



## December 2019

Rev. Andy Wagner

937-372-7601 office@fcum.org www.fcum.org

Sunday Worship

9:00-10:00 Sunday School

10-10:30-Coffee and Fellowship

10:30-11:30-Worship in Sanctuary

## Attendance

Date	Worship	Sun. School
October 27	136	50
November 3	160	48
November 10	142	50
November 17	167	70

## From Pastor Andy

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” – Isaiah 9:6

To those who complain that Christmas comes too early, I like to point out that those words of Isaiah were written at least 700 years before the birth of Jesus. It's never too early to look toward the coming of Christ!

Now I realize the complaints are not really about people preparing for the coming of Christ. Rather it's the commercialism, the decorations that take over the stores before we even get close to Thanksgiving, songs about snow and mistletoe and decking the halls with boughs of holly. But is it ever too early for all of that? I love it all! In any case, we are now entering into the season of Advent – a season of waiting and preparing for the coming of Christ. We are reminded during Advent of the Old Testament prophets who proclaimed the coming of Christ centuries before Jesus' birth.

And we are also reminded that Christ will come again. Advent is not just a time to look back to what happened 2000 years ago, but also to look forward to the new thing God is doing, the new advent of Christ. We are reminded to wait and to prepare and to look toward the new heaven and new earth that Christ will usher in.

Christ is coming. Let us prepare. Let us rejoice.  
Blessings, Pastor Andy



**Stephen Ministry**  
Grace through the Holidays

istmas is the best time of the year for some, for many it is an especially difficult one for any number of reasons. How do we balance these extremes?

For those who are dreading this Christmas, consider viewing this season as an opportunity to think, feel, and act in ways that break free from the past. Plan ahead or maybe plan not to plan ahead. If you go into Christmas without a plan, you risk spending it alone or becoming depressed. On the other hand, if you decide not to plan and let things unfold, you'd be a little bit like Mary and Joseph. They went To Bethlehem because they had no place to stay and no one waiting for them. If you choose to spend the day in solitude, know that you are not alone. Christ is with you.

Be open to new ways of celebrating. If past Christmas celebrations took place at home, staying home may feel especially hard. Consider volunteering at a soup kitchen or hospital. Even think about traveling to some place you've always wanted to go.

As much as you can, try not to forget tradition. Attending Christmas Eve services, lighting candles, praying from the heart, reading the Christmas story, and taking communion are all long-honored ways of remembering the reason for the season—Christ's birth.

Instead of withdrawing, make Christmas a time for growth. Buy gifts for those less fortunate. Bake Christmas cookies and share them with someone who isn't expecting them. Reaching out to others often leads to healing for both the giver and the receiver.

Put your feelings into writing. Keep a journal during Advent. Write a letter to those who have wronged you or to those you are

missing. If forgiveness is in order, say a prayer of forgiveness then destroy the letter. Reconciliation is a great gift to both the living and the dead.

If there is a place that's empty at your Christmas table this year, recall memories as family and friends share how that loved one still continues to affect their lives.

While you may feel sad as you go through any of these activities, that's okay. No one knows how you feel except you. Talk with God about your feelings. Share them with a trusted friend, relative, or Stephen Minister. Michael Guinan reminds us, “. . .we must not deny honest pain, nor skip too quickly from loss to acceptance. . .Christian faith does proclaim a message of hope, but death and grief are still real.” [Franciscan Voices, Cincinnati, Oh, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011]. Feelings are neither right nor wrong; they simply are.

If Christmas is a difficult time for you, you are not alone. Be gentle with yourself. Do what feels comfortable, not what you feel obligated to do. Let those who care about you know what you need. Believe that healing, hope, and peace will be yours when the time is right.

How many times have you been in a situation when you wanted to help someone going through a difficult time but didn't know where to start? One of the greatest gifts you can give not only during the Christmas season but any time of the year is the gift of presence. Reach out to those who are struggling for whatever reason. Spend time with them, especially during Advent and Christmas. Let them know you are praying for them. Invite them to come to our [Blue Christmas service on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the chapel](#). Even offer to accompany them. Likewise suggest Grief Support which meets at 7 on the second Thursday of every month. Pick up Care Notes that deal with specific challenges—for example, *Feeling Depressed at Christmas*, *Pathways through Your Christmas Grief*, *Celebrating Your Last Christmas with a Loved One*, *Coping with Holiday Stress*, *Rediscovering the Many Gifts of Christmas*. We are called to reach out to others. As a Christmas card I picked up today indicates, “In the promise of Christmas, may healing begin. May this be a season of peace, if not joy—a season of healing and love, knowing others remember and care.” May we be the hands and feet of Christ for those who are hurting, offering grace that we receive in abundance.

For additional information about Stephen Ministry for yourself or another, contact Becky Cultice, 376-5747.



## **Friends and Family Night**

We will be kicking off Advent with a special Friends and Family night. Sunday December 1, 5:00 – 7:00. We will furnish the main course and drinks. Please bring a covered dish to share.

We will gather at 5:00 for carol singing and dinner will be at 5:30. Following dinner we will be making Advent crafts. Please plan on joining us for fun and fellowship as we prepare for the Advent season.

## **United Methodist Women**

### **CIRCLES**

Lydia: Wednesday, December 11, 7-8:30pm, Parlor

Priscilla: Monday, December 16, 7-8:30pm – Parlor

Dorcas: Tuesday, December 17, 1-3:30pm, Parlor

## **Men of Faith**

The Men of Faith will meet on December 16<sup>th</sup> in youth room B in the Community Center and all men are invited to join us. Start time is 6:30 PM and a meal will be served. The program will start at 7:00 PM. which will be the election and installation of officers for 2019. We will then sing Christmas Carols followed by communion in the Chapel. Come at 7:00 If you want to attend only the program. See you on the 16<sup>th</sup>.



**The Community Christmas Concert Band** will present its annual concert on Sunday, December

15, 2019 at 3:00 in the afternoon in the Sanctuary of Faith Community United Methodist Church. Both sacred and secular music will be performed. There is no admission fee but donations for the purchase of new music will be accepted. The concert will last about one hour. Come join us for an opportunity to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

### **THE CLASS MEETING Study for Men**

The Class Meeting is a curriculum in the form of a book written by Dr. Kevin Watson. The book is designed to be used as an eight week study that gradually shifts from an informational study about the class meeting to a class meeting itself. John Wesley used the class meeting concept for the early church. It is not necessarily a bible study, it is more concerned with accountability and “How is it with your Soul?” How are you growing as a disciple of Christ? Each of the eight weeks has a different chapter to study and address. The chapter titles are as follows:

1) The New (OLD) Kind of Small Group ; 2) The Class Meeting: The heart of the Methodist Revival; 3) Moving into God’s House: The Theological Foundation of the Class Meeting; 4) Becoming Wesleyan Again; 5) The Basics: From Start to Finish; 6) The Role of the Class Leader; 7) What could possibly go wrong?; 8) The Keys to a Life Changing Group.

John Sherer has been through the study and is willing to lead a small group through this study. The book costs about \$20.00. John is suggesting a Saturday morning 8 AM or Wednesday eve. 6:30 PM study group, starting first week in January. Sessions would last 1 hour. The group will be limited to 6-8 men. First come first serve. Suggestions for other times will be considered. To sign up or get more information, call John Sherer, 32-2204 or email [shererjw@aol.com](mailto:shererjw@aol.com).

## Faith Community Preschool Fundraiser

December 9th-11th at Los Mariachis

Please come and support our preschool. Carry out or dine in.

Just present the flyer when you pay your bill.

Flyers are available in the narthex

## Have You Heard About Our Casserole CARE-aVan?

It's a meal ministry designed to provide food when a need arises—for example, during or after a hospitalization or stay in rehab, during a short term disability, upon the arrival of a new baby, or after a death in the family. Julie Wickline is coordinating this ministry and will be pleased to work with you to create a plan that will work for you. We at FCUMC are a family, and we want to be there for one another. Please don't hesitate to contact Julie at [wicklinecasa@aol.com](mailto:wicklinecasa@aol.com) or 937-207-8289 for questions or to provide your email or contact information.

**Monday Bible Study** will not meet again until January 6.  
Please mark your calendars

## Thanks

*Dear Church Family,*

*It is truly wonderful to be part of such a caring church family. Thank you all for your positive thoughts and especially prayers. I have had a long rehab and still have a ways to go, but I get stronger every day. The food that has been delivered has been delicious. Glen and I thank the hands that prepared it.*

*Blessings to all-- Carol Shaw*

*Faith Community,*

*Thank you for your recent gift to Her Story House. The impact is already being felt as we have new residents this week! Amen! Your support is invaluable to us and we are so deeply grateful for your partnership! Blessings—Gail Matson*

*I wish to thank everyone for their cards and prayers during my recent hip replacement surgery. I am doing great.*

*Thanks again. Prayers do mean a lot. --John Sherer.*

*Dear Debbie, Crystal, John and friends of Faith Community,*

*Thank you for hosting the Xenia football senior men. The setting and venue was great for our community.*

*God Bless you – Vince Purpero (Coach P)*

## Passings

**Our church family extends prayers and sympathy to:**

**Bonnie Weimer on the death of her mother, Geneva**

**Heinz;**

**Marie Ford and family on the death of her husband,**

**John Ford;**

**Alice Adkins, Janet Adkins, Brian Adkins, Kristin McNeely and Rebecca Test on the death of Gale Adkins, son, husband, and father;**

**Jennifer Burgess on the death of her grandfather, Gene Reese;**

**Harold Glick on the death of his father;**

**Diane Ohde on the death of her husband Donald.**

## FCUM Financial Standing

October Income	\$27,128	YTD Income	\$312,916
October Expenses	\$57,446	YTD Expenses	\$338,576
Difference	(\$30,318) -111.76%	Difference	(\$25,661) -8.20%

The new floor coverings and furnishings are included in October's expenses.

## Poinsettias

**It's time to order the poinsettias for the Christmas services. We can order red, white and pink poinsettias and the price will be \$10.00 again this year. Order forms will be in the**

church bulletins on Sundays Dec 1 and 8 and in the church office Dec 2-13. The last day to order will be Friday Dec.13

**PLEASE NOTE:** I have decided not to continue being the person in charge of altar flowers in the new year. If anyone is interested in volunteering to take this over please call me at 372-5078. This is a matter of keeping a schedule of Sundays and calling donors and the florist.

–Dolores Strous

### **Bazaar**

Thank you to all the women who cooked goods for the Baker's Table. It really was full of good food. We kept a tally of all the food sold in the fellowship hall so we do not have a count for each individual section of that room but we know that thanks to you who baked, we had plenty to sell. In fact, some of it barely hit the table before it was sold. Thank you for making it a success. – Virginia

(Reminder: If you posted a sign in your yard advertising the Bazaar, please return it to the church as they will be used next year.)

### **Mission Outreach**

Thank you FCUM for your generosity. Over \$300 was contributed for postage as well as items filling 14 boxes for shipment to our deployed troops.

The Mission Outreach committee also wants to thank the congregation for their donations, volunteer support and participation in our annual Fall Bazaar. We had nearly \$3000 in net proceeds which will be distributed to Henderson Settlement, Bridges of Hope, Fish Food Pantry, Wings of the Morning and Youth Outreach.

<b>Deadline for January Faith Links: December 13</b>
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**Have a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!**



## December 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1 Communion</b> 9-10-am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Fellowship & Coffee 10:30-11:30am Worship- <b>5-7pm-Advent Kickoff-Fellowship Hall</b>	<b>2</b> 6:30-8:30-Cub Scouts-15A&B, #5,11,12 7-8:30 -Boy Scouts-15C 7-9pm-Stephen Ministry-Library	<b>3</b> 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC 6pm-8:45pm-Girl Scouts-FH15A-C, 16A 6:30-8:30pm-Trustees-6	<b>4</b> Bulletin Deadline <b>9am-12:30pm Breakfast w/Santa-FCC</b> 6:15-7:15pm-Handbells <b>6:30-7:30pm-Blue Christmas Service-Chapel</b> 7:30-8:30pm-Chancel Choir-Sanctuary	<b>5</b> 10-11:30 -Bible Study-Parlor 11:30-12:30pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 1:15-3pm-UMW Mtg-15A	<b>6</b> 9:30-12pm-Christmas Concert Band setup-FHB&C 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC	<b>7</b> 9am-12:30pm-Christmas Concert Band practice-FH-B&C 12-9pm-X.H.S. Athletic Hall of Fame-FCC
<b>8</b> 9-10-am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Fellowship & Coffee 10:30-11:30am Worship-	<b>9</b> 6:30-8:30-Cub Scouts-15A&B, #5,11,12 7-8:30 -Boy Scouts-15C	<b>10</b> 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC 4:30-6pm-SPRC-Room 6 6pm-8:45pm-Girl Scouts Leader Meeting-FH15A,B	<b>11</b> Bulletin Deadline 6:15-7:15pm-Handbells 7-8:30pm-Lydia-15A 7-8:30pm-Chancel Choir-Sanctuary	<b>12</b> 10-11:30 -Bible Study-Parlor 11:30-12:30pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor 12:30-1:30pm-Membership Care-Rm. 6 7-9pm-Grief Support-P	<b>13</b> F.L. Deadline 9:30-12pm-Christmas Concert Band setup-FHB&C 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC	<b>14</b> 9am-12:30pm-Christmas Concert Band practice-FH-B&C
<b>15</b> 9-10-am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Fellowship & Coffee 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary <b>3pm-Christmas Band Concert</b> 4:30-5:30-Confirm class.	<b>16</b> 6:30-8:30-Cub Scout Mtg.-15A,B,rms. 5,11,12 6:30-9pm-Men of Faith-Room 16B 7-8:30 -Boy Scouts-15C 7-9pm-Priscilla-Parlor	<b>17</b> 1-3:30pm-Dorcas Circle-Parlor 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC 6-8:45pm-Girl Scouts-15A-C; Youth 16A 6:30-9:30pm-Ad. Bd. Room 6	<b>18</b> Bulletin Deadline 6:15-7:15pm-Handbells 7:30-8:30pm-Chancel Choir-Sanctuary	<b>19</b> 10-11:30 -Bible Study-Parlor 11:30-12:30pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	<b>20</b> 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC	<b>21</b> <b>10-11am- Preschool Christmas Program-Sanctuary &amp; FCC</b>
<b>22</b> 9-10-am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Fellowship & Coffee 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	<b>23</b> No Preschool-12/23-1/3/20 <b>5-6pm-Christmas Eve, Eve Dinner-15A-C</b> <b>6pm-Christmas Eve, Eve Service</b> 6:30-8:30-Cub Scouts.-15A,B,rms. 5,11,12 7-8:30-Boy Scouts-15C	<b>24</b> <b>9-10pm-Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</b>	<b>25</b> <i>For unto us a Child is born...</i>	<b>26</b> 10-11:30 -Bible Study-P 11:30-12:30pm-Prayer Shawl-Parlor	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 5-9pm-Double I-15A
<b>29</b> 9-10-am-Sunday School 10-10:30am-Fellowship & Coffee 10:30-11:30am-Worship-Sanctuary	<b>30</b> 6:30-8:30pm-Cub Scouts-15A,B,C 7-8:30-Boy Scouts-15C	<b>31</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b> 3:30-5:30pm- X.H.S. Winter Guard Practice-FCC				