


**ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS**

Looking for meaningful Christmas gifts? Visit Wesley Hall on December 1, 8, 15, and 22 to purchase alternative gifts that support several local organizations. Your gift will make a lasting impact while honoring loved ones with the true spirit of giving.

**Children's PAGEANT**



WUMC kids will share their Christmas pageant, "Follow That Star!" with the WUMC congregation during the December 22 10:00a service.




WUMC will ring the bell for the Salvation Army on Thursday, December 19, 8:00a-8:00p at Buehler's Towne Market. Sign up for a slot at the What's Up Table in Wesley Hall or call the church office.

**BLUE CHRISTMAS**

CHURCH OF THE CROSS UMC  
5200 CLEVELAND RD, WOOSTER  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22 · 2:00p

For those who have experienced loss, the holidays can be a particularly painful time, stirring up grief in acute ways. As a result, churches around the world have adopted the practice of having a "Blue Christmas" or "Longest Night" service during the Advent season, designed to provide space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance amidst the holiday hustle and bustle.


Main Street  WOOSTER

**HISTORIC DOWNTOWN**

CHURCH TOUR

Friday, December 6th  
4:00 to 7:00p.m.

SPONSORED BY:



WUMC will be a stop on this year's Church Walk on Friday, December 6, 4:00-7:00p. The Cleveland Carolers will again perform on the WUMC front lawn from 5:00-7:00p, in addition to the performers inside the sanctuary:

4:00: Vicki Moore, piano  
4:30: Steve Gerber, WUMC organist  
5:00: Aaron Miedel, violin;  
Steve Gerber, piano  
5:30: WUMC Campanile Bell Choir  
6:00: Tom Shaw, organ

**GREETERS/USHERS ARE NEEDED TO HELP WELCOME THE PUBLIC AND PROVIDE DIRECTION. IF YOU CAN HELP, SIGN UP AT THE WHAT'S UP TABLE IN WESLEY HALL OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

**PARENT'S NIGHT OUT**

Friday, December 6

Parents! Do you need a night off to do some shopping, have a quiet dinner, or just sit in silence? Plan to drop your kids off at the church gym on December 6 from 6:00-8:00p for some fun activities planned and provided by WUMC youth!

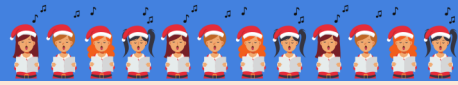
A new GriefShare session will begin on January 7; pick up a brochure at the What's Up Table in Wesley Hall or visit [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org) for more information.

**LUNCH BUNCH**



**Wednesday, December 18 · Noon**  
Pizza and beverages provided!  
Bring \$5 towards pizza.  
Bring a side or snack to share if you wish!  
All are invited!

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING**



Brighten the day of our limited mobility members by joining in for Christmas caroling on Sunday, December 15! We'll meet at WUMC at 4:00p. Sign up at the "What's Up?" table

**Advent & Christmas AT WUMC**

Stop by the What's Up Table in Wesley Hall today to pick up a WUMC Advent & Christmas brochure! It's filled with all the exciting events and worship opportunities happening this season. Take a brochure to plan your Advent activities and invite friends to join us in celebrating the joy of Christmas!

**LASER TAG**




Looking for a way to get out and moving in the new year? Join us for Laser Tag January 5 at Acres of Fun. We will meet at 3:00p and play 3 games of laser tag. Cost is \$10/person. Please let Ali know if you plan to attend!

**WOOSTER UMC VALUES DISCOVERY WORKSHOP**

WHO WE ARE • WHY WE EXIST • WHERE WE WANT TO GO

Saturday, January 25 | 9:00a-3:00p

Save the date and make plans to attend the WUMC Values Discovery Workshop and have a chance to shape WUMC's future as we discover who we are, why we exist, and where we want to go.

 Would you like to place a poinsettia in the Sanctuary for Christmas in memory/honor of a loved one or celebration of a special occasion? Each plant is \$8; order forms are available at the What's Up Table. A list of the dedications will be published in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



**Circuit Rider**

December 2024

WOOSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

connect • grow • serve



**Burning River Brass · Saturday, December 21 · 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 1) The WUMC Giving Tree to provide winter accessories to Meals Together patrons, and 2) the "Lift Her Up" Africa University scholarship 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](mailto:drittgers@woosterumc.org)

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

## Pastor's Ponderings: "On Our Way to Bethlehem"

Where do you plan to travel this holiday season? Is someone traveling to come and see you? The time between Thanksgiving and New Year's, including Christmas, is one of the busiest travel seasons of the year. As a child, I used to look forward to an annual trip to the New York City area to spend a few days with my extended family. The anticipation of experiencing the hustle and bustle of city life and seeing family made me eager to take those trips again and again.

Where will your travels take you? We're so often focused on the destination in our travels. "Where are you going?" is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the main reason for deciding to "go," it's often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments – whether frustrating or delightful.

This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the final destination of Christmas. We will also attune ourselves to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. Along the way, we will be invited to ponder our own milestones, including the progress and the potholes "on the way."

"On the Way to Bethlehem" is a worship series developed by Marcia McFee (Worship Design Studio) and inspired by the book "On the Way to Bethlehem: An Advent Study" by Rob Fuquay. Below is our weekly schedule of worship themes:

- Dec. 1 - First Sunday of Advent – "Rome: A Place of Longing (Hope)"
- Dec. 8 - Second Sunday of Advent – "Jerusalem: A Place of Waiting (Peace)"
- Dec. 15 - Third Sunday of Advent – "Nazareth: A Place of Simplicity (Joy)"
- Dec. 22 - Fourth Sunday of Advent – "Bethlehem: A Place of Humility (Love)"
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve – "The Manger: A Place of Care"
- Dec. 29 – First Sunday After Christmas – "Persia: A Place of Return"

**PRAYER:** *Dear Lord, may I become more aware this season of the journey of my life. Help me to see and discover you as my Guide. As I make my way to Christmas, may I step aside from the daily destinations of life to consider where my journey is ultimately taking me and where you want to lead me. Help me to be open to sights and stops you want to show me as I go, so that when I arrive at Christmas, I will be at a new starting point of my journey. Amen.*

P.S. - As a family update, our journey has taken an unexpected turn – you could think of it as a detour of sorts. The hip surgery that Beth was originally scheduled to have on November 21 has been delayed by five weeks to December 27. The delay comes as a result of IV saline shortage. We're thankful for those who have reached out and kept Beth in your prayers.

With Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in Christ, Pastor David Rittgers ([drittgers@woosterumc.org](mailto:drittgers@woosterumc.org))

### Kind words

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

Thank you so much for your generous support of our youth group's bake sale. Your donations and purchases helped us raise funds for the ASP Mission Trip and Summer Camp. We are grateful for your kindness and support. Sincerely, WUMC Youth and Kids

I wanted to thank you all for making me the Person of the Week. The flowers were beautiful, and I have so appreciated all the cards I have received welcoming me to the WUMC Family. I feel truly blessed to be a part of a community of so many kind members. All the best and with thanks, David Smailes

A heartfelt thank you to all of those who worked, brought food to share and attended this year's Feast of Thanks. There was plenty of food and fellowship. Nikki Reynolds

A special shoutout to Nikki, who had Feast of Thanks organized down to the last detail - which should come as no surprise to anyone that knows her well. Even though the announcements said that Nikki and I were the event organizers, 99.9% of the work was done by Nikki. Thanks to all who came, and special thanks to all who volunteered to help. Bob Reynolds, Church Council Chair

Thank you for the beautiful flowers and the many cards I received as Person of the Week. They were much appreciated. Nancy Ayres

Please keep the church informed of illness and hospitalization of any person who may need a caring visit or phone call.

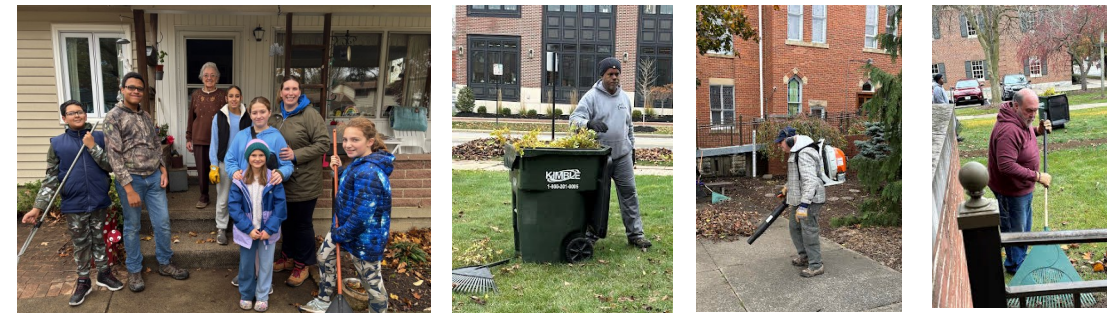
Recently ill/hospitalized:      Recent deaths: Dick Smith



## Photo Gallery



**Above:** The WUMC congregation shared a meal at Feast Of Thanks. **Left:** Leaves were raked and WUMC grounds were spruced up at the WUMC Work Day. **Below:** WUMC youth packaged meals at Project Feed.



**Far left:** WUMC was a Spooky Sprint Stop at the Heart & Ghoul Walk/Run for United Way; many WUMC members took part!



**Near left:** Youth held a bake sale to raise money for the ASP mission trip and summer camp.



**Left:** Ladies Night Out provided an opportunity to enjoy dessert and crafting.

**Above right and near right:** WUMC students decorate the glass door entryway.

