

Christ's United Lutheran Church
437 Airport Road
Ashland, PA 17921
www.christsunited.org

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December



The CULC Messenger
God's Work,
Our Actions



Join us for Worship - Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School - October through May

1st & 3rd Sundays @ 10:45 a.m.

Contemporary Worship Service -

*First Saturday of each month at
6:00 p.m.*

The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions





Christ's United Lutheran Church

One God. One People. One Purpose.

437 Airport Road, Ashland, PA 17921

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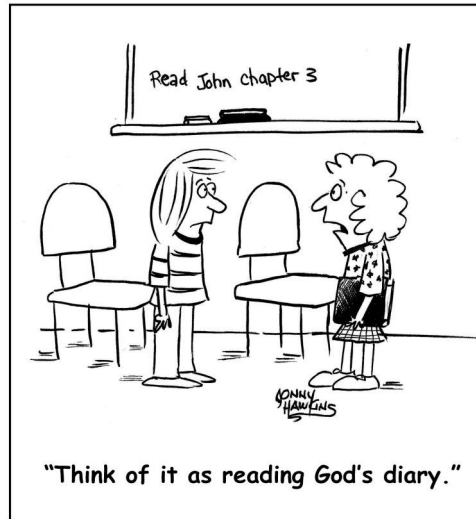
(570) 875-1591

December 2025

The December issue of the CULC Messenger
is sponsored in Memory of
Carol Klinger
by Donald Klinger Family

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Status of Accounts as of October 30

Total amount in checking account: \$95,733.28.

Amount needed in offerings per month to meet our
2025 Annual Budget of \$227,589.00 is \$18,965.75.

Income for October was \$12,159.99.

Expenses for October were \$14,733.04,
resulting in a net loss of \$2,573.05.

Benevolence for October was \$925.28.

CHURCH COUNCIL 2025

	Phone	Term Expires
John Towey, President	570-205-2682	Feb. 2027
Kay Berner, Vice President	570-875-1035	Feb. 2026
Morgen Sweitzer, Secretary	717-858-9824	Feb. 2026
Jamie Johnson	570-590-1678	Feb. 2028
Suzanne Peel	570-590-5023	Feb. 2026
Virgil Smith	570-205-6979	Feb. 2028
Barbara Stepanchick	570-875-1114	Feb. 2027
Janet Towey	570-205-3420	Feb. 2027
Mark Varndell	570-205-8002	Feb. 2028

Youth Representative - Maura Sweitzer

PASTOR

Rev. Brian Beissel
570-516-1787

***Pastor Brian's Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. or other times by appointment.

STAFF

Parish Administrator Debbie Hall 570-875-1591
office@christsunited.org 570-789-9722
Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:30 am- 4:30 pm

Director of Music Jamie Johnson 570-590-1678
Treasurer Ann Marie Dillman 570-449-2021
Indoor Custodian Ann Ray Begis 570-590-2729
Outdoor Custodian Dennis Wolfe 570-875-9085
Financial Secretary Christine Brennan 570-875-0720



Christ's United Ministry Teams

Christian Education
Evangelism/Outreach
Lutheran Church Men (LCM)
Social Ministry
Stewardship
WELCA
Worship & Music
Multimedia Ministry
Safety and Security Team

Christ's United Committees

Auditing & Finance Committees
Endowment Fund
Mutual Ministry
Nominating
Personnel
Property

Christ's United Lutheran Church **Mission Statement**

*We the members of Christ's
United Lutheran Church, Ashland,
desiring to be blessed together with
Word and Sacrament and to
become more perfectly the Body of
Christ in our world, do hereby
commit ourselves to a mission
which includes a creative re-
examination of our worship life; a
quality educational program for all
ages; intentional witnessing; a
serving spirit; and an integrated
support system which will under
gird our program and the
maintenance of our facilities as it
encourages improved stewardship.*

Message from Pastor Brian

Grace and Peace to you in the name of God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ!

You may have heard the story that Martin Luther invented the Christmas Tree. The story goes as follows: Luther was on the way home from a meeting one evening and saw how the stars twinkled through the forest full of evergreen trees. Wanting to re-create the image at home, he cut one tree down and brought it home, then hung candles on it to re-create the effect. Being that it was winter, he said that the candles represented the star that led the Magi to the Christ child. The evergreen tree, he remarked, represented the endless love of God.

This isn't the only story of the origin of the Christmas tree, however. Martin Luther may have been the first one to tie the decorated tree into the Christmas narrative, but around 70 years before Luther, there was apparently a group of German bakers that decorated an evergreen tree in baked goods, tinsel, and apples. In your pastor's opinion, this is an excellent waste of delicious baked goods.

The Luther story was widely broadcast in a 1959 radio program by WorldVision, a Christian based charitable organization that is linked nowadays with mission to third world countries. Their Christmas program re-ran the story multiple times, which led it to being put forth in the public eye.

If you are like the Beissel household, you likely have many ornaments that tell the Christmas story. One of my favorites at home is Linus, from the Charlie Brown Christmas story, dressed as a shepherd on a stage that looks like our traditional images of a stable. There's a button you can push, and it plays the audio from the Christmas special that tells the story of the shepherds coming to see the promised Christ.

And if you are like the Beissel household, there are other things there as well. In our tree, there is an ornament celebrating the Eagles' Super Bowl win in 2018, some Santas,, and some Paw Patrol figures from Timmy's early childhood. There is an ornament commemorating Timmy's adoption. It's not like we worship those things or anything like that - in a sense, they tell the story of our family. Maybe your tree tells your family story too, perhaps in a different way.



Christian symbol



22

POINSETTIA — This shrub, native to Mexico, is at the heart of legend about a poor girl who wanted to bring Baby Jesus a gift one Christmas Eve. As she walked to church, she gathered a bouquet of weeds — which Jesus miraculously transformed into lovely red flowers. Thus the poinsettia (named for Joel Poinsett, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico who first brought the plant to America) is known in Mexico as la flor de la Nochebuena (flower of the Holy Night). The poinsettia is also an ideal Christmas symbol because its leaves turn red when deprived of sunlight and its flowers (the red inner buds) bloom in December.

— continued on page 4

The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions



Here's the thing- you likely have all kinds of traditions and celebrations that come from your family, your nationalities, and all kinds of things. As long as those things point towards Jesus and what draws us closer.

Of course, your church family is a part of that as well. We have stories of what we do to celebrate Advent and Christmas. We have the lighting of the Advent candles, a slight change in our liturgy. We will have Christmas caroling again this year. Of course, it all builds to our Christmas Eve Services that we will celebrate together.

Let's be reminded that as Christ was a gift for us, we get to be a gift for others.

Peace, Pastor Brian Beissel



Schedule for December:



Your Pastor invites you to lunch!
Here is the schedule for December.
Lunch begins at 12 noon.

December 3 - Cracker Barrel



Bible Study

December Bible Study will be held on the
second and fourth Mondays of the month
(Dec. 8 and Dec 22) @ 10:00 AM
we meet here at the church.

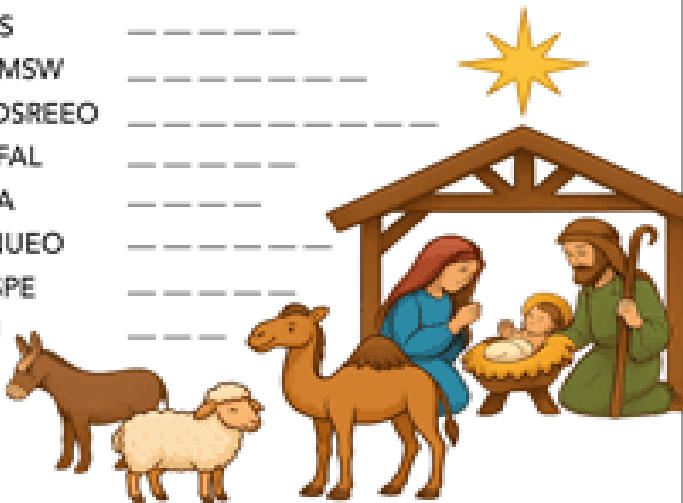
We are currently studying the Book of Acts.
All are welcome.

Puzzle!

The Christmas Story

Unscramble each set of letters to form a word from the Christmas story. One letter in each set doesn't belong. Write each extra letter below, on the line above the correct number. Then answer the question: What did we all receive at Christmas?

- (1) TGLBEHHEME _____
- (2) NEAGLO _____
- (3) NRMEDAG _____
- (4) ODEKSNY _____
- (5) AMGYR _____
- (6) OHESJIP _____
- (7) EFJSUS _____
- (8) ITEENMSW _____
- (9) SPHHDSREEO _____
- (10) EMCFAL _____
- (11) TLSRA _____
- (12) CSSNUEO _____
- (13) HEVSPE _____
- (14) ENIN _____



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14		



*The following donations were given to
Christ's United's Memorial Funds
since the last issue of the Newsletter:*

In Memory of Hannah Lisowski by:
Erik, Sally & Jacob Tice

In Memory of Barbara Liem by:
Beryl Stitzer

In Memory of Keith Morgan by:
Gail Marquardt

In Memory of Diane Heidlebaugh by:
Don & Laray Klinger
Jo-Ann Young

Donations to Christ's Cupboard

In Memory of Hannah Lisowski by:
Suzanne Peel and Family

In Memory of Richie Kosmisky by:
Suzanne Peel and Family

In Memory of Barbara Liem by:
Suzanne Peel and Family
Terry & Ted Ambrose

In Memory of Diane Heidlebaugh by:
Suzanne Peel and Family
Dorothy and Terry Kessler

In Honor of Susan Merwine's Birthday by:
Shirley Frey



Church Council Highlights **From November**

- LCM reported the Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner was a success.
- Youth Group will have a cookie making meeting on Sunday, November 9th.
- The insurance premium for the church is increasing and coverage is decreasing. We are getting quotes from other companies.
- The batteries in the phones are no longer holding a charge. New phones have been ordered.

Saturday Evening Contemporary Worship Service

Join us at 6 p.m. on the first Saturday of each month as our new Praise Band leads us in an informal worship service with uplifting music. Holy Communion is celebrated by Intinction.

The worship service for December will be held on Dec 6.



December Council Contact of the month is Barb Stepanchick.

The Council Contact of the Month is the "on call" member of council, the person to contact if you have any concerns (other than pastoral concerns), or need access to the building. If you need to contact Barb, she can be reached at 570-875-1114.



**Council Member
of the Month**



Communion and Contribution Records



Please assist us in making an accurate report of all active, communing and contributing members of Christ's United.

As we approach the end of our calendar year, it is important that everyone take a moment to complete one communion card and one offering envelope with your name and address. Both can be found in the pew racks at any of our upcoming services. Thank you. New offering envelopes for 2026 will be available soon.

PRAYER CHAIN



Each day members of Christ's United bow their heads and lift their hearts in prayer for the ministries of this congregation and people in need.

A copy of the Prayer List is available at worship services each Sunday. You also have an email sent to you each week with a list of those in need of your prayers. A phone chain notifies you of immediate needs. If there is an immediate need of prayer, please call the church office. In the event the office is closed, Gail Marquardt (570-554-1075 or 570-933-1737) should be called to begin the prayer chain. Please call the church office for more information or to become a Prayer Chain Participant.

Praying Through the Directory

Each month we will be listing three of our church faith families. We ask that you take the time and uplift them in prayer for their needs and spiritual journey.

This month we pray for:

The Anczarski Family - Joseph & Barbara
The Coward Family - William & Corrine
The Sisko Family - Daniel Jr. & Melissa



ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that during the worship service on **November 30th** this year's college students will receive a scholarship check to assist in furthering their education:



\$500 Scholarship Recipients:

Jacob Tice is a Sophomore at Commonwealth University—Bloomsburg. He is studying Secondary Education with a minor in Social Studies.

Carey Wahalec is attending Susquehanna University. He will graduate in the spring of 2026 with a Bachelor of Science in Finance.

\$100 Recipient:

Logan Walacavage is a 2025 graduate from North Schuylkill High School and is employed with the State Correctional Institution in Frackville. He is in training to become a Corrections Officer.

Endowment Fund



The congregation is encouraged to attend this service to show your support and offer prayers for the successful future of the Scholarship Recipients.

Pastoral Acts

Pastor Beissel preformed the following:

Memorial Services

Hannah Lisowski 9/27/25

Keith Morgan 10/4/25

**During this Christmas
Season please remember our home-
bound and members serving in the
Military with, cards, greetings,
and prayers.**



Leroy Berner, 1351 Deep Creek Rd., Ashland, PA 17921
Corrine Coward, 520 Dutchtown Rd., Ashland, PA 17921
Daniel Cunningham, C/O 630 Hoffman Blvd., Ashland, PA 17921
Pvt. David L. Cunningham Jr.,
 630 Hoffman Blvd., Ashland, PA 17921
Jim Gruber, 912 Centre St., Ashland, PA 17921
Jim Hepler, 501 Main St., Ashland, PA 17921
Nancy Kessler, Mt. Carmel Nursing Home,
 2616 Locust Gap Highway, Mt. Carmel, PA 17851
Ryan Kosmisky, 425 Volser Circle, Barksdale AFB, LA 71110
Bobbie Liem, 212 Biddle St., PO Box 127, Gordon, PA 17936
Gail Marquardt, 154 Stein Rd., Ashland, PA 17921
Anna Neumeister, Schuylkill Center, 1000 Schuylkill Manor Rd.
 Pottsville, PA 17901
Richard Shoup, 204 Peter St., Ashland, PA 17921

We Offer our Prayers to...

Please note that those experiencing a traumatic event are placed onto the Prayer List and will be **kept on for one month and then taken off**. If you would like someone added, please call the office or write their name on the Prayer Request sheet found on the Prayer Podium. **Please provide updates to the office in order that the list is always current.**



PRAYER REQUESTS

November 23 – Chuck Edelman (J. Towey)
 Mark Macaluso (J. Young)
 Paul Wehry (S. Tice)
 Families of Jeff Wolfgang (L. Wolfgang)
 Dana Carr-Passed away suddenly (D. Berner)

November 16 – Christina Dudley (D. Price)
 Jessica Zelenak (D. Price)
 Jimmy Wood (D. Price)
 James Dudley (D. Price)
 Sarah Shanks (T. Wolfe)
 Maryann Matty (J. Eisenhart)

November 9 – Families of Diane Heidlebaugh
 Dr. Lin

November 2 – Regnal Leibensperger (Pr. Brian)
 Josephine Rittle (J. Towey)
 Virginia Snyder & Family
 Kim Minning (A. Berger)
 John Leonard (J. Eisenhart)

Family of Leanne Hall (P. Dziczek)

Please continue to pray for: Corrine & Josh Coward, Jim Gruber, Annette Houser, Jack Houser, Jim Houser, Jr., Allen Johnson, Jennie Kosmisky, Pearl & Carl Lute, Dianna Monaghan, Jane Pennypacker, Heidi Walsh, Kayla Werner

Remember our Home-bound: Leroy Berner, Jim Hepler, Nancy Kessler, Gail Marquardt, Anna Neumeister, Richard Shoup, Karen Smith, Linda Zerby
And Friends: Michelle Ambrose, Robert Beecher, Donald Bulla, Margarite Felegi, Joe Ferraro Jr., Jim Fetterolf, Bob Griffiths, Cathy Groody, Dan Grow, Ann Helwig, Minah Horan, Donna Hughes, Lisa Metzinger, Zack Metzinger (J. Eisenhart), Ed Rakowsky (J. Eisenhart), Angie Romberger, Bailey Romberger, Samantha Schifano, Sarah (Herb) Shanks (T. Wolfe), Trevor Shilling (A.M. Dillman), Elizabeth Smith & family, Pastor Sunny Stock, Elaine Stone, Linda (Herb) Szuler (T. Wolfe), Joe Towey, John Towey Jr., Rose Varndell, Olivia Wagner (T. Shilling), Karyssa Wenrich, Bev Wolfgang



From the Staff of Christ's United:
 May the miracle of Christmas
 give you joy and peace this holi-
 day season and all through the
 new year. Jesus, Our Savoir is born!

Jamie



Debbie

Ann Marie

Pastor Brian

Dennis

Chris

Ann Ray



DECEMBER

birthdays

2	Nancy Lindenmuth	16	Tammy L. Harris
3	Asea Krah		Terri Whyne
4	Cheryl Weikel	17	Linda Brennan Panikkar
5	Janna Gregis		Cheryl Klinger
	Kristen Toldt	18	April Brennan
6	Daniel Cascarino		Lynn Dillman
7	Beryl Stitzer		Raven Marlow
8	Anita Fegley		Samuel Troup, Sr.
9	Robert Pennypacker		Tim Hubler
10	Makena Dean	20	Richard Edmondson
	Melissa Kubis		Rachel Pancher
11	Cory Krise	22	Regan Kratovich
	Christopher Olson		Jeff Brennan
12	Daniel Witner	23	Siena Smith
13	Karleigh Economy	25	Robert Carl
	Shea Moyer		David Hall
	Bruce Pirie		Daniel Cunningham
14	Joey Anczarski	27	Brody Baker
	John Lisowski		Zackary Coward
	Tammy I. Zangari	28	Bonnie Dillman
15	Ralph R. Johnson		Donald Klinger
	Arlene Krise	29	Sawyer Smith
	Jessica Nagle		Beth Andrews
	Leslie Shadle		William Cook
	Tyler Knorr	30	Jessica Gregis
		31	Mike Stepanchick
			Stephen Harhigh
			Lori Fox
			Christine Heyer



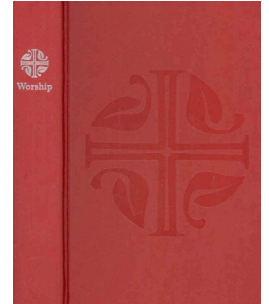
DECEMBER

anniversaries

12/05/08	Breann & Daniel Barker
12/07/02	Randy & Angie Lucas
12/11/93	Erik & Sally Tice
12/11/99	Stephen & Tami Wagner
12/28/10	Stephen & Brittany Harhigh



Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pew Edition



As the changing times have come, it has come time for us to transition to the newest hymnal. Released for the first time in 2007, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* includes selections from the green LBW and blue With One Voice, in addition to all new settings. Included are the settings we at Christ's United already use, in addition to ten other settings.

As time has progressed, the Sundays and Seasons programs we use in the office and for worship planning use more and more the ELW and not the green LBW. With this change, the time has come for us to make a switch. There will still be times we use hymns and settings from the green book.

We also are now worshipping using a projector, which means that we do not necessarily need one hymnal for each worship participant. Many of you use the books less and less and the screen more. Still, we need to have sufficient copies to meet copyright law standards.

You have an opportunity to sponsor the "new" (almost 20 years old) hymnal! Copies are \$26.50 each, and you can make your hymnal in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Name: _____

Copies: _____

In Honor or Memory of (circle one Please):

Christmas Tree of Sharing

The Christmas Tree of Sharing begins on Sunday, November 30. We will be collecting clothing items and toys for children up to age 18, ELCA Good Gifts, and food pantry items.

Tags will be available on the table in the Narthex beginning on November 30. After you make your selection, please place the “ornament” for ELCA Good Gifts, food pantry items, and H₂OPE on the Christmas Tree. All wrapped children's gifts are due back to the church by Sunday, December 21 and are to be placed under the tree. ELCA Good Gifts and food pantry items may be purchased up until Christmas Eve. Thank you!



MEMBER DIRECTORY



Updates for Our Member Directory

We are currently updating family information in the church member directory. If you have moved, changed phone numbers, had children, got married, etc. please let us know so we have your current information.

Please call the church office with any new information.

Thank you!



2025 Sponsorships

The sponsorship sign up sheets are posted on the bulletin board. Sign up for:

Altar Flowers \$35.00*
Worship Bulletins \$15.00
Special service bulletins \$10.00
Sanctuary Candle \$10.00
Children's Bulletins \$10.00
Monthly Newsletters \$40.00

*For Altar Flowers:

Please sign up by the bulletin board for week(s) you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers and call “Flowers From the Heart” 570-339-2519 to place order. **Cost is \$35.00.**

Please place order and make payment directly to the florist.

All other sponsorships, please make payable to CULC and give to Debbie in the Church Office.

Christmas Poinsettias!

Poinsettias are only available in red this year.



Sizes available:

1 plant per pot for \$12.00
2 plants per pot for \$17.50
3 plants per pot for \$24.00

Please sign up on the bulletin board.

Make checks payable to CULC and drop them in the church office.
The deadline to order is December 7.



Give Electronically

Checking/Savings Credit/Debit Card
Christ's United accepts electronic donations

Electronic Giving is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to our church. Go to www.christsunited.org or scan the QR code to learn how you can participate.



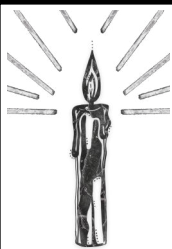
American Red Cross Community Blood Drive Christ's United Lutheran Church

**437 Airport Road (Gordon)
Ashland, PA 17921**

**Monday, December 1, 2025
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

Please contact Debbie Hall or call
1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2676) or visit
www.redcrossblood.org
to schedule an appointment.

Open to the public and walk-ins are Welcome!



When Christmas Hurts

A service of remembrance and Healing
Will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
35 N. 9th St., Ashland
on Sunday, December 7, 2025
At 1:00 p.m.

The Rev. Dana D. Heckman-Beil M. Div. .
and The Rev. Brian Beissel will preside

Hosted by Kull-Heizenroth Funeral Home



The next meeting of
Women of the ELCA is on
Wednesday, December 3rd
at 6:00 PM.

All women of CULC are
welcome to attend.

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS MEAL

**DECEMBER 14
11:00 a.m.
following morning worship**



**BAKED HAM and BAKED CHICKEN
GRAVY / COFFEE and TEA
will be provided by WELCA and LCM**

**Sign up to attend and include what you will bring
as a side dish to share.**

Indicate what specifically you will contribute:

FILLING

**HOT VEGETABLES
(yams, corn, green beans, etc)**

**SALADS
(coleslaw, cranberry sauce, broccoli, veggies, etc.)**

DINNER ROLLS

COLD DRINKS

**DESSERT
(cake, pie, pudding, etc)**

SOCIAL MINISTRY



Fellowship Hour will be held after worship on only the first Sunday of each month September through May. See schedule below for your committee's turn to serve. Please sign up on the bulletin board to help.

~ 2025 ~
December - Evangelism/
 Endowment/Stewardship

~ 2026 ~
January - WELCA
February - Church Council
March - Social Ministry
April - Evangelism/
 Endowment/Stewardship
May - WELCA
June/July/August -
 No Social Hour



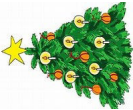
We will be collecting the following items for September:

Pasta & Sauce

Please place your donations in the shopping cart.

Thank You!

The next food distribution date is
 Thursday
December 11, 2025



Serving Our Community of Faith in December:



Date	Congregational Rep/Announcements	Lector	Ushers	Communion Assistants	Acolyte(s)	Crucifer
December 7 Advent 2		Beth Andrews	Kay Barner Allen Johnson c/d John Towey so	Larry Wolfgang AM Ken Dengler Becky Spencer	Karoline Towey	Kimber Towey
December 14 Advent 3		Angie Berger			Kayla Werner	—
December 21 Advent 4		Mark Vardell			Remington Stehr	—
December 24 Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m.		Jacob Tice	Thomas Wolfgang b Allen Johnson c/d Ken Dengler so	Erik Tice AM Barb Stepanchick Dennis Wolfe	Ava Hubler	Cole Johnson
December 24 Christmas Eve 7:30 p.m.		Sally Tice	Kay Berner b Allen Johnson c/d Dennis Wolfe so	John Towey AM Beth Andrews Donna Wallace	Volunteer Needed	Marisa Seritsky
December 28		Barb Stepanchick	Kay Berner b Allen Johnson c/d John Towey so		Volunteer Needed	—



December 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
 Help Us "Spruce" Up the Church!	9:00 Christmas Decorating 1:00 – 6:00 Red Cross Blood Drive 		10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch w/Pastor Brian 6:00 WELCA 7:00 Council	6:30 Choir Practice		6:00 Contemporary Service
7 Advent 2	8 	9	10	11	12	13
9:30 Worship W/ Holy Communion 10:30 Fellowship Hour 10:30 Choir Practice 10:45 Sunday School & Confirmation Class 1:00 When Christmas Hurts Service @ GSLC 5:00 LCM / Property	10:00 Bible Study		10:30 Seniors	10:00 – 11:30 Christ's Cupboard 6:30 Choir Practice 		
14 Advent 3	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:30 Worship 11:00 Christmas Meal			10:30 Seniors	6:30 Choir Practice		9:30 Christmas Caroling
21 Advent 4	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26	27
9:30 Worship 10:30 Choir Practice 10:45 Sunday School & Confirmation Class	10:00 Bible Study		4:00 Worship w/ Holy Communion 7:00 Special Music 7:30 Worship w/ Holy Communion			
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			
9:30 Worship  12						