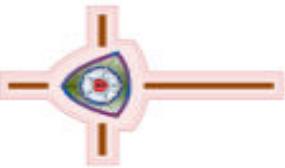


Christ's United Lutheran Church
437 Airport Road
Ashland, PA 17921
www.christsunited.org



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JANUARY
2026



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.*



*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

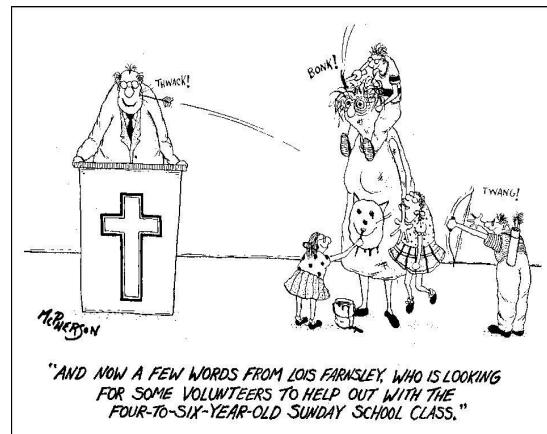
www.christsunited.org

(570) 875-1591

January 2026

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Status of Accounts as of November 30

Total amount in checking account: \$81,244.89.

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

Income for November was \$13,601.95.

Expenses for November were \$17,509.96, resulting in a net loss of \$3,908.01.

Benvolence for November was \$780.38 .

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



Like us on
Facebook

*The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions*



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.

PASTOR BRIAN'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE



Grace and Peace to you from our Lord in this New Year!

Who are we as a church? I've been asking myself that for quite some time. I'm not just talking about CULC. I'm talking about the wider church as well. What defines us?

Is it faith in Jesus Christ? Or is it something else?

See, I've been thinking about this. The Financial Leadership Academy team has been discussing things. Our council has been discussing things. I invite all of us into this conversation. The next FLA meeting will be on January 12 at 6, and in the interest of transparency, I would like to invite anyone who would like to take part in the conversation.

Outreach is something we do very well here. I am proud of the work of the food pantry. I am looking at all of the good we are doing for who we are helping in our Christmas tree program. There are kids that wouldn't have a Christmas, but will have one, because of the work of Christ's United.

But we also know that the church has sizeable challenges.

Maybe the question isn't who do we want to be, but who does GOD want us to be? And how do we make that work in this world that sometimes seems very hostile?

Scripture reminds us of the early church's struggle. They lived in a world in which they were seen as the enemy, yet they were trying to provide the world with comfort and a sense of belonging. The early church was in part a mix of all kinds of people. Rich and poor, old and young, and people who were cast aside by the powers that be. The early Christians, some of them, were killed because of what they believed.

Christian symbol



22

SHIP — The Christian church has long been symbolized by a ship. While the Old Testament tells of Noah's ark preserving righteous people during the flood, the New Testament recounts Jesus calming the storm that battered the disciples' fishing boat. St. Ambrose described the church as a ship with the cross as its mast, and others have compared salvation to being drawn out of the sea of death into the safety of the church (ship). Indeed, many large churches are constructed to represent a big boat, with the main worship space called the nave — Latin for ship.

*The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions*



— continued on page 4

I don't know about you, but I would certainly rather live in the 21st century than the 1st century. No time is perfect, and no time is completely bad.

I invite you to journey with me to figure out how we wade through this world together in 2026.

In peace,

Pastor Brian Beissel



Schedule for January:

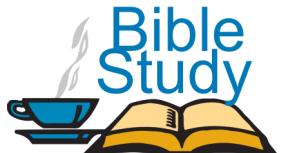


Your Pastor invites you to lunch!
Here is the schedule for December.
Lunch begins at 12 noon.

January 7 - Huddle House, Lavelle

Bible Study

On the first and third Mondays of each month
@ 10:00 AM we meet here at the church
for Bible Study.
We are currently studying the Book of Acts.
All are welcome.



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

437 Airport Road (Gordon)
Ashland, PA 17921

Monday, February 2, 2026
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!

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.



January 18th will be CULCs third Arts Sunday.

The theme this year will be trees. Psalm 1:3 states

He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,



Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers

We invite anyone who has a craft whether it is knitting, crocheting, painting, drawing, coloring, weaving or any other handicraft that has a tree in it to bring it in for display. Please have your craft here by Saturday January 17 for display on January 18 so that everyone can look at the display. You can drop your craft off during church office hours or anytime on January 17 between the hours of 9-11:30.

As it states in Proverbs 11:30:
The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who is wise wins souls.



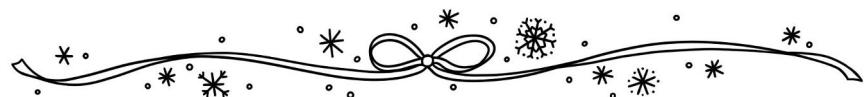
Faith in Action

A Christian is someone who makes it easier for others to believe in God — not through perfection, but through kindness, grace and love in everyday life. When people see Christ's compassion in us, they're drawn closer to Him.



Church Council Highlights From December

- Financial Leadership Academy is looking into options on how to generate additional revenue.
- Pastor Brian presented a proposed Identity Statement to be stated at the end of every worship service.



Annual Committee Reports Due

All Committee Secretaries
and Treasurers:

Please have your reports submitted to the church office by Sunday, January 18, 2026.

This is the deadline for all information so it can be included in the Annual Congregational Report. Our annual meeting is on Sunday, February 15th after worship.
Thank You!

>>>>>
ANNUAL
Committee
REPORTS
<<<<<<<<

January Council Contact of the month is Janet Towey.

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 Janet, she can be reached at 570-205-3420.



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

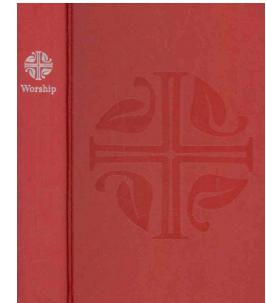
Each month we will be listing three of our church faith families. We ask that you take the time and uplift them in prayer for their needs and spiritual journey.

This month we pray for:

The Andrews Family - Beth & Ron
The Coward Family - William II, Zachary, Jonah
The Smith Family - Donald Jr., Traci, Nathan

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.

There is a copy of the Hymnal on the table in the Narthex for anyone wishing to see it.

Name: _____

Copies: _____

In Honor or Memory of (circle one Please):



New Year, New Mercies

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.” —

Lamentations 3:22–23

As we step into 2026, we celebrate a fresh start and a faithful God. May this new year be filled with His hope, peace, and purpose.



Snowflake SNACK CAKES



Celebrate the beauty of winter with these fun snowflake-inspired treats!

What you need:

- Graham cracker squares or sugar cookies
- White frosting or marshmallow fluff
- Pretzel sticks (snowflake arms)
- Shredded coconut or white sprinkles
- Mini marshmallows or candy pearls

What you do:

1. Frost each cracker or cookie.
2. Arrange pretzel sticks in a crisscross for the snowflake base.
3. Sprinkle with coconut or sprinkles for snow.
4. Add marshmallows or candy pearls to the ends for detail.

Lesson tie-in:

Remind kids that God made each of us unique—just like no two snowflakes are alike!

(Psalm 139:14, KJV)

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.



December 28 – Terry Shilling

Cyrus Clark

Ken Connor (T. Wolfe)

Scott Smith (M. Smith)

Wayne Shaffer (P. Dziczek)

Families of Robert Bylone MaryJo Leonhardt, Dr. Craig Reimer

December 21 – Don Hand (B. Spencer)

Carl Lute-P. Lute

Mark Abramawicz & Family (L. Wolfgang)

John Towey

Jim Klock (J. Eisenhart)

Gail Lorady

Families of Keith Knott (P. Dziczek),

Theresa Deibert (D. Zaharick) & Charlie Klauger

December 14 – Jackie Dercole (D. Hall)

John Masser (V. Brown)

Roman Wagner (A. Jackowiak)

December 7 – Celin (A. Berger)

Nelson R. Berger (A. Berger)

Kim Minning (A. Berger)

Families of Jeff Wolfgang (L. Wolfgang), Dana Carr (D. Berner)

Please continue to pray for: Leroy Berner, Corrine & Josh Coward, Jim Gruber, Jim Hepler, Jack Houser, Tara Houser, Jim Houser Jr., Allen Johnson, Jenny Kosmisky, Gail Lorady, Carl (Mick) Lute, Dianna Monaghan, Richard Shoup, Karen Smith, 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 & Amber Adams, Michelle Ambrose, Robert Beecher, Donald Bulla, Christina Dudley (D. Price), Margarite Felegi-Hospice (A. Berger), Joe Ferraro Jr., Jim Fetterolf, Bob Griffiths, Cathy Grody, Dan Grow, Minah Horan, Donna Hughes (Grubers), Zack Metzinger (J. Eisenhart), Lisa Metzinger, Ed Rakowsky (J. Eisenhart), Angie Romberger & Bailey Romberger (L. Rickert), Samantha Schifano (C. Varndell), Sarah (Herb) Shanks (T. Wolfe), Trevor Shilling-Elizabeth Smith & family, Pastor Sunny, Elaine Stone, Linda (Herb) Szuler, (T. Wolfe), Joe Towey, John Towey Jr., Rose Varndell, Olivia Wagner, Karyssa Wenrich, Bev Wolfgang



- 1 Jamie Johnson
- 2 Katelyn Bechtel
Barbara Pennypacker
Nathan Smith
- 3 Emily Reichwein
- 4 David Hepler
Margaret Koons
- 5 Miles Hudock
Kevin Wright
- 7 Katrina Economy
Brenda Knorr
- 8 Craig Troutman
- 10 Laray Klinger
Luke Young
Liam Young
- 11 Harry Hepler
- 12 Richard Knorr
Jennifer Lettich-Snyder



- 13 Jesse Cascarino
Trevor Wilson
- 14 Ron Andrews
Cheryl Neumeister
- 15 Karen Green
- 16 Rylee Nagle
- 17 Jim Gruber
Debbie Hall
- 18 Bill Burke
- 19 Deb Zahrick
- 20 Ian Bendinsky
Nathan Hepler
Jennie Kosmisky
- 21 Karen Schewinhart
Bryce Weikel
- 23 David Chuplis
- 24 Katherine Bixler
Rachael Hostetter
- 25 Steven Wagner
- 30 Allen Johnson
Caleb Steinbauer
Amanda Sterling

Puzzle!

In the New Testament, followers of Christ are called by many names. Use the hints to fill in the blanks. Need help? Check an NIV Bible for the missing letters.

D _____ s
(Acts 6:7)



C _____ n P _____ e
(1 Peter 2:9)



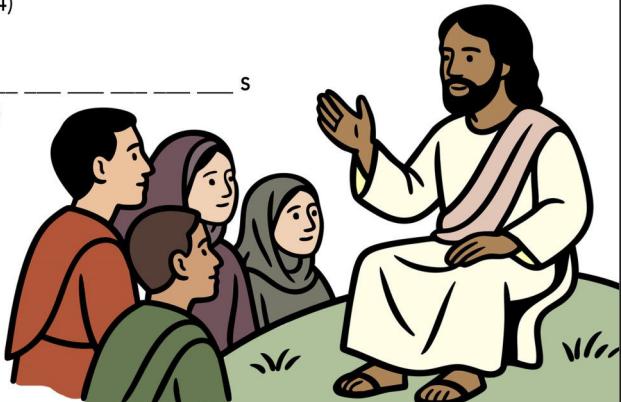
S _____ s of C _____ t
(1 Corinthians 4:1)

C _____ s
(Acts 11: 26)

B _____ s and S _____ s
(1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)

B _____ s
(Acts 5:14)

W _____ s
(Acts 1:8)





All are welcome to attend the Women of the ELCA's next meeting on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 6:00 PM
WELCA will not meet in January.



LUNCH BUNCH

JANUARY 12th at 1:00
LA DOLCE CASA (Di Maggios), Tamaqua
Their 375,000 light holiday display is still a glow until February.
Pictures from newspaper article are posted on the bulletin board next to sign up list.
Sign up on BB so table reservation can be made.

Bible Quiz

Fill in the blank to complete this verse from 2 Corinthians:
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new _____.
The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."



- A) Creation
- B) Beginning
- C) Season
- D) Covenant

Answer: A (See 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV)

01/08/11 Douglas & Lindsay Fetterolf
01/13/72 Leroy & Deb Berner
01/20/05 Allen & Keri Johnson
01/30/82 Craig & Penny Troutman



2026 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
Palms for Palm Sunday \$15.00

*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.



Dear Christ's United Family,

Thank you so very much for your generous Christmas gifts.

Your kindness and support are always so greatly appreciated by all of us.

Wishing everyone a very happy, healthy New Year filled with many blessings.

Sincerely,

Christ's United Staff:

*Pastor Brian, Ann Ray, Chris, Ann Marie,
Debbie, Jamie & Dennis*



The following Memorial was given to Christ's United since the last issue of the Newsletter

In memory of Our Parents and Grandparents
by: Ralph & Eileen Johnson

In Memory of Barbara Liem
by: Angie Berger & Family

In Memory of Hanna Lisowski
by: Angie Berger & Family

In Memory of Diane Heidlebaugh
by: Jo-Ann Young

In Memory of Charlie Klauger
by: Don & Laray Klinger



Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)

Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Neglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11, 16)

Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols

O Lord, let my
New Year's resolution
be to ~~be~~
**follow you
more closely**
and to
**trust in your
loving guidance.**



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.

~ 2026 ~

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



14



We will be collecting the following items for January:

Canned Soup

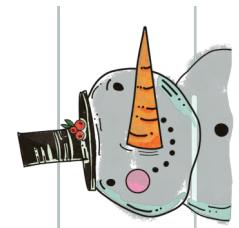
Please place your donations in the shopping cart.

Thank You!

The next food distribution date is
 Thursday
January 8, 2026



Serving Our Community of Faith in January:



Date	Congregational Rep/Announcements	Lector	Ushers	Communion Assistants	Acolyte	Crucifer
January 4	Angie Berger	Erik Tice	Barb Stepanchick Terry Neumeister c/d Virgil Smith so	Kay Berner AM Deb Price Angie Berger	Sawyer Smith	Eli Pennypacker
January 11	John Towey	Kay Berner		Larry Wolfgang AM Barb Anczarski Ken Dengler	Maura Sweitzer	John Wagner
January 18					Nelson Berger	Timmy Beissel
January 25					Volunteer needed	

JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 New Year's Day	2	3
						6:00 Contemporary Service
4	5	6 EPIPHANY	7	8	9	10
9:30 Worship W/Holy Communion 10:30 Fellowship Hour 10:30 Choir Practice 10:45 Sunday School & Confirmation Class	10:00 Bible Study		10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch w/Pastor Brian 7:00 Council	10:00 – 11:30 Christ's Cupboard 		
11 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30 Worship W/Holy Communion 10:30 Choir Practice 10:45 Learning Series	1:00 Lunch Bunch 6:00 Financial Leadership Academy	6:00 Social Ministry	10:30 Seniors			
18	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	20	21	22	23	24
9:30 Worship 10:30 Choir Practice 10:30 Worship & Music 10:45 Sunday School & Confirmation Class	10:00 Bible Study 		10:30 Seniors			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9:30 Worship 10:30 Choir Practice 10:45 Learning Series			8:30 Newsletter Assembly 10:30 Seniors			