

ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
582 Church Street
Amherst, Ohio 44001

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 AM
Wednesday Breeze Chapel: 7:00 PM
Office Hours: Monday-Friday:
8:30 AM-12:30 PM and 1:00-2:30 PM
Afternoons available by appointment.

Happy New Year friends!

*"Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven."*

JANUARY 2023

THE KEY



BEST WISHES
TO ALL IN 2023!

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and
on this rock I will build my church,
and the gates of Hades will not
prevail against it. I will give you the
KEYS of the Kingdom of Heaven."

— MATTHEW 16:18-19

ST. PETER'S U.C.C.
582 CHURCH STREET
AMHERST, OH 44001





THE KEY

January 2023

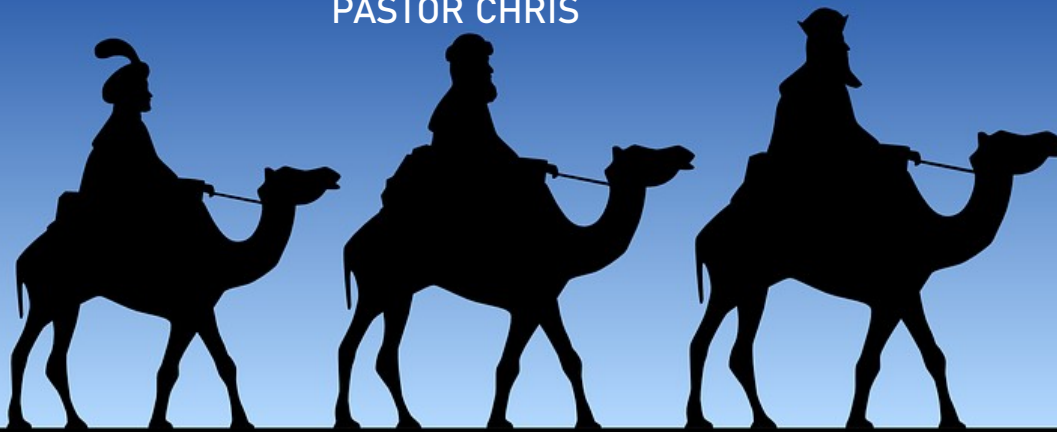
ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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"THE VISIT OF THE MAGI"

Pastoral Ponderings

From the desk of
PASTOR CHRIS



THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MATTHEW 1:12 NRSV



MAYBE WE WILL BE OFFERING ALL THREE— GOLD, FRANKINCENSE, AND MYRRH

When do you put your Christmas decorations away? Do you keep them up until the end of January, or do you follow a practice of putting them in storage after Epiphany? (Which is the 6th of January.) I find it difficult to put my decorations away because they add so much beauty, light and joy to my home, and I don't want that experience to end. However, I don't want to be that guy that leaves his decorations up until Easter. I find myself, however reluctantly, putting my decorations away by the end of January. The story of the Magi, who bring their gifts to the newborn King, is an important reminder that the season of Christmas is not over after the birth of Christ, but continues for as long as it takes for all of us to journey to the manger and offer Christ our gifts.

In our protestant tradition, Epiphany doesn't seem to be as big a deal as Christmas. We don't, generally, gather for an Epiphany service—or—unless you share different European traditions, exchange gifts on Epiphany. For most of us, Epiphany is just another day in the story of Christ. We often blend Epiphany (Three Kings Day) with the story of the Baptism of Jesus which is celebrated on the Sunday following Epiphany every year. While I haven't made any special plans for St. Peter's United Church of Christ to celebrate Epiphany this year, I do want us to be mindful of what the 6th of January means for each of us. Traditions aside, we need to think about what gifts we would like to offer Christ in the New Year.

Do we want to bring to the manger our gifts of Gold? Are we pledging our financial offerings to help this newborn King to grow in power and glory? Are we offering Frankincense—which was burned in the temple indicating the power of God) which demonstrates our faith that Christ is the son of God? Or are we offering a gift of Myrrh—which recognizes the death of Jesus? Maybe we will be offering all three—gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as our gifts to the newborn King?

Epiphany literally means to reveal, and in the case of the newborn King in Bethlehem, we recognize the revelation of God in Christ, and we pledge our gifts of—gold (money), frankincense (faithfulness), and myrrh (that new life is found in the empty tomb.)

It's not yet time to put away our Christmas decorations, but it is still time to celebrate what this child, this Jesus, this Christ means for us. Hyperbole aside, the gift of Christ means everything! **Let us give Christ what we have to offer—our money, our faith and our gratitude for the gift of His life.**

Happy Epiphany!

Remember, you are loved!

Rev. Chris Buckham-Taylor

Pastor Chris





JANUARY SERMON SCRIPTURE READINGS

1/1 Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

1/8 Matthew 1:1-12

An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel,

1/15 John 1:29-42

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and

remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God." The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"

The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

1/22 Matthew 4:12-23

Need Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

1/29 Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Continued on next page...

Quilt Presentation & Kuzma Decorates!



I want to thank all of you who gave ornaments to the Kobiakovs and who made the Potluck possible. Nataliia was overwhelmed by everything: quilt, food, gifts. She sent me the following message that I would like to share with you. In addition I have updated

the framed photos of them outside the church office. Please check them out.

They love their tree and are posed with the matching PJs the church purchased for them. (It is one of their family traditions.)

"Our first American tree and it's incredible. Yesterday we decorated the Christmas tree with joy and gratitude and looked at every Christmas ornament, and felt the care and love of all people."

Nataliia & Family

Blessings and a Happy New Year to All of You! Linda Gatz

...Matthew 5:1-12 continued from page 4.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

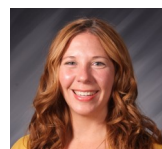
"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



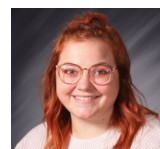
Wendy Kosakowski



Heather Nail



Kerri Kobylka



Ms. Stempowski

JANUARY

The best possible introduction for children to the world of learning.

Christmas is over and the New Year has begun. It was so nice to take the time to enjoy the wonder of Christmas.

This month the children will learn the letters Qq, Ii, and Ss. We will also introduce the 5 senses. To go along with the letter Ss, the children and teachers will be wearing slippers and sleepwear to school. We are looking forward to rolling out of bed to come to school.



For our field trip, we will be going to **Amherst Park Bar and Grill** to go **BOWLING**.

Now is the time to enroll your child for the upcoming school year. Look for a registration paper in the preschool hallway. You may also call the preschool for more information. If interested, please call the school at **440-985-1972**.

Have A Great New Year!

Wendy Kosakowski, Director
Heather Nail, Kerri Kobylka, and
Ms. Stempowski

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

ST. PETER'S PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



YOGA with Mary-K

Wednesday Mornings | 8:30-9:45 AM
Thursday Evenings | 6:00-7:15 PM

Our Wednesday morning, and Thursday evening class will meet in the lower level of St. Peter's Church. Please arrive by 8:25 a.m. for the morning class, and by 5:55 p.m. for the evening class. Enter through the door by the Chapel.

"YOGA with Mary-K" is for anyone who needs lengthening, stretching and loosening as we target the fascia, connective tissue and joints to develop strength and restore flexibility. Bring your own mat, a water bottle and wear comfortable clothes.

Mary-K is a RN/BSN, with over 12 years of yoga teaching experience, and 30 years of personal practice.

Cost is \$10 per class.



Circle Six Meeting

Tuesday, Jan. 3
at 6:00 PM

GAME NIGHT!

Circle Six will hold it's next meeting on Tuesday, January 3rd at 6 PM in Fellowship Hall.
We will be having Game Night. Please bring your own meal and beverage.

Thank you to Nataliia and Dot for our December Program!



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

"When a leader in the Church inspires council members with vision, he helps them focus on their real mission so that they are ministering to people rather than merely administering programs." — M. Russell Ballard

Please welcome our new council members, Judy McCurdy and Joan Whitman! And, a big thank you to Tom Hollstein for accepting the position of Council Secretary.

President's Report Revised

Mary-K thanked everyone who worked on the budget reduction project for 2023. The budgeted expense reduction for 2023 was \$75,000. Mary-K then thanked everyone for their hard work this year. Mary-K thanked the council members that are leaving Council (Shelley Harmych, and Susan Cherry) at the end of December 2022.

Looking back at 2023!



Looking back at 2022!

Looks like we're back in full swing! Here's to a great 2023!





JANUARY EVENTS

- Jan. 1 Communion Sunday
- Jan. 2 Office Closed New Year's observed
- Jan. 3 Preschool & Pastor Chris back
Circle Six Meeting 6 PM
- Jan. 5 Compassionate Care 10:30 AM
Handbell Choir begins 7:30 PM
- Jan. 7 Confirmation Class 6-7 PM
- Jan. 8 Installation of Officers 10 AM
- Jan. 12 Preschool Board Meeting
- Jan. 14 Men's Fellowship Breakfast
9:30 AM St. Peter's UCC
- Jan. 15 Quilts of Valor presentation
- Jan. 16 Council Zoom Meeting 7 PM
- Jan. 18 Clergy Lunch Meeting 11:30 AM

Spiritual Life: The team will be breaking through the winter months of Jan. & Feb.

Bible Study: 7 PM, Tuesdays, Zoom

Breeze Chapel: 7-7:30 PM, Wednesdays

Handbell Choir: 7:30 PM, Thursdays

Coffee Chats with Pastor Chris

Sandstone Coffee House Wed. 9-11:00 a.m.

YOGA with Mary-K, St. Peter's lower level
Wed. 8:30-9:45 AM & Thurs. 6:00-7:15 PM

Confirmation every Wed., 6-7 PM



NO MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST FOR JANUARY

We will update you when we will host the next Men's Fellowship Breakfast. Thank you to those of you who have attended.

Please be safe this winter!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

"Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!"

Darlene Mudrich January 01
 Lisa Terranova January 01
 Mary Jo Shalkhauser January 06
 Eleanor Traster January 07
 Patricia Heatley January 10
 Kyle Beiswenger January 13
 Judy Baker January 14
 JoAnn Hamlin January 15
 Danielle Nagy January 15
 Susan Conkle January 16
 Kristy Guild January 16
 Margaret Settle January 16
 Jared Hubach January 18
 Karin Andy January 25
 Serita Reyes January 25
 Karel Schieferstein January 25
 Patricia Logar January 26
 Sarah Readinger January 28
 Dwight Siron January 29
 Brian Schieferstein January 30

The Amherst Salvation Army St. Peter's Ringers



We would like to extend a sincere and HUGE thank you to St. Peter's UCC members who braved the wind and cold to ring the bells at Giant Eagle on Sat. Dec 3. Thanks again to the following members for supporting this mission. Walter & Luena Beale, Ken & Cindy Bring, Sue Conkle, Geoff & Linda Gatz, Fred Helyes, Penney Knepper, Karen Norton, Don & Marcia Ramsey and David Rice. Your efforts will be a blessing to MANY, we know YOUR HEARTS were warmed as well.

THANK YOU WALTER & LUENA BEALE, KEN & CINDY BRING, SUE CONKLE, GEOFF & LINDA GATZ, FRED HELYES, PENNEY KNEPPER, KAREN NORTON, DON & MARCIA RAMSEY AND DAVID RICE.

Compassionate Care Meeting Jan. 5 at 10:30 AM

Joan Whitman, Team Leader | 440-320-8923 | rwhitman1@oh.rr.com

We meet the 1st Thursday of the month in the Fireside Room at 10:30 AM. Joan Whitman is the Team Leader. If you have any questions regarding Compassionate Care, or would like to join our group please contact Joan. We would love to have you join us as we minister those in our church that need care.

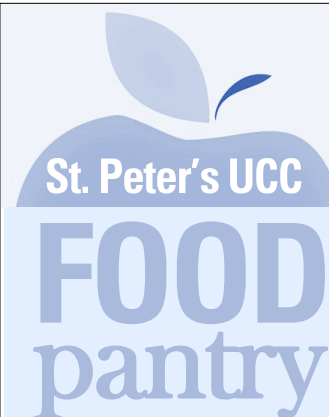
Are you in need of Prayer?

Call Joan Whitman, contact person for the Prayer Team.

Please call Joan if you would like to be added or removed from **THE KEY** prayer list shown below. Also, if you want to keep your prayer request confidential, we can also add your name for our Prayer Team.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Karin Andy	Jean Marsh	Mary Ann Sterna
Judy Baker	Tom McKinley	Don Swift
Lois Barnes	Bev Mischka	Jean Swift
Roger Becker	Glenn Miskov	Elaine Thompson
Richard Berry	Audrey Montgomery	Edgar Vargas
Joyce Darakis	Darlene Mudrich	Gloria Versace
Tudy Diaz	May Poor	Sue Smith
Valentino Dziak	Serita Reyes	Sharon
Don Flock	Janet Siron	
Ruth Kossow	Sherry Spratt	



In December,
we collected
279
food items!

Good Shepherd Baptist Food Pantry has started the **Weekend Children's Backpack Program** (*last year the number doubled*). We cannot let any child go hungry if it is in our power. To the right are some suggestions that would be very helpful with this great need.

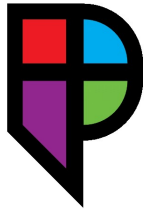
We will also still collect '**regular food items**' for families in addition to the Backpack Program. Please leave your donations in the drop off boxes at the church. Pam Miskov will ensure that all items are transported to Good Shepherd Baptist Food Bank.

Thank you to everyone who continually donates! This contribution of 279 food items is outstanding!



THE WORST ENEMY OF HUNGER IS APATHY.

[Single Serving PB & Jelly](#)
[Canned Soup \(Pop top lids\)](#)
[Mac & Cheese \(Microwavable\)](#)
[Spaghetti-Os \(Pop top lids\)](#)
[Peanut Butter Crackers](#)
[Individual Cereals](#)
[Granola Bars](#)
[Oatmeal Packages](#)
[Small Bag Chips](#)
[Small Bag Pretzels](#)
[Fruit Cups](#)
[Jello Cups](#)



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Office Phone: (440) 988-4965

Office Hours: Monday-Friday

8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1-2:30 p.m.

*Afternoons available by appointment
with Pastor Chris.*



Chris Buckingham-Taylor, Pastor
(920) 650-0761
pastor@stpetersamherst.org



Jessie Kubuske, Christian Ed. Director
(440) 988-4965
dir.ed@stpetersamherst.org



Kaye Oswald, Office Administrator
(440) 988-4965
admin.ofc@stpetersamherst.org

Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. | **Sunday School:** 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Breeze Chapel Service: 7:00 p.m.

Please visit our website, www.stpetersamherst.org to make your donation electronically via Breeze or PayPal. Also, we now have the ability to accept donations by TEXT! If you would like more detailed information, please contact the church office.

Executive Council

Christine Burman, Council President	(440) 522-8035	president@stpetersamherst.org
Judy McCurdy, Council Vice President	(440) 522-8035	judymccurdy4@gmail.com
Tom Hollstein, Council Secretary	(440) 988-7425	tomholls06@gmail.com
Lauri Hubach, Treasurer	(440) 988-2459	treasurer@stpetersamherst.org

St. Peter's Preschool

Wendy Kosakowski, Administrator & Teacher	(440) 985-1972	preschl@stpetersamherst.org
Heather Nail, Teacher & Assistant Administrator		
Kerri Kobylka, Teacher		
Taylor Stempowski, Teacher's Aide		

Website and Social Media Addresses

St. Peter's Website	www.stpetersamherst.org
St. Peter's Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/stpetersuccamherstoh
St. Peter's Twitter	https://www.twitter.com/StPetersUCCOh
St. Peter's YouTube Channel	St Peters UCC Amherst