

Agape

Greek for "Love without Limits"

North Olmsted United Methodist Church

Vol. 55 Issue 12

December 2021

Advent and Christmas Worship Opportunities

As an expression of love for our entire community, we require all persons, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face masks throughout their time in the building.

All worship opportunities in December will be offered *in-person* and will be *livestreamed*.

Visit <http://www.noumc.org/worship-remote-worship-resources/> for bulletins and worship links.

Advent Wreath

Sundays of Advent and Christmas Eve

As we count down the Sundays leading up to Christmas, in worship we will light an additional candle each week on the Advent wreath. This is a great opportunity especially for families with children to participate in a tangible ritual, but of course individuals, friends, or any other groupings are more than welcome, too! For more information or to sign up to participate during any of our four Sunday morning worship services from November 28 through December 19 or on Christmas Eve, please contact Pastor Hoyte at noumc@noumc.org or ext. 16.

Christmas Eve Worship Leadership

December 24, 7 pm

Help us lead worship and offer hospitality on Christmas Eve by serving as liturgist, usher, or greeter! If you are interested in serving, please email noumc@noumc.org.



Blue Christmas

Monday, December 13, 7 pm

See page 2 for more information.

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24, 7 pm

*Candlelight Service with
Choirs & Special Music*

First Sunday after Christmas Day

Sunday, December 26, 10:30 am

Traditional Worship and Carol Sing

Worship Opportunities

You Are Invited to Blue Christmas

...a gentle, contemplative service for those who are carrying pain or loss
during this season of celebration

Monday, December 13, 7 pm, Sanctuary and Livestreamed

This year your Stephen Ministers are sponsoring our eighth annual Blue Christmas service. It will be held in-person on: Monday, December 13 at 7 pm. We will provide a link, closer to the date, for those who wish to join us online. And the service will remain available for viewing afterwards on our website.

For many of us, 2021 has been a year of transition. We've weathered the many changes brought in our lives by the pandemic, and even today we live with the uncertainty of what tomorrow may bring. We've grieved the loss of family members and dear friends. We miss "the way things used to be" and long for something a bit more "normal" as we approach Christmas. And in all of this, we simply miss each other... miss the smiles hidden behind masks...miss the handshakes and the hugs. There is such a need for healing and peace in our world, in our church, and in our hearts.

Into this need comes our Savior, Jesus. His name is Emmanuel, a name that means "God with us". God comes to be present with us today in much the same way that he came to a hurting world years ago...a gentle, humble beginning bursting forth as an unexpected ray of hope. Our service promises to be a gentle, quiet service...filled with peace, hope, prayer, music, and candlelight.

God wants to renew our lives this Christmas season, bringing hope to us in the areas of our deepest need, bringing peace to us in the midst of our darkest confusion. If you, or someone you know, are remembering a loss or going through a season of pain, I invite you to join us this Christmas for a time of comfort and rest.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel... May we journey together.

Blessings,

Rev. Alice and the Stephen Ministries Team



Worship Leadership

Date	Greeter(s)	Liturgist	Usher(s)
December 5	Claudia & Paul Taller	Chris Byrns	Sarah Jackson
December 12	Ellie & Jim Yager	John Vas	Barb & Ron Clough
December 19	Sarah Jackson	Michelle Wolter	Judi Wagner & Guylene Harold
December 26	Jean Scothon	Bill Ransom	Sarah Jackson

Opportunities for Fellowship

Hanging of the Greens

Saturday, November 27, 9 am - 12 pm

Advent is almost here! We are in need of a few helpers to help us hang the greens on Saturday, November 27. If you would like to help, email Craig Mueller.

Christmas Cookie Baking!

Saturday, November 27, 3 pm - 5 pm, Kitchen & Fellowship Hall



All youth and their families are invited to join us on Saturday, November 27 from 3 pm to 5 pm in the kitchen at NOUMC. We will be baking Christmas Cookies to be included in our Free Holiday Community Meal. All family, friends, and members of NOUMC are invited to attend. A select number of cookie tasters also will be needed to properly complete the task. Please RSVP to Tammy Moore or Sarah Jackson if you plan to attend. Thank you for your help in adding a little "sweetness" to the lives of our Community Meal recipients.

United Methodist Women Christmas Lunch Out

Wednesday, December 1, 12:30 pm, Bistro 83 in North Ridgeville

We would love to have you join us for lunch at Bistro 83! To RSVP, contact Barb Andrews.

United Methodist Women 2021 Wrap-Up

The UMW had our Give-Away meeting in November. We donated money to: the altar guild, the Sunday School project, organ maintenance, the free community meal program, Laura's Home meals, Oxcart Pantry, the North Olmsted community fund, the OhioGuidestone cookie jar fund, and West Side Community House.

We will take the rest of the month off, returning for a business meeting on January 5. Don't forget to check out the craft cart for decorating and gift ideas, and Merry Christmas to all from the UMW.

Lunch with Friends

Meets on the third Thursday of each month, 11:30 am

For those of us who enjoy a good restaurant but don't want to eat alone, this is the group for you! We meet at different restaurants for food and fellowship. To find out where we will dine each month, read the church announcements or call Carole Bettinger. All are welcome!



Opportunities to Give



Wrapped Gifts Due by Sunday, December 12

Visit the easel in Fellowship Hall to choose a gift from the wishes of families in our area. It is easier for everyone if you can take a tag or tags from the board, purchase, wrap, and bring in the gift(s) with the tag attached so they can be delivered. Place the gifts around the tree in the Sanctuary by December 12.

Support the General Commission on Race and Religion (GCORR)

Penny Sunday is December 19

The December Penny Sunday offering will support the General Commission on Race and Religion. The Racial Justice Group has been utilizing their podcasts and information online for over a year.

The commission was formed in 1968 by the church to keep "The United Methodist Church accountable in its commitment to reject the sin of racism in every aspect of the life of the church." Racism is their primary focus, which also includes poverty, gender discrimination, and more.

GCORR is at a critical turning point. Decades of denominational decline, coupled with the current conflict and instability in the church, have caused—and will continue to cause—a steep decline in funding, resulting in cutbacks to programs. The reality is that GCORR has been underfunded for years. Staff cutbacks have come when many local congregations are recommitting to confronting racism and most need institutional support.

With God's help and your generosity, we are calling in a future where GCORR becomes self-sustaining, with a wider reach and an exponentially greater impact than ever before. For more information, visit: <https://www.gcorr.org> and <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/commissions-umw-adapt-to-new-budget-realities>.

Make checks payable to NOUMC and write December Penny Sunday in the memo. Send checks to the church office, attention Financial Secretary. For those worshipping in-person, a special offering basket will be made available.

Donate to Oxcart Pantry

Collecting cleaning supplies, especially laundry detergent, until Sunday, January 2

You have already started to fill the collection container in Fellowship Hall with cleaning items. Laundry detergent is one of the most asked for items at the Pantry. Thank you for your continued generosity!

It took two deliveries to get all the Thanksgiving items to the Oxcart Pantry. The count was over 168 items and helped to fill Thanksgiving bags for your neighbors. Thanks for making the holidays a little happier.

Christian Education



Adult Sunday School Advent Study

Sundays, 9 am, Choir Room

Join us as we continue to study "The Journey; Walking the Road to Bethlehem" by Adam Hamilton. Hamilton will take us on a journey as he travels on video from Nazareth to Bethlehem in this fascinating look at the birth of Jesus Christ. Upcoming sessions include: Mary's Visit to Elizabeth, From Nazareth to Bethlehem, and The Manger. For more information, contact Craig Mueller.

Christmas Flower Sale

Orders due Monday, December 6

The youth are accepting orders for **Poinsettias and Christmas Cacti** that will be placed on the altar for our Christmas Eve service. Order forms are available in Fellowship Hall, on page 6 of this newsletter, and on the website. Proceeds will benefit this year's Oxcart Food Pantry Sunday School Mission Project.

Please drop your order form and payment into the purple box in Fellowship Hall or send the form with your check to the church office, attention Wendy Cooper. You can also email Wendy Cooper.



Thank You

Thank you, youth and church family!! Thanks to your generosity and efforts we were able to pack 11 cleaning kits for UMCOR!! So much to be grateful for! Happy Thanksgiving!

Chris Byrns

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the cards and prayers. I appreciate it and I am doing better. I am getting stronger every day.

Sydney Scothon

On behalf of the North Olmsted Oxcart Pantry and the clients we serve, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude for your recent financial donations. These have been challenging times. Operations at our pantry were forced to adapt as the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our area last year. Your financial donation during this time means so much more to us.

Thank you, too, for all of your food donations and school supplies.

Christine, Administrator, Division of Youth and Family Services & Georgia, Outreach Case Manager

Poinsettia Orders 2021



Please email orders to noumc@noumc.org

or mail orders to the church office,
attention Wendy Cooper, by December 6.

All proceeds to benefit the
Oxcart Pantry Sunday School Mission Project.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Size	Color	Price	Quantity	Total
6 ½ Inch	Red Poinsettia	\$10.00	_____	_____
6 ½ Inch	White Poinsettia	\$10.00	_____	_____
6 ½ Inch	Pink Poinsettia	\$10.00	_____	_____
6 ½ Inch	Marbled Poinsettia	\$10.00	_____	_____
6 ½ Inch	Burgundy Poinsettia	\$10.00	_____	_____
6 Inch	Christmas Cactus	\$10.00	_____	_____
		Total:	_____	_____
			Paid _____	Owe _____

Dedication

In Honor of/from:

In Memory of/from:

Church Office and Building Updates

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10 am - 2 pm

On Tuesday, Megan will work from home and will continue to check her email and voicemail during office hours (10 am - 2 pm).



Pastoral Care

Please reach out to Pastor Hoyte by using his cell phone or email address if you have any questions or want to schedule an individual time to talk.

Pastor Hoyte continues to keep you in his thoughts and prayers. God *IS* with us!

Building Mask Policy

In light of the Delta Variant and current CDC guidelines and in respect for everyone's health, we will require all persons, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face masks throughout their time in the building. Thank you for your understanding.

Financial Contributions to North Olmsted United Methodist Church

Please continue to be faithful with your financial gifts by sending your stewardship contributions to the church office to the attention of the Financial Secretary.

For those who worship with us in person, the ushers will have an offering plate available on Sunday.

January Agape Deadline

December 15

Please email articles and meeting dates to noumc@noumc.org, mail them to the church, attention Megan Howe, or put them in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox outside the church office by December 15.

Church Staff: 440-779-6634

Pastor: Hoyte Wilhelm
ext.16
cell: 330-428-1545

Director of Christian Education:
Wendy Cooper
ext.13

Organist: Marlene Dirksen

Admin. Assistant: Megan Howe
ext.10

Youth Director: Chris Byrns
ext. 14

Music Director: Gabriela Martinez

Social Media: Hanna Moore

Church Family News

2	Sally S.	17	Barbara C.
3	Barbara S.	18	Hanna M.
5	Kelly M.	19	Lois D.
6	Jan R.	22	Mikenzie D.
10	John S.	23	Wayne P.
11	Barbara S.	24	Jean S.
13	Ray P.	27	Christopher H.
15	Floyd A.	29	Liz L.
16	Phoebe T.	29	John W.
17	Kristi J.		

18	Megan and Nathan H.
19	Brigid and Shawn D.
29	Anita and James B.
31	Ellie and Jim Y.

DECEMBER



Prayer Concerns

First Responders
 Victims of natural disasters
 Those suffering from mental illness
 Those affected by gun violence
 Those who are homeless
 Stephen Ministers, Care Receivers
 Our condolences to Wendy C.
 following the passing of her
 mother, Luverne
 Our condolences to Jane B.
 following the passing of her
 sister, Beverly
 Our condolences to Ray B.
 following the passing of his
 cousin, Meredith
 Jennifer G.
 Randall S.'s son

Sydney S. and family
 Alice and Tony, lifted by
 Claudia and Paul T.
 Ron W.
 Karen, lifted by David L.
 Nancy D.
 Dale, David L.'s brother
 Lois D.
 Teresa, Michelle W.'s cousin
 Jan R.
 Scott, David L.'s brother
 Josh O.
 Carol W.
 Viola C.
 Susan W.
 Donald R.
 Keith A.

Sterling B.
 Betty Ann, sister of Mike B.
 Miriam, lifted by Janis J.
 Patty, lifted by Janis J.
 Mary, lifted by Susan W.
 Monica, lifted by Susan W.
 Sheryl, lifted by Sally S.
 Barbara B.
 Donna, sister of Carol N.
 Steve, son of Mary Ellen M.
 Selene, lifted by Carole A.
 Judy, lifted by Brenda F.
 Israel, Sarah J.'s student
 Bev, lifted by Josh O.
 Christopher Y., USAF
 Matthew F., USAF
 Lt. Col. Bill G., USMC

December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday 10 am - 2 pm</i>			1 12:30 pm UMW Lunch (Bistro 83)	2 4:30 pm - 6 pm Free Holiday Community Meal (Carry-Out Only) 7 pm Choir (Sanctuary)	3	4 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved
5 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 3 pm - 5 pm Girl Scouts (Classroom 7)	6 11 am Bells (Choir Room) 12 pm - 1 pm Racial Justice Group (Zoom) 8:30 pm AA (FH)	7 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved 7 pm Scouts (FH)	8	9 7 pm Choir (Sanctuary)	10	11 8:30 am UMM Breakfast (Canary's) 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved for Organist
12 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 3 pm - 5 pm Girl Scouts (Classroom 7)	13 11 am Bells (Choir Room) 12 pm - 1 pm Racial Justice Group (Zoom) 7 pm Blue Christmas Worship 8:30 pm AA (FH)	14 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved 7 pm Scouts (FH) 7:30 pm Holiday Hits Concert (LCCC Stocker Arts Center)	15 <i>January Agape Deadline</i>	16 11:30 am Lunch with Friends 7 pm Choir (Sanctuary)	17	18 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved for Organist
19 Penny Sunday 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 3 pm - 5 pm Girl Scouts (Classroom 7)	20 11 am Bells (Choir Room) 12 pm - 1 pm Racial Justice Group (Zoom) 8:30 pm AA (FH)	21 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved 7 pm Scouts (FH)	22	23 7 pm Choir (Sanctuary)	24 Christmas Eve 7 pm Candlelight Worship	25 Christmas Day
26 10:30 am Worship	27 <i>Office Closed</i> 8:30 pm AA (FH)	28 10 am - 2 pm Sanctuary Reserved	29	30	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i>	

For the most up-to-date calendar, visit www.noumc.org.

*Please contact the church office to add your meeting or gathering,
virtual or in-person, to the church calendar.*

Agape Newsletter

North Olmsted United Methodist Church
4600 Dover Center Road
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070



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.

Free Holiday Community Meal Carry-Out Only

Thursday, December 2

4:30 pm - 6 pm

Carry-Out Menu:

*pork roast, mashed potatoes and gravy,
green beans, and dessert*

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. Menus 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 an accessible facility.*