Care Center for children from 6-18 years of age, 18 Community Group Homes and serve individuals through their vocational Day Support workshop and Flat Rock Educational Center. "Once a child is admitted, Flat Rock's Care Center forms a covenant relationship with the resident's family or guardian that the center will care for the child until either care is no longer needed or the family chooses to transition the resident out of the care of Flat Rock Care Center." The residents work toward individual daily goals while living in a family type setting. They eat meals in a family setting, and enjoy strong social relationships with those around them. Our donations will help enable the residents to have a family centered care facility.

United Methodist Women By Barb Andrews, UMW President

Once more the UMW owes a successful rummage sale to you! The second rummage sale of the year netted a profit of over \$1700. We are really happy to share the money with you at our final meeting of the year this week. We hope your committee was happy with our allocations. We will let you know where the money went in the next Agape.

We have only one more get together this year, and we'd love to have you join us. Let us know if you'd like to join us for lunch on Dec. 6. The place will be announced in church on the second. Then we will take a short vacation until January 3 when we'll start all over again.

Don't forget to check out the craft cart and table for some ideas for Christmas gifts!

Thank You Notes....

Thank you
for your generous
contributions for the
Hat and Mitten Tree.
We divided the 190 items
between Brookside Community
Center and Guidestone.
Those 190 items will help keep
a lot of people warm
this winter!
Thank you for all
your help.
The Outreach

Committee





Thank you

for your very generous donations of supplies for Dr. Lenore's medical mission to Haiti on Dec. 2 through 9.

Your monetary donations will be used to purchase medicine for those in need.



Various items have been found about the building. Check the Lost and Found box in the entryway. Also some food containers and dishes have been left after potlucks. They can be found in the Food Mission room or the kitchen.

- A man's gold wedding ring was found after the turkey dinner. See Sharon in the office if it is yours.
- A set of keys with a goldfish flashlight was found. Check the lost and found box if you are missing it.

A Way Forward...

During General Conference 2016 in Portland, OR, delegates approved a proposal by the Council of Bishops to create the Commission on a Way Forward. Commission is comprised of eight bishops, 11 laity, 11 Elders, and two Deacons representing nine countries. It is tasked with completely examining, and possibly revising, every paragraph of *The Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality, and exploring options to help maintain and strengthen the unity of the church.

A Special General Conference has been called for February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, MO for the purpose of acting on a report by the Council of Bishops based on the proposals from the Commission on a Way Forward. Bishop Tracy S. Malone reminds us that, "The unity of the Church is all of our work to do. The unity of the Church is all of our conversations to have." To that end, the bishop created an East Ohio Conference design team that developed a process for having intentional, meaningful conference-wide conversations among clergy and laity to discern a way forward through the present impasse related to human sexuality.

Each of the scheduled conversations will begin with participants gathered together for worship, a time of centering, and instruction. Then participants will move to their assigned small groups for facilitated dialogue around the following four questions that were crafted by the Council of Bishops for discussion by United Methodists across the denomination:

- In our diverse and global existence, what is the shared mission of the Church?
- Is there a proactive way to live together in our differences that doesn't presume that we will solve our differences? If so, what would it be?
- What might be a form of unity that would empower us living together?
- What is our witness and what can be our witness to the world in relation to our differences?

All clergy and laity in the East Ohio Conference are invited, and encouraged, to participate in any one of the following Conversations on a Way Forward:

Sat., Feb. 3, 2018, 10 am-1 pm - Thoburn UMC

Sun., Feb. 4, 2018, 2-5 pm - Willard First UMC

Mon., Feb. 5, 2018, 6-9 pm - Lakewood UMC

Sat., Mar. 3, 2018, 9 am-12 pm - Church of the Lakes UMC

It is important that you register in advance for the conversation you wish to attend, as each location has a seating capacity for small group sessions.

Register at the East Ohio Conference UMC website.



North Olmsted UMC 4600 Dover Center Rd. North Olmsted, Oh 44070 Phone 440-779-6634 Fax 440-779-0903



Office Hours:

Monday–Wed. 10 am - 2 pm Thursdays - 1 to 5:00 pm

Christian Ed Office Hours:

Mondays - 1 to 3 pm Thursdays - Noon to 3 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday, Nov. 26 9 am - Sunday School 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship	7:30 Bells 8:30 AA	28 11am AA 7 pm Bible Study	29 10 am-UMW 8:30 AA	30 7 pm Choir Practice	1 Youth Cookie Baking Night	2 8:30 am UMM Breakfast -Canary's 9am - 2pm Stamping 9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class
Sunday, Dec. 3 1st Sunday of Advent Hanging of the Greens 9 am - Sunday School 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship & Advent Potluck 6:30-8 pm - Scouts	7:30 Bells 8:30 AA	5 11am AA 6– 7 Daisy Scouts 7 pm Bible Study	6 11:30 UMW Christmas Luncheon 6:30 Yoga 8:30 AA	7 4:30—6pm Holiday Community Meal 7pmChoir Practice	8	9 9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class
Sunday, Dec. 10 9 am - Sunday School 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship Noon—Ad Board	7:30 Bells 8:30 AA Rev.	11am AA Mark out of the	8:30 AA office	14 10- 2 St. Richard's Fellowship 7pm Choir Practice	15	9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class 8-1 Breakfast with Santa 3-9 pm Private Rental
Sunday, Dec. 17 Penny Sunday 9 am - Sunday School 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship 6:30—8 pm Scouts	7:30 Bells 8:30 AA	11am AA 6-7pm Scouts 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Service	20 8:30 AA	7 pm Choir Practice	22	23 9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class
Sunday, Dec. 24 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship 8:00 pm—Christmas Eve Service	25 Merry Christmas 8:30 AA	26 11am AA	27 8:30 AA	28	29	30 9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class
Sunday, Dec. 31 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship	Jan. 1 8:30 AA New Year!	11:00 AA	3 10 am UMW 6:30 Yoga 8:30 AA	4 8am-4 Lifeline Screening 7 pm Choir Practice	5	9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class 8:30 am UMM Breakfast -Canary's
Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018 9 am - Sunday School 10:00 am-Fellowship 10:30 am-Worship 11:30 am-Fellowship	7:30 Bells 8:30 AA	9 11:00 AA	10 10 am UMW	7 pm Choir Practice	12	9:30-10:30 am Fitness Class



4600 Dover Center Rd. North Olmsted, Ohio 44070

Agape Newsletter
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FREE COMMUNITY MEALS - JOIN US!





Thursday, January 25, 2018
Serving 4:30 to 6 pm
Please join us!

Held at North Olmsted United Methodist Church 4600 Dover Center Rd., North Olmsted, Ohio 44070 440-779-6634

The Free Community Meal is a mission of North Olmsted United Methodist Church with assistance from our friends at St. Richard and St. Clarence Catholic Churches and others in the community. All meals are funded by donations and the dinners are prepared and served by volunteers. Menu's may change because of donated food or food pricing. Additional volunteers are always welcome! If you would like more information, please contact us at 440-779-6634.

We are a handicap accessible facility