



Mitten Tree

This year's Mitten Tree will once again benefit the residential students at the Christian Children's Home of Ohio (CCHO). CCHO has requested that our collection focus on **HATS & GLOVES** (no scarves or mittens). All the items collected will be delivered to CCHO to help keep the kids warm this winter! Look for the tree in Wesley Hall during Advent and add hats and gloves for kids ages 6-18!



LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, December 20 - Noon
 Pizza and beverages provided!
 Bring \$5 towards pizza.
 Bring a side or snack to share if you wish!
 All are invited!



BAKE SALE

Sunday, December 10
 United Women of Faith will hold a bake sale in Wesley Hall. Donations are welcome and can be left in the church kitchen anytime prior to the sale (please mark UWF Bake Sale). Proceeds will go to Boys & Girls Club of Wooster.



Circuit Rider

December 2023
 WOOSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH connect • grow • serve



GREETERS NEEDED!

Burning River BRASS


Greeters are needed to welcome the public for the Burning River Brass concert on December 16.
 Contact Nancy Franck (nfranck@woosterumc.org or 330.601.3076).



Brighten the day of our limited mobility and other congregation members by joining in for Christmas caroling on Sunday, December 17, at 4:00p! We'll meet at WUMC. Sign up at the "What's Up?" table in Wesley Hall.



WUMC will ring the bell for the Salvation Army at the downtown Buehler's on Friday, December 15, 8:00a-8:00p. Sign up for a slot at the "What's Up?" table in Wesley Hall or call the church office.



Would you like to place a poinsettia in the Sanctuary for Christmas? Each plant is \$13; order forms are available at the "What's Up?" table in Wesley Hall.



WUMC kids will present their Christmas Pageant during worship on Sunday, December 17.




WUMC has printed invitational cards for the Advent season. If you'd like to invite friends or neighbors to join us for Advent this year, pick up some cards at the "What's Up at WUMC?" table in Wesley Hall.



Burning River Brass · Saturday, December 16 · 1:30p

A WUMC holiday tradition, Burning River Brass returns to the WUMC Sanctuary to share some Christmas joy!
 This popular free event offers seating on a first-come, first-served basis until capacity is reached.
 Doors open at 12:45p. A free will offering benefits the Salvation Army.



BLUE CHRISTMAS

Wednesday, December 20
 7:00p WUMC sanctuary

For those who have experienced loss, the holidays can be a painful time. Churches around the world have adopted the practice of having a Blue Christmas or a Longest Night service, providing space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance.



SAYING farewell

Canal District Farewell Event
 Saturday, December 9
 Doylestown UMC (153 Church St.)
 All are invited to bid farewell to the Canal District and Superintendent Angela Lewis. It will be a time of remarks, reflection and refreshments.



UWF QUARTERLY DINNER

"Angels Among Us"

United Women in Faith
 Wednesday, December 6
 (gather at 5:30p; dinner at 6:00p)

Tickets for the catered dinner are \$20 each and are available for purchase in Wesley Hall or the church office through November 26.
 All congregation members are invited to attend the dinner and program!

Wooster UMC • 243 N. Market St. • Wooster OH 44691 • 330.262.5641
 Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
 Pastor David Rittgers drittgers@woosterumc.org
 Office Manager, Becky Pickett office@woosterumc.org

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Pastor's Ponderings: A "New" Year Begins



The Greatest Gift Has Already Arrived

There's something special about the Christmas season. There's a sense of anticipation in the air that's hard to ignore. We can't wait until Christmas Day arrives and for all of the celebrations that come along with it. Special people, special foods, special places, and special presents make the Christmas season memorable and worth repeating again year after year.

As children, we learn to anticipate the opening of gifts. In order to heighten our anticipation, we have special calendars to count down the days before Christmas FINALLY arrives. What could be hiding inside that box wrapped in festive paper and ribbons? Did we get that present that we had hoped to receive? What might have appeared in our stocking that we didn't even expect?

For me, that sense of anticipation carries over into adulthood. Anytime an Amazon delivery truck drives by the house in the weeks leading up to Christmas, I wonder if someone thought of me. If a package or card comes in the mail, might it contain a meaningful gift of some sort?

All this anticipation looks forward to a great celebration, and rightly so. That's indeed part of the Christmas story – that we have something wonderful to hope for in the future that will last for eternity. And yet, at the same time, we should pause and realize that no matter how wonderful the gifts we receive this year may be, the truth is, we've already received the greatest gift we could ever ask for in Jesus Christ who came to us as a helpless baby in Bethlehem.

Our Advent themes will expound on this idea as we consider the grace of God that has come to us in the flesh. Grace is the "gift of God" that we can do nothing to earn. We can only receive.

Over the next few weeks in worship, we will talk about:

- "The Gift That We Didn't See Coming" (Dec. 3)
- "The Gift That Makes Things Right" (Dec. 10)
- "The Gift That Keeps on Giving" (Dec. 24, 10:00 a.m. service)

We will also receive the gift of our children's pageant on Sunday, December 17 at our 10:00 a.m. worship. And then on the evening of Sunday, December 24, we will share in our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5:00 p.m. This service will include the telling of the biblical Christmas story and lots of great music, including "Silent Night" when we will light our candles together.

In addition to these wonderful times of worship, there are many other Advent and Christmas activities you can take part in to be reminded of the great love God has for the world. Please take a few minutes to scan this edition of the Circuit Rider newsletter to find out how.

I'm looking forward to celebrating Christmas with you for the first time in just a few weeks!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor David Rittgers (drittgers@woosterumc.org)

Kind words

Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul, and health to the body. Proverbs 16:24

A huge thank you to Bob and Nikki Reynolds for coordinating the 2023 Feast of Thanks, along with every person who helped make it happen, either by helping with set up, serving, or clean up, kids who made centerpieces, folks who made sides and desserts, and everyone who attended!

Thank you to all who baked for and bought from the youth bake sale. \$595 was raised - God is Good! *Deb Clow, Director of Youth Ministries*

Thank you so much for providing such a wonderful brunch for our family after Ross's funeral. It took a huge weight off our shoulders in a time of need. It was beautiful down to every last detail! *Love, Buddy & Tammy Barton*

Thanks to the WUMC congregation for their generosity in providing canned goods to People to People Ministries. A van load was delivered to PTP to help stock their pantry for winter!

Please keep the church informed of illness and hospitalization of any person who may need a caring visit or phone call.
Recently ill/hospitalized: Recent deaths: Marjorie Baker, Michael Dunaway, Donna Featherstone



Photo Gallery



Left: Thanks to Bob & Nikki Reynolds (and adorable grandson Mac) for loading up and delivering canned goods to People to People!

Right: Rev. David Wilcox gave a historical presentation, "Our Sanctuaries".

Below: Ladies Night Out creations.



Left, Above and Below: Hanging of the Greens to prepare for Christmas.



Right: WUMC Youth prepare cookies for the bake sale to support their upcoming mission trip.

