



The Messenger

Mogadore United
Methodist Church

December 2023
January 2024

Sing a New Song Unto the Lord!

Isaiah 42:10, Psalm 98: 1

Often when we think about the holiday season we think of our fond memories and family traditions. We can close our eyes and imagine the smells of Christmas cookies baking in the oven, or the freshness of newly cut trees and festive wreaths.

Perhaps we can still hear in our spirits our loved ones' voices singing holiday music. I can almost hear my mom singing "Silver Bells" along with the radio in our kitchen, my children singing the Hanukkah "Dreidel Song" at their Jewish preschool, or the church choir singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's Messiah; then, of course, there was the extended family singing "The Little Drummer Boy" at Mass and later around the table often with a few tears glistening in their eyes. I am sure that your heart has collected the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of Christmas days past. The traditions of the holiday season are many and the music is both merry and magnificent.

But this holy season from Advent to Christmas and the Epiphany is also a time to honor God's invitation to sing a new song. Like Mary and Joseph so long ago, we are called today during this season to listen deeply for God's voice speaking to us over the din of holiday songs, Hallmark movies, and cash registers. God's voice will come in the middle of our ordinary days. God's voice will sing to us a new song of hope, peace, service, joy and always, love.

My prayer is that we will wholeheartedly respond to God's Christmas love song with a new song of love! My prayer is that as we behold the holy infant in the manger we will also see new possibilities in our own lives for forgiveness, simplicity, playfulness, and faithfulness.

May each of our souls sing a new song unto the Lord as we journey from Advent to Christmastide and into a New Year.

May our voices join together in a glorious hallelujah chorus that brings Jesus' joy to the world.

Beloved of God, my prayers to you for a Blessed Advent, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

Rev. Pam



Lighthouse
CHURCH

EAST OHIO CONFERENCE

The United Methodist Church

Treasurer's Report

Balance in General Fund as of January 1, 2023		\$18,363.65
January Offerings	12,943.02	
January Disbursements	14,937.01	(-1,993.99)
February Offerings	11,191.21	
February Disbursements	15,379.20	(-4,187.99)
March Offerings	18,586.63	
March Disbursements	12,631.98	5,954.65
April Offerings	13,574.80	
April Disbursements	12,453.96	1,120.84
May Offerings	9,465.01	
May Disbursements	1,734.19	(-5,269.18)
June Offerings	10,136.50	
June Disbursements	10,529.58	(-393.08)
July Offerings	10,801.42	
July Disbursements	16,007.97	(-5,206.55)
August Offerings	17,615.67	
August Disbursements	15,774.28	1,841.39
September Offerings	15,184.55	
September Disbursements	12,405.22	2,779.33
October Offerings	9,961.24	
October Disbursements	13,024.99	(-3,063.75)
Ending Balance on September 30, 2023		\$12,948.06

The October offerings of \$9,961.24 were below average, and the October disbursements of \$13,024.99 were about average for the month. Our General Fund balance is now down about 50 % from the start of the year.

If you are interested in on-line giving, please contact Kathy Lang, and she can get you set up. If you are unable to attend our Sunday morning services, offerings can be mailed to the church, or to my home address of 13523 Iris Ave. NW, Mogadore, Ohio 44260.

— *Barry Rudy, Treasurer*

Advent and Christmastide: Sing a New Song

This Advent and Christmastide we will explore the biblical invitation to sing a new song unto the Lord. (Psalm 96)

December 10 — Advent Week Two

We will look at the Magnificat, Mary's new song in the Gospel of Luke. How does Jesus' birth call the world to a new song of justice and peace?

Wednesday, December 13

6 to 7:30 p.m. Holiday Coffee House Hour in the Fellowship Hall

PastTime with Cheryl McInturff and Chuck Lyons will be performing all their Christmas songs. Light refreshments will be served.

December 17 — Advent Week Three A Drop In Christmas Pageant

We will explore Jesus' coming as a song of welcome for all people. We will have a drop-in Christmas Pageant. The intergenerational pageant will be open to all children who would like to participate - no lines to memorize! Even little ones can be a part of the pageant. Participants are welcome to arrive at 10:10 a.m. to get their simple costumes and the basic instructions. All of us will be part of sharing the sacred story by singing favorite Christmas hymns. Contact Rev. Pam (216-704-0307) with any questions or to be part of the pageant.

December 24 — Advent Week Four A Celebration in Song

Our music director Fran Snyder and our MUMC Singers are offering us a "new song." Fran has prepared a wonderful program called "I Am Dreaming of a 'Light' Christmas." This program will include festive music and scripture. If you would like to be part of this very special worship experience please leave a message for Fran at the church office. (330-628-1232).

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service December 24 at 6 p.m.

Beautiful, traditional Christmas worship of Word, Song, Blessing of the Children, Communion and "Silent Night" by candlelight.

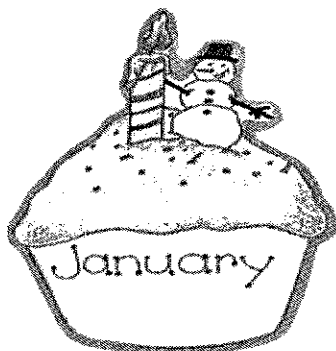
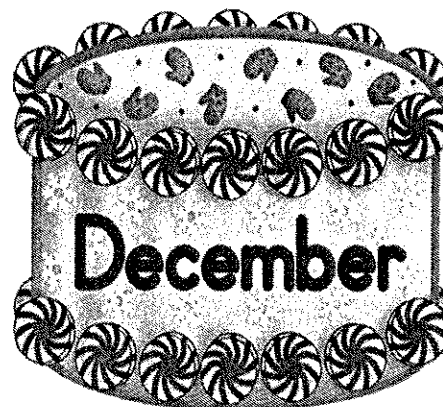
Sunday, December 31

10:30 a.m. Worship — Christmas Hymn Sing



December Birthdays

December 2 Phyllis Watson
 December 6 Nicole Thomas
 December 7 Tamara Calderwood
 December 8 Sue Vargo
 December 14 Lynne Shaffer
 December 16 Lisa Seibel
 Emily Hill
 December 20 JoAnn Wolonsky
 December 29 Tanner Hill



January Birthdays

January 19 Jan Ramsey
 January 21 Lynn Straight
 Ariana Crockett
 January 22 Nancy Roepke
 January 31 Karen Mullett
 Michele Straight

Giving to UMCOR for Israel/Palestine Relief



The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has recently issued a grant that was used to purchase hygiene kits for those affected by the conflict in the Middle East. They will continue working with local partners to support ongoing relief efforts. If you would like to help, donate to East Ohio Fund 1301 and 100 % of your gift will be forwarded to UMCOR International Disaster Response and Recovery. Please indicate Israel/Gaza in the memo to designate it for that response.

MUMC in Mission: Sharing Christ's Love

A HUGE THANK YOU TO

The Prayer Warriors

The positive impact of your prayers was felt by so many people during this challenging year.

Our "garden elf" for all the fresh produce.

The September 11th prayer vigil participants who joined in our church led community prayer service for current military, current safety forces, and fallen heroes.

Everyone who provided help, encouragement, physical, and emotional support to friends, neighbors, and fellow congregants. Perhaps hundreds of untold hours were spent chauffeuring to pharmacies, doctors, grocery stores, and providing personal care and medical assistance to folks who needed a helping hand. Lots and lots of visits, phone calls and cards delivered to help cheer and encourage the sick, shut-in, and homebound.

The dedicated **OPEN M Mountain of Food** crew who provided over 100 volunteer hours.

The 10 **CROP WALK** hikers who raised funds for food sustainability programs.

The cooks, servers and clean-up crew who helped feed football players, cheerleaders, and coaching staff before one of their playoff games.

Adopt-a-Family donors who will have provided dozens of Christmas presents for needy children in addition to the outreach funds already donated.

Food basket donations from so many of you who helped provide 200 packages of spaghetti and 100 rolls of paper towels for the **OPEN M Christmas** food basket give-away.

Special donations for *Good Neighbors, Mogadore Schools, Open M, Haven of Rest, Battered Women's Shelter*, and several local residents with emergency needs, combining for a total of \$7,000 in addition to everything above. We have also contributed nearly \$5,000 to fully fund our mandatory **benevolence apportionments**.

Mitten tree donations

As of this writing we have begun collection, hoping to receive at least 100 items of clothing donated to Somers Elementary School and *Ellet Good Neighbors*, with another 5 weeks of collection ahead of us.

Christmas in the Village. Thanks to the helpers and visitors to our booth on December 9

Whether you gave time, talent, money, effort, prayer, or all the above, your church family thanks you for all you do to "feed His lambs and sheep." God bless you all, and have a Spirit-filled 2024.

Stewardship Update from the Financial Secretary

Thank you to all who have completed pledge cards for 2024. Due to 11 new pledges from those that didn't pledge for 2023 and many increases in faithful pledgers, we have exceeded what was pledged for 2023. However, that amount only covers one-half of our expected 2024 budget. If you have not completed a pledge card, there is still time as it's an important part in creating our 2024 budget. If you would rather give your pledge verbally, just give Kathy Lang a call at 330-715-8789. Thank you for your commitment to the financial health of our church!

Bible Readings for the 12 Days of Christmas (December 25 through January 5)

December 25: Luke 2: 1-20
 December 26: John 1: 1-5
 December 27: John 1: 9-14
 December 28: Luke 2: 21-35
 December 29: Luke 2: 36-40
 December 30: Matthew 2: 1-12
 December 31: Matthew 2:13-18
 January 1: Matthew 2: 19-23
 January 2: Luke 2: 41-52
 January 3: John 3: 16-21
 January 4: 1 John 4: 7-10
 January 5: 1 John 4: 11-16

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. — John 1: 1



December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Fellowship Hall in Use in the afternoon
3 First Sunday of Advent	4	5	6 10:30 a.m. Bible Study	7	8 5:30 p.m. UWF Holiday Gathering	9 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Christmas in the Village
10 Second Sunday of Advent Communion	11	12	13 10:30 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Rebecca Circle 6 to 7:30 p.m. Holiday Coffee House	14	15 7:30 a.m. Meet at the church to carpool to Open M Mountain of Food	16
17 Third Sunday of Advent Drop-In Pageant	18	19	20 10:30 a.m. Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Portage Patchers	21	22	23
24 10:30 a.m. Worship 6 p.m. Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26	27	28	29	30
31 Christmas Time Hymn Sing						



Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. Pamela Buzalka
Church: (330) 628-1232
Parsonage: (234) 813-9040
Pastor's Cell: (216) 704-0307

Accompanist: Fran Snyder
Custodian: David Smith
Secretary: Joyce Selzer

The mission of the
Mogadore United
Methodist Church is to
follow the example of
Jesus Christ,
demonstrating Christ's
love and service to others
through worship,
outreach, fellowship, and
spiritual growth.

Mogadore United Methodist Church
3828 Mogadore Road, Mogadore, OH 44260
(330) 628-1232 Email: mogadoreumc@att.net
Website: www.mogadoreumc.org
Find us on FaceBook!
Church Office Hours: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays