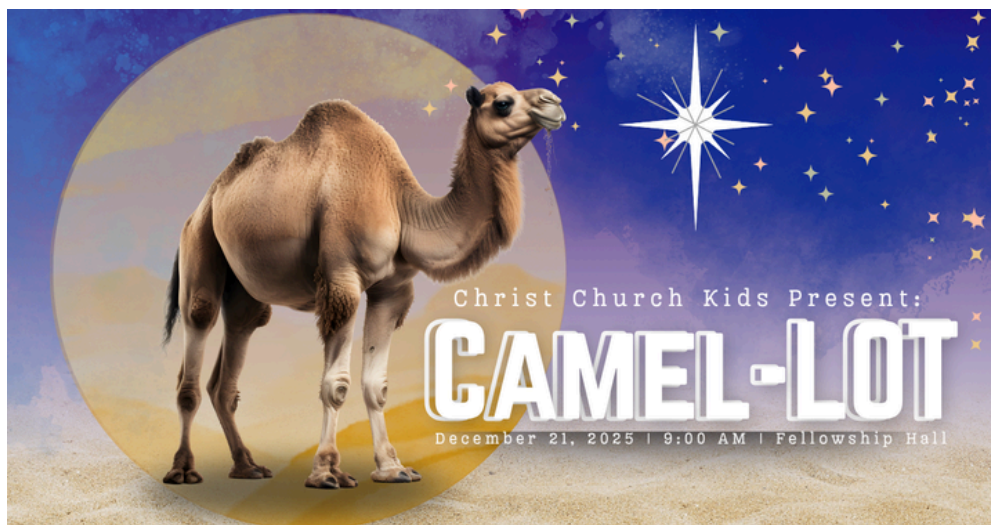




CHRIST CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

DECEMBER  
2025

# THE VISITOR



Get ready for a Christmas story like you've never seen it before! This year's Christmas pageant, Camel-LOT, follows the nativity through the eyes (and humps!) of the camels who carried the treasures of the Magi—only to discover that the greatest treasure of all was waiting in a manger. The morning begins with a warm breakfast at 9:00 AM, and then our Christ Church Kids will take the stage to share a joyful, imaginative retelling of Jesus' birth.

Along the journey you'll meet a star that refuses to stop shining, wise men who aren't always entirely sure where they're going, camels with delightfully oversized personalities, and sheep with even bigger opinions. Familiar Christmas music will appear throughout the story—though with a few unexpected “camel-ized” twists that are sure to bring smiles and laughter. And woven through every scene is the heart of the story: in every version, every retelling, and every journey toward the manger, Christ is the true treasure we seek.

We hope you'll join us for this fun, faith-filled morning as our children remind us of joy, wonder, and the welcome that Christmas brings to all.

## \*\*\*Notable Church Events in December\*\*\*

- Men's Breakfast Study - 12/2
- Advent Bible Study - 12/3
- Ladies of Light Gathering - 12/6
- Pageant Practice - 12/6
- Christmas Caroling - 12/7
- Men's Breakfast Study - 12/9
- Bigs & Littles - 12/9
- Advent Bible Study - 12/10
- Newsletter Deadline - 12/12
- Men's Breakfast Study - 12/16
- Advent Bible Study - 12/17
- Pageant Practice - 12/20
- Christmas Pageant - 12/21
- Longest Night Service - 12/21
- Men's Breakfast Study - 12/23
- Church Office Closed - 12/24 through 1/2  
(voicemails will be monitored)

## ***The Most Wonderful Time of the Year***

One thing that everyone knows about me is that I'm one of those people who love everything about Christmas. I started listening to my Christmas playlist (over two hundred songs and growing!) in early October. It's a transitional year for us but we have set out to utilize our Christmas décor to spruce up two houses.

I love Christmas in the church so much. There's an energy that is unmatched. There's some stress for the staff, too, so please be gentle with all of us as we try to not only match your Christmas expectations, but those of our families as well.

In addition to the bounty of family/youth activities that are planned, I've plotted out some activities of my own for the grown-ups. I will preface the descriptions by admitting that the times will not work for everyone, because a time that works for everyone simply doesn't exist. If any of these interests you but the timing doesn't, please give me feedback about what would have worked better!

**-Men's Breakfast Study:** Tuesday mornings at 6:30 in the conference room, held on December 2, 9, 16 & 23. A four-part video on Joseph...I'll provide the coffee, donuts, and video, you just need to show up before work or school and open your minds to learn more about Joseph, the least-known member of the holy family.

**-Advent Bible Study:** Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 pm in the chapel, held on December 3, 10 & 17. We will study Luke 1-2:6. My plan is to offer a Bible study each week during the school year going forward, restarting on January 7.

**-Longest Night Service:** December 21 at 7 pm in the sanctuary. The holidays are the most wonderful time of the year, but our losses, whether recent or long ago, and our sadness, disappointment and hurts are also felt during the season. On the longest night of the year, we turn to God and one another to face what we are feeling, or to support those who are hurting. If you haven't attended one of these services, I think you will be moved!

Christ Church has lots planned as we prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus, and I acknowledge that it's the busiest time of year, with many worthwhile opportunities vying for your time and attention. Please be sure to take time for your own spirit and grant yourself quiet times to locate your own peace and hope.

Peace,  
Scott



## CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

November 2025

### Church Council Meeting Summary from November 11, 2025

- \*A \$300 donation to OrrViews was paid from the current fund.
- \*Treasurer's Report is on file. Brian has added a line for the Samaritan Fund.
- \*Staff reports are on file. Joe Hranko has submitted his resignation as church janitor. He is willing to stay until the end of May.
- \*Parish Health Team will be headed by Adam Maag. He will set up for blood pressure readings and find helpers.
- \*Bed build produced 8 more beds to be delivered to the Salvation Army. Twin sheets are needed.
- \*Ladies of Light put together 75 Period Packs.
- \*There is a water leak in the men's room in the "new" area of fellowship hall. Motion by Jason, second by Dwaine to approve \$2000 for repairs. Money will be taken from the facility fund.
- \*Congregational meeting on November 16. Budget approval and council nominations are the agenda. Suzanne, moderator. Julie F., vice moderator. Vickie Nussbaum, 1 year. Terri - re-elect to a 3-year term. Nominations may be made from the floor.
- \*Pastoral Care Committee - members are Ken L. (chair), Elizabeth W., Julie Y., Jason A.. The chair will report to the council.
- \*Church office update. Council set a budget of \$30,000.
- \*A pamphlet will be created that contains information of organizations in the Orrville area helping folks needing gas, food, help with utilities... Caitlin will have copies.
- \*Next meeting December 9, 7 PM.

## Memorial Gifts

*In memory of Paul Holderman*  
William Arnold

*In memory of Dennis Shafer*  
Rev. Jacquie McMillen  
Mike Finney



**There will not be a church potluck in the month of December. We will resume the third-Sunday potlucks on January 18<sup>th</sup>. See you then!**

## Treasurer's Report

Current Fund	October 31, 2025		
	Month of Oct 2025	Year-to-Date	Last Year
Sunday Offerings	\$ 23,969	\$213,649	\$203,392
Other Income	\$ 363	\$ 10,301	\$ 9,495
Expenses	<u>\$ 26,713</u>	<u>\$203,223</u>	<u>\$183,038</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (2,381)	\$ 20,728	\$ 29,849
Benevolent Fund	\$ 2,849	\$ 28,819	\$ 29,094
Samaritan Fund (Formerly PEF)	\$ 794	\$ 5,918	\$ 4,711
Friendship Meals	\$ 635	\$ 635	\$ 20

Samaritan (Formerly Pastor Emergency) Fund Balance is \$2,542.

Brian Amstutz, Treasurer



# YOUTH NEWS

## Youth Fellowship Schedule:

**12/07:** No YF, come join the all-church caroling!

**12/14:** Time TBA Christmas party and white elephant gift exchange

**12/21:** No YF due to Christmas break

**12/28:** No YF due to Christmas break

**1/3-1/4:** Youth & Mentor Retreat at Camp Y-Noah. No YF.



**There will be no Kids Club on December 24<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>** due to the holiday season. We will resume our regular Wednesday night meetings on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

## Food Drive Thank-You

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated non-perishable food items to support the Salvation Army! Your kindness and generosity will help provide meals to individuals and families in need this season. Together, we are sharing God's love and making a difference in our community.



## Bigs & Littles Christmas Party Tuesday, December 9 • 6-7pm

Join us for a simple and meaningful evening designed for our youngest children—Kindergarten and under, attending with an adult.

We'll begin our time together with the Christmas story, told in a way little ones can listen, wonder, and enjoy.

Afterward, families can rotate through a few easy crafts, play some age-friendly games, enjoy seasonal snacks, and even meet a special guest in a red suit.

It's a relaxed, family-friendly night to slow down, have fun, and share the story at the heart of the season. We hope you and your little one will join us!





### **Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 7 • 5:00 PM**

Join us for an evening of music, community, and Christmas cheer! We'll gather at 5:00 PM in the church's Gathering Area, form groups, and head out to share familiar carols with members of our church family and community.

After caroling, everyone is invited back to the church for a time of fun and fellowship. Please bring a snack to share and enjoy a cozy evening together as we warm up, visit, and celebrate the season.

Whether you sing loudly, softly, or mostly just for fun, your presence will help make the night bright. This is a wonderful event for all ages—just a reminder that parents should plan to attend with their children. Come spread joy with us!



### **Blood Pressure Checks Return!**

Beginning in January, Parish Health Team members will be providing complementary blood pressure checks to the congregation the 2nd Sunday of each month. Meet at the rear of the church at the conclusion of the service. No sign up is necessary. Participants will be given a written copy of their readings for their personal records. A gentle reminder this will not be a replacement for regular health screenings with a physician and the church will not be maintaining any participant's records.

**Get ready for some fast-paced festive fun!** The Ladies of Light will gather for a little friendly competition. We'll divide into teams and race to complete a Christmas-themed jigsaw puzzle. Who will be crowned the puzzle champions of the season? Come join the fun and find out!

**In January, we will take a break from gathering** to rest from the holiday season. See everyone again in February!



**A huge thank you** to everyone in the congregation who purchased supplies and helped assemble period packs at our November Ladies of Light gathering. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to create 75 packs!! Church World Service will distribute the packs to disaster relief victims, refugees and asylum seekers, and the homeless, providing women and girls a sense of dignity during their menstrual cycle.



## Birthdays

12/01 Dana Keirstead	12/14 Laura Brownlee
12/01 Jack Wallace	12/15 Bob Landis
12/01 Beau Stocker	12/15 Sith Luangraj
12/02 Kerri Shonk	12/15 Allison Gresser
12/02 Elise Troyer	12/15 Molly Hostetler
12/03 Martha Johnson	12/17 Katherine
12/06 Al Yeagley	Blasingame
12/07 John Curtis	12/18 Sheila Bricker
12/07 Tyler Bates	12/18 Gunner Curtis
12/07 Olivia Weeman	12/19 Craig Keirstead
12/10 Carrie Lefever	12/23 William Stocker
12/10 Kayla Bumgardner	12/23 Wanda Falb
12/11 Florence Duemmel	12/23 Jacob Weyrauch
12/11 Bob Duemmel	12/24 Heather Tompkins
12/11 Joe Hranko	12/24 Josh Hershey
12/11 Rebecca Sigler	12/27 Karen Gresser
12/11 Jaxon Curie	12/27 Brandon Sigler
12/11 Charlotte Curie	12/30 Linda Madigan
12/12 Jayne McGrew	12/30 Caleb Maupin
12/12 Michaela Donley	12/30 Jayne Wallace
12/13 Dennis Landaw	12/31 Jim Swinehart



## Anniversaries

12/03 John & Martha Johnson, Jr.  
12/09 Jason & Lori Ayers  
12/12 Ben & Robin Stocker  
12/17 Josh & Mollie Curie  
12/27 Kevin & Meredith Kropf  
12/31 Gordon & Margaret Maupin



**We have two special offerings for the month of December. All month will be 'Church World Service' and on Christmas Eve, 'The Christmas Fund'. Both are 5 for 5 offerings with UCC.**

### Church World Service:

When disaster strikes, Church World Service is the primary agency through which the UCC gives support for relief and recovery efforts. This assistance may take the form of winterized family tents for Pakistani earthquake survivors, food packages and tankers full of water for displaced people in violence-torn Darfur, Sudan or long-term recovery assistance for families affected by hurricanes, tornadoes or flooding across the U.S.

### The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**



## Christ Church Congregational Meeting November 16, 2025

The congregational meeting was called for the purpose of approving the church budget for 2026 and the election of council officers.

Motion by John Kropf, second by Sarah Finney to accept the 2026 budget as presented. The 2026 budget was accepted unanimously.

Council officers and members: Suzanne Jelinek - moderator, Julie Finney, vice-moderator, Vikki Nussbaum for a one-year position in the ministry area of Care and Community and Terri Brest to a second three-year term in the ministry area of Worship and Faith Formation. There was a motion by Joi Hemphill, second by Sarah Finney to accept the slate as presented. Council representatives were elected unanimously.

Motion to adjourn Julie Finney, second by Terri Brest.

The congregational meeting was adjourned at 11:25 AM.

