

# December 3, 2023

Please take a moment to sign our attendance register located in each pew.

(\*\*Indicates, please stand as able)

Greeting/Life of the Church

Prelude Carol Stewart  
"When We All Get to Heaven" Emily Wilson/Cindy Berry

Lighting the Candle of Hope

From ancient times, no ear has heard, no eye has seen, no one has witnessed any god but you.

**If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!**

You watch over those who do right, who love justice and follow your way.

**If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!**

We cannot save ourselves. We need you, Lord God. We light the candle of hope. We call on your name, trusting in you.

**If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!**

\*\*Opening Hymn "People, Look East" (v.1,2,4) UMH #202

Opening Prayer (unison)

**God of glory, your power darkens the skies and causes the moon to grow dim. When we scatter to the four winds, gather us from the ends of the earth and restore us as your people.**

**Awaken us from slumber, that we may be found ready when the master of the house returns. Amen.**

Children's Moments

Prayer Hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" UMH #140

Prayers of the Faithful & the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Offering/Offertory

"Coming Again"

Carol Stewart  
John W. Peterson

\*\*Doxology

UMH #95

\*\*Prayer of Dedication

**You have enriched us in every way, O God, through our faith in Christ Jesus. You have granted us grace and blessed us with every spiritual gift. In gratitude for your many blessings, we offer our tithes and offerings this day. Enrich and bless these gifts, that they may go into the world and help build your kingdom. Amen.**

\*\*Gospel Reading

Mark 13:24-37

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

**P: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

Ministry of Music

Victor Hess, vocal solo; Gene Foiles, piano

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" Theodore Baker and Michael Praetorius

Sermon

"Meanwhile..."

Pastor Jeff Bandy

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

\*\*Closing Hymn "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" (v.1,2) UMH#196

\*\*Sending Forth

Keep awake; hope is coming to us.

**We await God's salvation.**

Keep alert; Christ is coming soon.

**We await God's blessings.**

Be ready; Christ is among us now.

**We go with God's blessing.**

Postlude

"Welcome Home, Children"

Carol Stewart  
Adrian King/Dick Torrans



*The Altar Flowers are given by Stephen Ministry:  
Blessed are those that need to be comforted.*

## Scripture Reading - Mark 13:24-37 (CEB)

<sup>24</sup> "In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won't give its light. <sup>25</sup> The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. <sup>26</sup> Then they will see the Human One coming in the clouds with great power and splendor. <sup>27</sup> Then he will send the angels and gather together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

### A lesson from the fig tree

<sup>28</sup> "Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup> In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he's near, at the door. <sup>30</sup> I assure you that this generation won't pass away until all these things happen. <sup>31</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

<sup>32</sup> "But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the Father knows. <sup>33</sup> Watch out! Stay alert! You don't know when the time is coming. <sup>34</sup> It is as if someone took a trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the doorkeeper to stay alert. <sup>35</sup> Therefore, stay alert! You don't know when the head of the household will come, whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. <sup>36</sup> Don't let him show up when you weren't expecting and find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!"

#### WELCOME VISITORS!

If you are visiting with us today, we welcome you and hope you will come back and worship with us again soon. We would love to get to know you, please take a moment to provide your information in the attendance register located in each pew.

#### Next Sermon – December 10

"Surprised"  
Gospel Lesson

Rev. Jeff Bandy  
Mark 1:1-8



#### Rev. Jeff Bandy

Office Hours M, T, TH 9:00am-3:00pm & by Appt.

Office: (937) 372-7601 ext. 13

[pastorjeff@fcum.org](mailto:pastorjeff@fcum.org) ♦ [www.fcum.org](http://www.fcum.org)

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**We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation**

### December 3, 2023 - Worship Team

Ushers

Bob Whipp, Rick Smith,  
Edward Stidham, Gerald Mahan

Greeters

Doug Wickline, Julie Wickline

Liturgist

Mike Engle

Organist

Carol Stewart

Bells Director

Jim McPeck

Choir Director

Melody Kelley



Monday 4	Cub Scouts	6:30 pm	FH 15 A-B
	Boy Scouts	7:00 pm	FH 15 C
	Stephen Ministry	7:00 pm	Library
Tuesday 5	Bible Study	10:00 am	Parlor
	Winter Guard Practice	3:30 pm	FCC
	Girl Scouts	6:00 pm	FH 15 A,B,C, 16A-B
	Trustees	6:30 pm	Parlor
Wednesday 6	Handbell Practice	6:15 pm	Music Room
	Choir Practice	7:30 pm	Sanctuary/Chapel
Thursday 7	Prayer Shawl	10:00 am	Parlor
	Woman's Club of Xenia	1:30 pm	Parlor
Friday 8	Winter Guard Practice	3:30 pm	FCC
Saturday 9	Concert Band Practice	9:00 am	FH 15 A-C
Sunday 10	Sunday School	9:00 am	FH 15A-B, 11, 16A
	Hospitality Time	10:00 am	Narthex
	Worship Service	10:30 am	Sanctuary
	Community Christmas		
	Concert Band	3:00 pm	Sanctuary

### Sunday Children's Church – Ages 3-8

December 10 theme - The names of Jesus  
December 17 theme - The Visitors at the Nativity

### Sunday School Studies

**Advent Class** will meet Dec. 3, 10, and 17 in FH 15A-B, leader Lynn Engle, study of **Historical aspects and Biblical texts of Handel's Messiah.**

**Double I and Open Doors** will be joining the Advent Class.

**Grades 6-12** will meet in Rm 16 A, Leader Julie Wickline.

**Preschool – Grade 5** will meet in Rm 11 under the leadership of Kiley Fleming and Karen Mosing for Bible Stories and activities to reinforce the Bible Story of the day.



*This year's Christmas Offering will go to the Benevolence Fund, let's bring the Hope of Christmas to many families this coming year.*

## December 3, 2023 Announcements

**THANKSGIVING MEALS:** We want to send a HUGE Thank You to everyone who contributed helping to make those less fortunate truly blessed during the holidays. We were able to donate over \$900 and several boxes of food to FISH PANTRY.

**ST. PAUL'S CHRISTMAS TREE:** Thank you for your tremendous generosity for all of the Christmas Gifts provided for the St. Paul's After School program so the children can select gifts for their family members.

**WEST OHIO ADVENT CALENDAR:** The Connectional Ministries Team's prayer for you this Advent is that you be filled with joy, hope, peace, and love as we await the birth of Christ. They would like to gift you an Advent calendar created for our West Ohio faith communities, with intergenerational relationships in mind. The calendars are available to pick up on the table in the Narthex.

**BLUE CHRISTMAS: A SERVICE OF HEALING AND HOPE:** Christmas comes every December, whether we are ready or not. Memories of past experiences and the pain of present circumstances can become overwhelming. Stephen Ministry will sponsor a Blue Christmas service **TODAY, Sunday, Dec. 3, Harp music by Mary Ann Spahr at 2:15pm and the service will begin at 2:30pm in the chapel.** Child care will be provided. This will be a time of quiet music, reflection, and prayer. We invite reflection on the pain, loneliness, and sadness we may be feeling. Our hope is that you will find healing and comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

**EVERYONE IS INVITED TO THE ALL CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY TODAY, Sunday, Dec. 3, 5-7pm:** We will have a meal, Chrismon decorating and other crafts, Christmas trivia and caroling for all to enjoy.

**SUNDAY, DEC. 10, IS COINS FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY:** Coins will go to the following Ministries supported by the FCUMC mission and outreach team: Bridges of Hope, Fish Pantry and Family Promise.

**THE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT BAND** will present its annual concert on **Sunday, Dec. 10 at 3:00pm** in the Sanctuary. Both sacred and secular music will be performed. The program will be offered at no charge, but donations for the purchase of new music will be accepted. Please join us in this celebration of our Savior's birth.

**MARY & MARTHA GATHERING:** Thank you to all the ladies who attended the kick-off of Mary & Martha. The night was full of FOOD, FAITH & FUN! Please join us for our next gathering, **Monday, Dec. 11, 6:00-8:00pm.** We all know how busy this time of year can get so let's all share a dish that is quick and easy to make or grab something from the store (chips and salsa, veggies and hummus, etc). We are calling it the Holiday Hustle! Questions, call Laurie Krakowiak @ (937) 694-8114 or Barbara Mills @ (937) 414-4108.

**BLOOD DRIVE:** We will have a blood drive in the Community Center on **Monday, Dec. 18, 2:00pm to 6:00pm.** You can make a reservation for your preferred appointment time to donate by going to [www.donortime.com](http://www.donortime.com) or (937) 461-3220. Remember that your donation can save as many as THREE lives!



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