News Around the Congregation

COFFEE, TEA, & PASTOR B The December get together takes place Dec. 10 from 10:30 a.m. until noon at Blackbird Bakery in Lakewood. Join us for a great cup of coffee (or other beverage) and conversation!

ADVENT STUDY WITH PASTOR BROOKE Mondays at 2 p.m. or Tuesdays at 7 p.m. through Dec. 17. Help kick off the Christmas season with this exploration of the reason for the season!

SIGN LANGUAGE YOUTH, ADULT CLASSES CONTINUE on Tuesday evenings. Youth, ages 7-13, meet 5-6 p.m. Adults, ages 14 and up, meet 7-8:30 p.m. For information and to sign up, contact Cory Svette: email csvette09@mail.bw.edu; cell 440-213-8755.

POINSETTIA ORDERS are due Dec. 1. Look in the bulletin or on the information table for order forms.

EVERLASTING LIGHT THE PROMISE OF CHRISTMAS A Cantata performed by the Chancel Choir, Dec. 22 during worship. Don’t miss this glorious beginning of Christmas Week!

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM takes place Dec. 13 and 14, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. each evening, with live animals, refreshments, and more.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE is on page 3.
In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’

— Luke 2:8-10

Happy Advent! While some people will read this before the first Sunday of Advent and others may see this closer to Christmas, we will likely be in the season of Advent when you read this. Advent — the season of waiting. Waiting for the Messiah to arrive in the form of that little baby. That most unexpected of packages that will completely change the world; and if we allow him to, to change us as well.

I can relate to those shepherds in the field. Sometimes I get afraid too — I am the new pastor of a church that has so much going for it. The people are wonderful, we have wonderful music, we engage in ministries like the community meal and monthly in-gathering, and did I mention the people?! But I sometimes get fearful that I don’t know what I am doing. And then one of those lovely people remind me that I am not alone, that God is with me.

So as you move through the hectic-ness of this season, remember not to rush too much. The baby will arrive, but the anticipation not only of that baby’s arrival, but also how that baby can change your life is worth waiting for. What are you doing to prepare for Jesus to enter your life yet again this Advent season?

Blessings,
Pastor Brooke

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December Mission Offering and In-Gathering

You have the opportunity to be a part of the ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year’s Christmas Fund Offering.

“It wasn’t easy picking up the telephone to share with you my present situation. In fact, it was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life although it reminded me that grace still happens. Sometimes we as clergy persons lose sight of God’s grace when the negative stuff comes into our lives.”

“...thanks so much for sharing your time and ministry with me. Your most gracious gift is appreciated more than words can say as I continue to live in the ‘meantime.’”

These eloquent words are from a pastor who is the recipient of the caring and concern of those who contribute to the Christmas Fund.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund also provides for the Supplementation of Small Annuities and Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks to lower-income retirees.

In Gathering: Adopt a Family and Help Older Adults

Beginning Nov. 24, and running until Dec. 15, we will hold our annual Christmas drive for families in need.

This year, we will provide for a family of four and two single older adults through the City of Westlake Community Services program. A sign-up sheet will be posted the 24th.

Thank you in advance for your generous donations!

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Pastor Brooke’s Office Hours:

Monday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Tuesday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Sermon Prep: 1-5 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Friday: Day Off
Saturday: Day Off
Advent Activities for the Whole Family

Advent is a wonderful time to come together to create memories as we wait for and anticipate the birth of the Christ Child. Here are some suggestions of activities that generations can do together, whether you live in the same household or not. So find a child or a teen, related to you or not, and deepen your experience of this Holy season.

Serving Others
1. Shop together for food items to donate to a pantry
2. Bake cookies to take to someone in a senior center
3. Drive around and make donations at several Salvation Army red buckets.
4. Write letters or create cards for active duty military overseas

Faith-full Activities
1. Sing Christmas carols together (at home or down your street)
2. Go to the library (or your bookshelf) and read some of your favorite Christmas storybooks.
3. Set up a nativity scene together and share the Christmas Story and memories of Christmases past.

Outings
1. A PJ drive around to look at Christmas lights.
2. Go to a tree-lighting ceremony.
3. Attend a Christmas concert at a school or church.
4. Invite others over to your house to watch a favorite Christmas movie.

Greetings!
It’s hard to believe Christmas is right around the corner!

On Sunday, December 22, during the 10:30 a.m. morning service, our very own CHANCEL CHOIR will present “EVERLASTING LIGHT, The Promise of Christmas,” a Cantata by Larson, McDonald, Rouse, and Shackley. You will hear original music as well as familiar carol melodies. We invite you to come and join us as we bask together in the everlasting light and love of Christ.

We also invite you to attend our 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service. Music will be presented by both our Chancel and Bell Choirs.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our music ministry.

Wishing everyone a blessed holiday season.
Carol

Leadership Training for All Members
Serving on Teams
There will be a training session for all team members Saturday, Jan. 11, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please plan on attending.

Reweemer UCC December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays
2 Aaron Barnes
4 Kelly Patzwahl
5 Steve Earl
6 Dale Andrews
13 Susan Schlitter
16 Holly Miller Shank
17 Johanna Slygh
20 Alexis Widmer
26 Tim Thomas
28 Lori Lentz
29 Alex Tomoff
31 Jane Huml

Anniversaries
16 Brent & Katie Stone
19 Bill & Elaine Freed
22 Dave & Sandy Evans
27 Chuck & Barb Zaugg

Christmas Worship Schedule
Dec. 19, 7 p.m.: Blue Christmas Service
Dec. 22, 10:30 a.m.: Christmas Cantata
Dec. 24, 5:30 p.m.: Christmas Eve Family Service
Dec. 24, 7:30 p.m.: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Margaret Borrelli

Carol Peddie
Leadership team met on November 18. The pledges were down this month, but Alex reported that this was an anomaly for this year, as we have met our budget for pledges each month this year. All other financial areas are at budget or below.

A significant amount of time was spent on discussion of replacing the large copier in the office. The lease expires December 1 and leadership team needed to vote on what type of copier we were going to purchase. The team had decided earlier this year to purchase a copier instead of lease, as it was more cost effective. It was decided that $5,500 would be approved for the purchase of a copier with an 11x17 drawer as well as an 8.5x11 drawer for paper.

It was noted that the leadership team unanimously voted to go ahead with Journey to Bethlehem this year. Diane Kvasnicka and Debbie Shank have graciously agreed to be co-chairs.

There was also discussion regarding the leadership team expressing our thanks to the Strategic Vision Committee for their work. Bonnie Hawver presented a letter she had drafted that the team agreed to send.

Pastor Brooke presented a proposal for an IT consultant to come in to connect the three computers in the office as well as provide some education for the staff. This was approved.

Pastor Brooke said that there would be leadership training on January 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m. for all people serving on teams to discuss expectations and good leadership skills. Janet had been contacted about hosting a blood drive at the church. Discussion ensued, and it was decided that Janet would follow up to gather more information.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Brooke

Annual Reports are Due

Redeemer will hold its Winter Annual Meeting Jan. 26 following worship.

All Team Chairs should turn in their end-of-the-year Annual Reports by Dec. 31.

Reports can be sent via email to church@corucc.org or left on Barb’s desk in the church office.

May the peace, hope, and joy of Christmas be with everyone during the season and in the new year.