

DECEMBER 2024

THE HOPE CHURCH BEACON

BE THE CHURCH
Protect the environment.
Care for the poor.
Forgive often.
Reject Racism.
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity.
Love God.
Enjoy this life.

HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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WORDS OF HOPE

“Those who walked in the dark have seen a bright light. And it shines upon everyone who lives in the land of darkest shadows.” Isaiah 9:2

Most of us find joy in decorating our homes for Christmas. We take out our treasured decorations and delight in the memories they hold. Growing up, every year we carefully unpacked the old nativity set and placed it under the Christmas tree. Over the years, the figures became chipped. Sheep were missing legs, and the cow had only one horn. By the time I was in high school, our original three wise men had been reduced to just two, the third one lost in the attic. The infant Jesus had teeth marks from the family dog acting as if the plastic savior was a chew toy.

However, our little nativity set never lost its ability to fill us with a sense of expectation. We never talked about buying a new perfectly enacted set. We never considered purchasing one that was a valuable collector's item. I wonder if unconsciously there was something about its missing and damaged parts that was a source of comfort. After all it was familiar, and the reality of its imperfection reminded us of the need for Christmas, the need for love to enter our hearts once again.

Angels and wise men. Shepherds and stars. It never occurred to us as children that the cast of characters were mixing images of two different nativity accounts in the gospels. Only in Luke's Gospel is there a manger and shepherds. The crowded inn and wise men and a brilliant star belong only to Matthew's narrative. The birth narrative is not even mentioned in the gospel of Mark or John! What mattered to us was not the biblical or historical accuracy of the details.

What mattered was the power of the story to rekindle our sense of wonder and to stir our hearts. Along with strains of “Silent Night” playing softly in the background, our family nativity set reminded us, every winter of our lives, of the simple birth of a baby who provided the foundation of our faith. The light and hope of the world given to us in the darkest of seasons. Through that well-worn nativity we embraced the gift of love born in a stable and born in our hearts each year.

May the blessing of the Light of the World bring you a deep sense of wonder and love this Advent!

Advent Blessings,
Pastor Meg

CHURCH NEWS



Hanging of the Greens


We have a tradition at Hope Church of working together to decorate the church for Advent and Christmas.

On December 1st following worship, we will enjoy a pizza lunch and then decorate the church.

We need people of all ages and abilities to help with this project. This is one of those times when the expression "many hands makes light work" is very true!

This event helps us all get in the spirit.

Please plan on joining in the fun and serving your church!



Do You Have a Key to the Church?

We need your information to keep our records up to date!
Did you forget to fill out a Key form - There is still time:

We kindly request that ***all persons*** who currently possess a key to any part of the church facility submit their key information to the office by **December 1st**. There is a form to fill out giving us the information needed to help us update our records. If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the church office. It is not too late!

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.



What is Advent?

The Christian New Year begins on the first Sunday of Advent. Advent ends and Christmas begins on Christmas Eve. Christmas lasts for twelve days, ending on Epiphany, January 6th. This is what we commonly called the 12 days of Christmas. Epiphany is the celebration of the Magi following the star and finding the Christ child and worshipping him.

The time before Christmas, is Advent, a season of preparation for Christmas. Christians prepare for the birth of Jesus by remembering the history of the Jewish people's deep longing for a Messiah. In Advent, we reflect on our own deep need for a savior. Christ was born not to be a royal ruler available only to the elite but instead to connect with all people. Christ was not a warrior but instead humbled himself as a servant. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit."

If you're unfamiliar with Advent, I expect it might feel odd to think of the weeks before Christmas as something more than Christmas time.

Advent doesn't get much attention compared to Christmas, though interest in Advent is growing steadily in many churches and in many Christian homes. That's not to say all Christians are excited about Advent. Some Protestants ignore Advent because it isn't taught in Scripture.

What Colors Are Used in Advent?

There are a few other things about Advent, besides its themes, that you might find odd if you didn't grow up celebrating Advent. We associate Christmas with the typical Christmas colors of red, green, white, silver, and gold.

Advent, on the other hand, features purple (or dark blue) and pink. The purple/blue color signifies seriousness, repentance, and royalty. Pink points to one of the themes of Advent, which is joy. For many observers of Advent, the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent are "purple/blue" Sundays. Only the third is a "pink" Sunday. The pink candle stands out to remind us that, even as Advent helps us get in touch with our somber yearning for God to come to us, we rejoice in the knowledge that God came to us in the person of Jesus.

What is the significance of the different Sundays?

In most protestant denominations, the first Sunday of Advent, we recognize the hope found in the birth of Christ. The Second Sunday, we focus on Christ as the Prince of Peace. The third Sunday, we rejoice in the joy that Christ came to be the savior for all people. The fourth Sunday of Advent, we turn our attention to the gift of love that God gave to the world through the birth of Jesus. On Christmas Eve, we light the Christ Candle which represents Christ as the center of our faith.

There is no absolute right color scheme of Advent. The Christ-candle is white and usually taller than the other candles signifying both purity and importance. Most advent wreaths are circular which symbolizes the unending, unbroken love of God. Evergreen branches are used on the wreaths to symbolize growth and everlasting life.

During this season of Advent may we allow ourselves to reflect on the gift of God's unconditional love that comes to us through the birth of Jesus.

CHURCH NEWS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Hanging of the Greens - December 1st

Motor City Choral Christmas Concert - December 6th

Christmas Pageant / Wrap It Up - December 15th

Blue Christmas - December 22nd 4pm - online only

Christmas Eve Worship - December 24th 6:30pm

Epiphany - Baby Shower for JESUS- January 12th

Advent



Reverse Advent Bags will be
available for pick up starting
on **Sunday December 1st.**

We're excited to once again offer our Reverse Advent program. This year, we will be distributing Advent Bags. We are asking that you fill the bag with socks of all sizes. Socks are the number-one item requested by families in need. Please return your bag to the church by **December 31, 2024.**

If you are worshipping online or if you're not attending during the in-person Sunday service, you may make up your own bags or you may pick up a bag from the brown box during the week.

Reverse Advent is a great way to prepare our hearts for Christmas.

CHURCH NEWS



Hear Ye, Hear Ye! Santa is Coming to Hope UCC!

Oh, the joy! Gather 'round, young ones, for a most magical visitor will be stopping by Hope United Church of Christ! On Sunday, **December 15th, 11am - 1pm**, none other than Santa Claus himself will be with us, ready to bring cheer to every child's heart.

With a twinkle in his eye and a belly that shakes like a bowl full of jelly, Santa will be here to listen to your wishes, share in the Christmas spirit, and make this season merry and bright! Bring your list, your friends, your pets, and your best holiday smiles. This is your chance to tell Santa all the things your heart desires.

So, polish your boots, brush your coats, and don't forget to bring your biggest smiles. Santa can't wait to meet each and every one of you!



WRAP IT UP!

Back by popular demand, we're holding the Wrap-It-Up event again this year. The event will take place on **Sunday, December 15** right after the Christmas Pageant. Our talented wrappers will be available to wrap your gifts for free. (Although, a free-will donation is always appreciated.) We'll also be having our bake sale and boutique items for sale. We hope to see you there.



CHURCH NEWS

Come and join us for Coffee Hour!



Whether you have a love for coffee, enjoy baking, or simply take pleasure in serving others, we would greatly appreciate your help.


We are looking for volunteers to help with organizing and cleaning up the coffee area, as well as providing refreshments for our weekly coffee hour fellowship.

If you're interested, please check the sign-up sheet in the narthex for more information and available time slots.

PEANUT ALLERGIES Due to peanut allergies, please label any coffee hour goodies that contain or may contain any form of nuts.*

A special THANK YOU to everyone who helped in November with Coffee Hour!

FAITH AND FUN!



On December 15th, following the festive ambiance of the Christmas Pageant in worship, we will host a delightful Coffee Hour. While it won't be the traditional sit-down breakfast we're accustomed to, it will feature a variety of delicious continental treats to savor. Afterward, we can all come together for the Wrap It Up event! We're eagerly looking forward to sharing this joyful time of year together. See you there!

CHURCH NEWS



Hope Church is thrilled to welcome the

MOTOR CITY CHORALE

on December 6th, 2024, at 7:30 p.m.

This performance will feature a delightful blend of hymns, uplifting Christmas music, and popular tunes you hear on the radio. While there is no admission fee, we will be accepting a Free Will Offering.

*Join us for this festive concert
and embrace the Spirit of Christmas!*



Christmas Pageant

The Hope UCC Christmas Pageant is in the air!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 15th**, with the final rehearsal scheduled for Saturday, December 14th, at 12 p.m.

If you're interested in participating, please reach out to Pastor Meg. We can't wait to share the story of Jesus with everyone!



CHURCH NEWS



Pastor Meg is looking for people to get together to go to the see the movie about Bonhoeffer that is currently in the theaters.

Some church leaders have loved the movie and others have criticized it. Let's watch and make our own judgement. Let her know if you are interested in going and we can find a date and time that works for a group.

This is the true story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a man who preached love while plotting the assassination of an evil tyrant.

The movie depicts the life of Rev. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran theologian who is one of the best-known Christian martyrs of the 20th century. After two years of imprisonment, Bonhoeffer — an outspoken critic of the Nazi regime — was executed on April 9, 1945.

Bonhoeffer's reputation as a scholar, however, does not rest on his heroic death. His 1937 volume "The Cost of Discipleship," a study of the Sermon on the Mount, is renowned as a classic of modern theological writing.

The Christmas Fund

"And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them..." Luke 2:9

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

We are preparing to receive this offering on December 22nd.



2024 Project Give Thanks

On Sunday November 24 each child in worship received \$5.00 from Pastor Meg. The children not in church will receive it in the mail. The idea is for the children to find creative ways to be a blessing to someone else. During this Christmas season it's tempting for children to focus on their Christmas lists. They are never too young to begin to learn the importance of giving to those less fortunate. A list of suggestions was included with the five dollars that included buying a toy for our Christmas toy drive or buying the supplies to bake goodies. The children will report back on what they did with their five dollars. We are looking forward to hearing how each child passed the blessing on! PS You might want to try a version of this idea with your family!

Blue Christmas - Not feeling Christmas Joy this year?

This Blue Christmas service is for anyone who might be struggling during the holiday season. It is usually close to the date of the longest night, when the days are shorter, and the darkness of night is longer.

This time of year, carries the expectation that we are all filled with happiness, and we know that often that is not our reality. Blue Christmas is designed to remind us that it's okay to have a whole range of emotions. This is a service of comfort and peace. This would be an excellent service to invite anyone you know who might need some encouragement to view.

This year's Blue Christmas Service will be on-line ONLY and will be on our FACEBOOK page on Sunday, **December 22nd at 4pm**. The beauty of doing it on Facebook is that you can watch the service at your convenience. It will be on FB during the entire season.



BABY SHOWER for JESUS January 12th!

Epiphany is the Twelfth Day of Christmas which is on January 6th. The day we remember that the wise men came bearing gifts for the Baby Jesus. At Hope Church we will be celebrating Epiphany with a Baby Shower for Jesus. To give ourselves a chance to recover after Christmas we will be hosting the baby shower on **January 12th following worship**. We are asking you to donate unwrapped gifts that a baby might need. The items we collect will go to an agency that helps low-income moms care for their infants. On the 12th we will have a special coffee hour with the baby shower theme and refreshments and games. Come join in the fun and honor the newborn born to be our Savior!

CHURCH NEWS



Thank You for your support
On behalf of Motown Soup, we just wanted to thank everyone who supported the soup sale on November 17th. It was a great success. Motown Soup provides funding to various groups in Macomb County that feed the hungry each year. The Hope Food Pantry has been blessed in the past with donations from Motown Soup to help us continue to feed the hungry. Thank you for your purchases.

Ambassador for Hope- Job Description

The purpose of this designated role is to have at least two people each week to serve as friendly greeters. We want to make sure that visitors and our members feel welcome at Hope.

We would try to have 8 people serving in this official capacity. Ambassadors would sign up for a week each month but also be available as needed.

Weekly responsibility:

Be at church by 9:45.

Wear a nametag with yellow ambassador sticker

Watch for newcomers and introduce yourself. Answer questions and invite them to sit with you.

During worship scan the sanctuary looking for new faces.

During the blessing song walk out and stand near Pastor Meg.

Introduce yourself to new people.

Give them the current thanks for Poppin' bag.

Invite them to coffee hour and go with them if possible.

Sit with them and find a table with other members you can introduce them to.

Offer a tour of the church building.

Make sure Pastor Meg is aware of their presence.

Offer them a visitors clipboard to leave us their contact information.

If there are no visitors go into coffee hour and look for people seated by themselves invite them to join another table or sit with them.



CHURCH NEWS



Interested In Serving Your Church?

The Board of Trustees are looking for people to run for election to the Board. We have a few vacancies to fill. To serve on the Board, it is a two-year commitment.

You must also be a member of the church for a minimum of two years.

If you have a desire to become more active and to learn more about the church this is a great way to fulfill your desire.

Please reach out to Nancy B, Ida E or Rick C
and we will make sure your name is on the “ballot” for the February election.



New Member Class

Do you know what this comma means? Are you interested in finding out? Have you been attending for a while, and you would like to know more about what it means to be a member? Would you like to become more involved, but you don't know where to begin? Do you have questions about what the UCC is all about? Come and join in the conversation with Pastor Meg and then decide if it feels like a good fit and a good time for you to become a member.

Join in the conversation on **Sunday December 8th**. We will meet in the parlor following worship. Grab some refreshments and come join us. Please call the church office or let Pastor Meg know if you can attend. Wherever you are on your life journey you are welcome here!

CHURCH NEWS



WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER ALTAR FLOWERS FOR THAT SPECIAL DAY?

To sign up, please register on the
bulletin board located in
Fellowship Hall.

The cost is \$20 per arrangement.
Payments may be made either
online or in person.

POINSETTIA PLANTS

It's time to order your Poinsettia Plants for the Christmas Season.

The cost is \$12 per plant. The deadline to order is Sunday, December 8th.

Fill out the form below for each plant separately and completely.

Include your payment of cash or check with each form.

Place both in the offering box, drop off at the church office, or mail in to Hope UCC.

Poinsettia Order Form

IN HONOR OF:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Placed by: _____

Phone #: _____

Flowers are provided by Bruce & Pam Anderson, owners of Moehring Woods Florist, 313 882-9732.

HOPE CHURCH INFORMATION

We are the Church!

We need teens or adults to serve as liturgists by reading the scripture each week. If you would be willing to serve in this capacity, please reach out to Pastor Meg and sign up at the Welcome Table.

Pastor Meg is inviting children and teens to read the Call to Worship. If you have a young person in your family who would like to participate in worship, please contact the church office. Pastor Meg will write the material at your child's reading level. The children do not need to be church members.

WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER!

Hope Website



www.hopeuccmi.com

YouTube



@hopeunitedchurchofchrist-c8235

Instagram



@HopeUCCmi

Facebook



@HopeUCCmacomb

Hearing Assistance is Offered at Hope UCC

Can't quite hear Pastor Meg's sermon?
Think the choir just doesn't sing loud enough?

We can help!

We can accommodate you with our assistive listening system! We have installed a complex system that can transmit directly to your hearing aids through your own smartphone or with a special receiver we can lend you. We also have earphones for those without hearing aids.

Make sure you can hear God's wonderful good news!

HOPE FOOD PANTRY



On November 9, we held a drive-thru distribution day.

We served 685 individuals, which includes 203 families.

We distributed 16,961 lbs. of food, hygiene, and cleaning supplies.

The success of this pantry distribution day was made possible thanks to the generous contributions from our donors, the hard work of our volunteers, and the dedication of your Christian Mission & Witness Committee members.

We will welcome ANY donations for the Food pantry!



**HOPE Food Pantry is open the
2nd Saturday of each month.**

**Our next drive-thru pantry
distribution volunteer service
day will be:**

**Saturday,
December 14th
from
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Volunteer service hours are 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering it is helpful to sign up or contact a member of the Christian Mission and Witness Committee. There is also a sign up sheet posted on the table in the Narthex. We have packing and unloading parties all month long! Have your family or group staff an event!

Thank you for always remembering the Hope Food Pantry!

Our continued success is because of you!

**Please join us in thanking all the
volunteers for their hard work and
dedication on this mission project!**

Hope Food Pantry also distributes a Hygiene Kit every quarter.

We are asking that donations for the hygiene kits focus on
these 3 most requested items:

Toilet Paper / Laundry Detergent / Dish Soap

[please note that these should be single servings, individual size]



CHRISTIAN MISSION & WITNESS

Do you recall the magic of Christmas morning during your childhood?
The joy of finding a brand new toy waiting for you under the Christmas tree was truly unforgettable!
This year, let's spread that joy to others by participating in our toy donation drive.
We are partnering with the Fraser Township Library.



The final day for donations is Sunday, December 1st.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

For more information, please reach out to Karen Miller.



6 DEGREES OF SEPARATION

How does trash travel?

1 Plastic bag from a store in the city



2 blows from a trash can



3 into a storm drain



4 travels through pipes and downriver



5 into the ocean



6 where marine wildlife mistakes it for food.



Ocean Conservancy

TYPE OF DEBRIS

DECOMPOSITION RATE

Paper Towel

2-4 weeks

Newspaper

6 weeks

Apple Core

2 months

Cardboard Box

2 months

Cotton Shirt

2-5 months

Waxed Carton

3 months

Plywood

1-3 years

Wool Sock

1-5 years

Plastic Grocery Bag

10-20 years*

Foam Cup

50 years*

Tin Can

50 years

Aluminum Cans

200 years

Disposable Diaper

450 years*

Plastic Beverage Bottle

450 years*

Fishing Line

600 years*

**Items are made from a type of plastic. Although no one has lived for 450 or 600 years, many scientists believe plastics never entirely go away. These decomposition rates are estimates for the time it takes for these items to become microscopic and no longer be visible. Sources: EPA, Woods Hole Sea Grant*

Submitted by Karen Miller

International Coastal Cleanup

WHAT WILL YOU FIND?

Food Wrappers

Even though many food wrappers look like foil, most are made of plastic.

- ★ Try buying in bulk and using reusable containers to store on-the-go snacks.

Plastic Beverage Bottles

In the sun and salt water, plastic bottles become brittle and break into smaller pieces.

- ★ Opt for tap water or fountain drinks in a reusable bottle.

⌚ Breakdown Time: 450 years

Forks, Knives & Spoons

Volunteers collect enough utensils—more than half a million in one day—to host a picnic for every resident of Washington, D.C.

- ★ Entertain with reusable forks, knives and spoons made from bamboo or recycled plastic.

Cups & Plates

Foam cups and plates cannot be easily recycled and often crumble into small pieces.

- ★ Grab a reusable mug that can go from coffee to smoothie with just a rinse.

⌚ Breakdown Time: 50 years

Bottle Caps

Plastic bottle caps are one of the most commonly found items in the stomachs of sea birds.

- ★ Keep your bottle caps to use for art projects or on-the-go games. Checkers, anyone?

Plastic Grocery Bags

Plastic grocery bags pose high risks to sea turtles when they mistake them for their favorite food, jellyfish.

- ★ Toss reusable bags in your backpack, purse or car so they are handy for every trip to the store.

⌚ Breakdown Time: 1-20 years

Takeout/Takeaway Containers

Volunteers collect enough containers in one day to get takeout for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for 858 years.

- ★ Reuse these containers for tomorrow's leftovers or other storage needs.

Cigarette Butts

The most common item found during beach cleanups, cigarette filters are actually plastic.

- ★ Properly dispose of cigarettes in receptacles or use a portable ashtray.

⌚ Breakdown Time: 1-10 years

Straws/Stirrers

Volunteers collect enough straws and stirrers in one day to line California's 840 mile coastline.

- ★ Next time you're out, politely refuse plastic straws or carry your own reusable straw.

Fishing Gear

Abandoned fishing gear can trap and harm ocean life long after it is lost or discarded.

- ★ Don't leave your line behind; participate in a fishing-line recycling program.

⌚ Breakdown Time: 600 years



GROUPS AND MEETINGS

Hope Fun Bunch

On the 18th of November the Hope Fun Bunch had 17 members present. What a nice Fall day for all to gather together. We had a potluck luncheon which all enjoyed. During our meeting it was reported the Christmas Shoe Box project totaled 12 boxes which were delivered on Wednesday the 20th.

Thanks to all who participated in the holiday program.

Our Christmas luncheon is coming up fast. The tickets are \$25 per person. Your money can be given to Joe, Ida or Tom. We need to have the money in on the 1st of December in order to hold the reservation. The luncheon is slated for the 9th of December. The location is on the corner of Mound Rd. and 13 mile at the Gazebo. We will meet at 11 :30am and eat at 12 noon.

Come join us on our Holiday Celebration.



*Officers: Tom R, President;
Ida E, Vice-President;
Joe H, Secretary-Treasurer*



HOPE SPARKLES EXERCISE CLASS

This class takes a comprehensive approach to fitness, blending stretching routines, balance enhancement exercises, and gentle cardiovascular activities.

We incorporate 2-pound weights, provided by the church, for strength-building workouts. For flexibility training, we use therapy bands supplied by our instructor. The result of participating in these sessions is a notable enhancement in overall health and well-being.

Classes are held regularly every Monday from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and every Wednesday from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Our instructor, Linda Hohf from the Arthritis Foundation, has a remarkable understanding of our joint and muscle requirements, customizing our workouts to meet these needs effectively.

What truly makes this Exercise Class unique is "YOU." All you need to do is "SHOW UP" for an hour of enjoyment and fitness alongside friends!

The cost is just \$1 per person, per class.

**There will be NO CLASS 12/23, 12/25, 12/30, & 1/1.
We will begin fresh on January 6th.**



COMMUNITY

PFLAG-CT warmly invites the Hope UCC congregation to participate in our monthly support meeting. This gathering will take place on the last Tuesday of each month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. We deeply appreciate Hope UCC's support of our chapter, as our mission focuses on supporting, educating, and advocating for the LGBTQ community. We welcome you to join us and learn more about our work.

To stay connected, please visit our website at PFLAGCT.org, complete the form, and mention Hope UCC. This will add you to our email list, ensuring you receive notifications about future meetings.

For any inquiries, feel free to reach out to me at yvonnetaad@wowway.com, and remember to mention Hope UCC.

Thank you once again for your support of our chapter.
Stay safe and healthy, and may God bless you.

Yvonne Tadajewski, President, PFLAG-CT



REACH OUT IN FAITH




Thousands of older and disabled adults in our community struggle daily to get by. For these individuals a little extra help can make it possible for them to remain safe and independent in their own homes. The Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers program matches volunteers with frail, homebound and isolated neighbors who need assistance. If you have just a couple hours a month that you can give to someone in need, you can make a huge difference in the life of a struggling neighbor. You tell us what days, times and areas are convenient for you, and how you would like to serve. You can be matched with the same person for regular visits, or just be on a list for occasional rides and chores. Volunteers are needed to help with:

- Transportation for appointments and essential errands;
- Simple chores, yard work or home repairs;
- Help with housekeeping or meal preparation;
- Friendly visits or supportive phone calls,
- Respite breaks for full-time family caregivers,
- And other support that can help a frail, older or disabled neighbor.

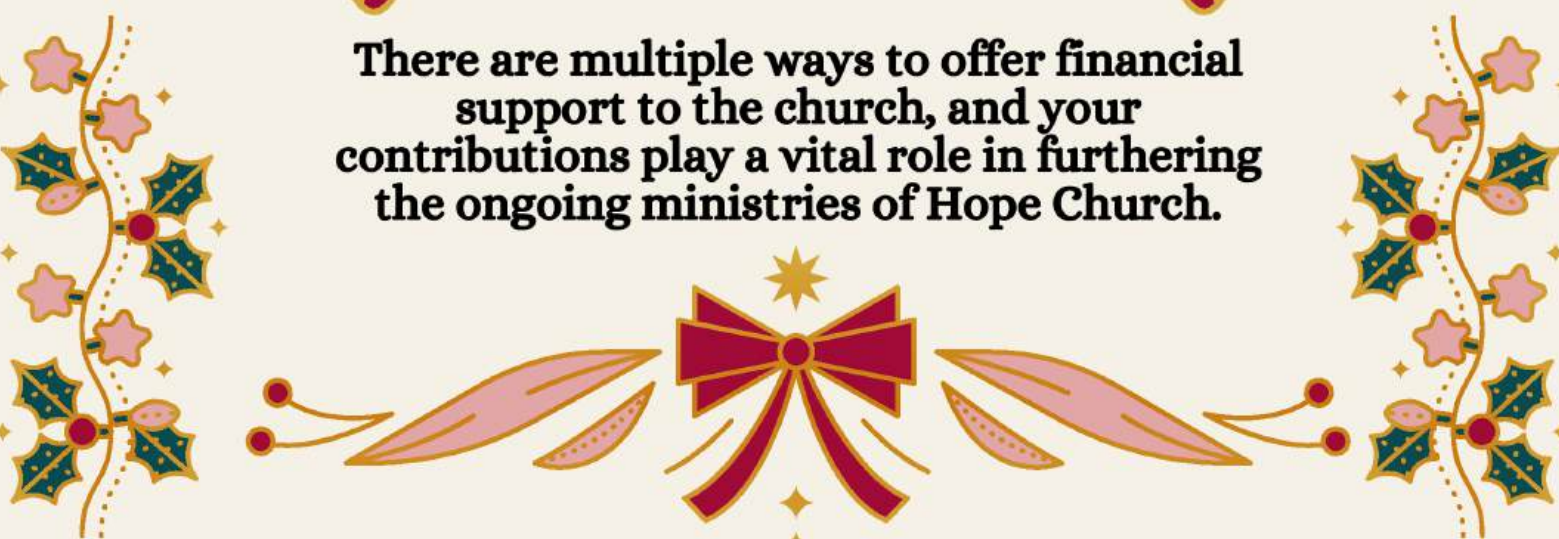
We also need volunteers who can provide support in our office, assist with special events, or serve on our various committees.

Call us at (586) 757-5551, or visit www.ivcinfo.org to learn more.

HOPE GIVING



There are multiple ways to offer financial support to the church, and your contributions play a vital role in furthering the ongoing ministries of Hope Church.



To give Online: Visit the Hope UCC Website
WWW.HOPEUCCMI.COM

Select the "GIVE A GIFT" tab and then "GIVE A GIFT HERE"

To give from your Cell Phone: Text "HUCCF" to 45777
The site will respond with a link which you can use to route your donation to a specific fund. If you would like to donate to the "General Fund" you can simply text: "Gift Amount" followed by "HUCCF" to 45777.

[For instance, to give \$10 text "10 HUCCF" to 45777]

In both cases, you will be directed to our secure payment processing center where you will be able to easily walk through the steps to register and/or direct your donation. *(Hint – If using the text method, save this phone number in your "Contacts" list to make it easier to access.)*

To give In-Person: We have a donation box in the sanctuary. You can mail your gift to the church office. You can also drop it off from 9 a.m. -1:30 p.m. M - F

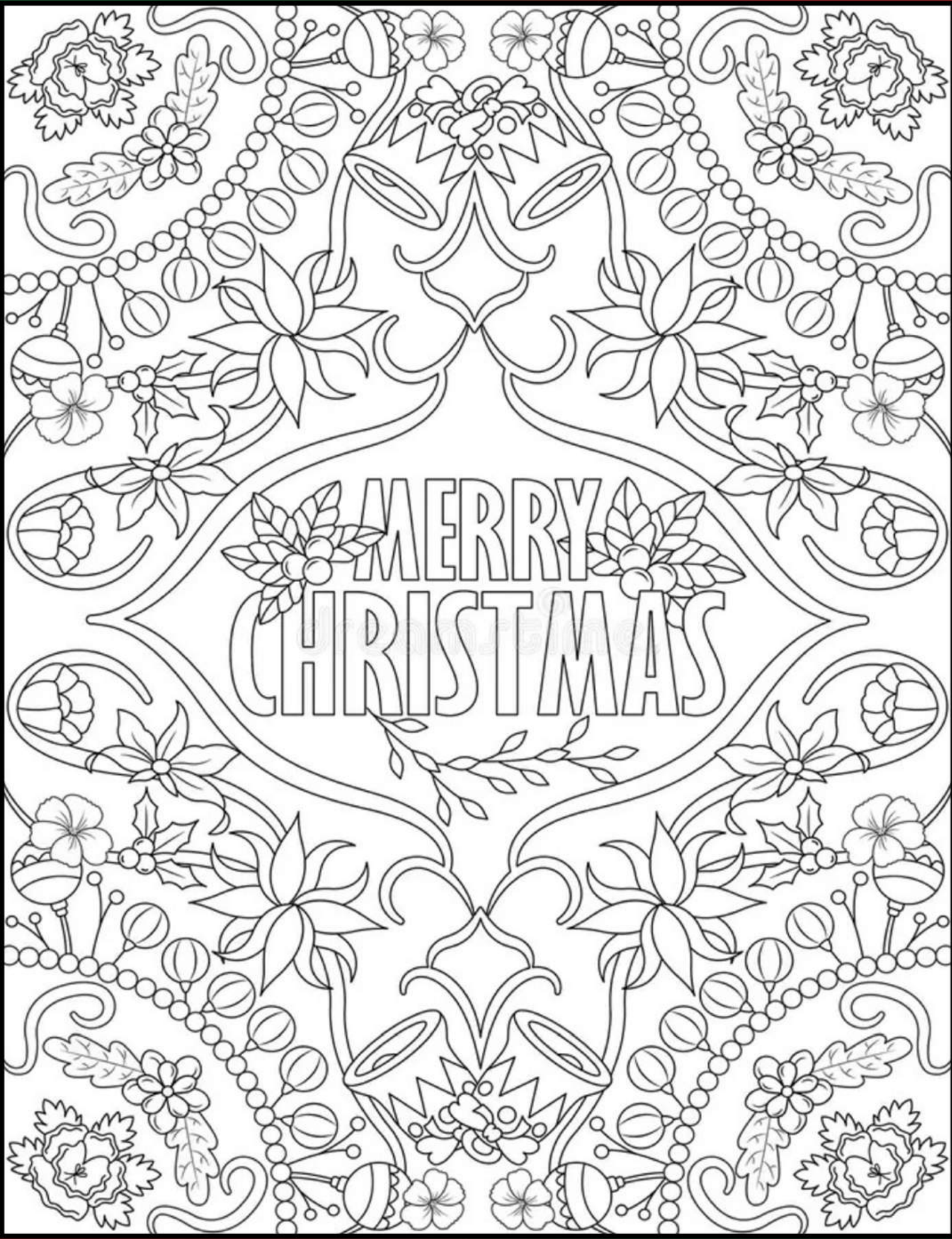


Your Giving Statement will reflect the total donation.

Questions? Contact Lori Sarnowski



FAMILY PAGE



FAMILY PAGE

Christmas Carol Picture Puzzle

Each numbered box contains pictures that are clues to its title.
Write the number next to the carol it matches.

Merry Christmas

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| ___ Angels We Have Heard on High | ___ O Holy Night | ___ I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day |
| ___ Caroling of the Bells | ___ Little Drummer Boy | ___ Do You Hear What I Hear? |
| ___ Away in a Manger | ___ Silent Night | ___ I Saw Three Ships |
| ___ While Shepherds Watched | ___ Mary, Did You Know? | ___ Go Tell It on the Mountain |
| ___ Joy to the World | ___ What Child is This? | ___ Hark the Herald Angels Sing |
| ___ O Little Town of Bethlehem | ___ The Holly and the Ivy | ___ We Three Kings of Orient Are |

1 	7 	13 
2 	8 	14 
3 	9 	15 
4 	10 	16 
5 	11 	17 
6 	12 	18 

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

HOPE CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Our congregation knows that prayer is our tool for connecting to God.
Together, we pray in worship, and we pray at home.

You may contact the church office to remove or add a name.

We also have a prayer sculpture in the church lobby, and you are welcome to write a prayer request and hang it on the sculpture. When we lift our concerns in prayer, we will surely know the presence of the Lord.

Please remember those on our Prayer List ... With a phone call, card, or note, and keep them in your Thoughts & Prayers.



Ken & Su

Lori & Al

Jerry & Shannon

Jean

Sue


Carol

Flaherty Family

John

Elaine

Clifford Family



*We offer a special prayer for
those who keep their
concerns and needs to
themselves, hoping that
everyone finds the strength,
courage, and patience
to navigate their personal
challenges.*

BOTS Meeting Minutes

Hope United Church of Christ Synopsis of Board Meeting November 12, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by President Steve Nielson. Pastor Meg led us in prayer.

Those in attendance: Pastor Meg, Steve Nielson, Nancy Burnham, Terri Hillman, Kirk Schoenherr, Linda Parsons, Linda Rehm and Lori Sarnowski. Absent: Jerry Rogers and Nancy Fay.

[Congregational Comments](#) – Steve Nielson – None

[Additions to the Agenda](#) – Steve Nielson – None

[Approval of Agenda](#) – Motion to approve the agenda was made by Nancy Burnham with a second by Kirk Schoenherr. Motion carried.

[President's Remarks](#) – Steve Nielson: As done the past few years, suggested we not have a meeting in December due to everyone's busy schedules. Board agreed. He thanked all of us for the past year and has enjoyed working with everyone. He is leaving tomorrow for five days to hunt down Bambi.

[Approval of the October Meeting Minutes](#) – Motion by Nancy Burnham with a second by Lori Sarnowski to approve the October minutes. Motion Carried.

[Treasurer's Report for October 2024](#) – Motion was made by Linda Parsons with a second by Kirk Schoenherr to approve the report for October. Motion Carried.

The following items summarize the financial results for the month of October:

Statement of Operations – Income (Page 3):

- Weekly Offerings for October 2024 were \$4,331 less than the amount budgeted and \$5,714 less than the amount received for October 2023. There were five October Sundays in 2023 and four Sundays in 2024. Year to date Weekly Offerings were \$3,878 less than the amount budgeted but \$81 (\$2 per week) more than the same period in 2023. We also received Special Offerings of \$305 for Energy and \$550 for Neighbors in Need in October.
- The only Investment activity for the Operating Fund consisted of \$0.45 in interest to the Money Market Account.
- Year to date Operating Income, comprised of Weekly Offerings plus other Income accounts, is \$2,762 less than the amount budgeted but \$74 more than 2023.

Statement of Operations – Expense (Pages 4-6):

- Total Operating Fund Expenses for October 2024 were \$1,109 less than the amount budgeted and \$990 less than the Expenses for October 2023. Year to date Expenses were \$10,335 less than budgeted and \$423 less than the same period in 2023. Year to date favorability to the Expense budget is primarily driven by the open Christian Education Director position and associated Christian Education costs, as well as lower heating cost. That favorability is partially offset by higher electricity and grounds upkeep costs, office supplies and administrative expenses, and cost associated with increased church life activities.
- There was a loss (Income less Expense) of \$3,053 in October 2024 versus a gain of \$2,668 October 2023.



BOTS Meeting Minutes

- SYNOPSIS OF OPERATIONS:

	<u>October</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Operating receipts	\$14,572	\$177,978
Operating expenses	<u>17,625</u>	<u>197,855</u>
Excess of receipts over expenses		
(Expenses over receipts)	<u>(\$ 3,053)</u>	<u>(\$ 19,877)</u>

Dedicated Accounts (Page 7):

- Dedicated Accounts had income of \$3,613 and expense of \$6,222 for the month, leaving a balance of \$94,526.

Building Fund (Page 9):

- Hope for the Future offerings received in October 2024 were \$955 which was \$95 less than the amount budgeted and \$465 less than the amount received for October 2023. We have received Memorials of \$3,410 year to date. Final invoices for the parking lot repair were paid in July bringing the total paid in 2024 for the repair to \$107,456.

Investments (Page 9):

- The securities account had an October loss of \$2,232 compared to a loss of \$5,608 for October 2023. Year to date 2024, the securities account had a gain of \$39,683 versus a gain of \$13,573 for 2023.

Synopsis of Cash Flow (Income less Expense)

	<u>October</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Budgeted Accounts (Operating plus Building excluding Investments)	(\$ 1,713)	(\$107,814)
Non-Budgeted Accounts (Dedicated Accounts)	<u>(2,609)</u>	<u>(1,970)</u>
Total Cash Flow	<u>(\$ 4,322)</u>	<u>(\$109,784)</u>

Unfinished Business

Painting Improvements
Civil Engineering

New Business

Tree Trimming – Steve Nielson: Due to concern over some of the trees on our property, Norm Nenninger contacted Davey Tree Expert Company to get their recommendations. Since Norm is planning to have the building power washed and sealed in the spring, part of the recommendations should be attended to now. The tall Arborvitae's on the corners and front of the building have grown to the extent they are rubbing on the building and these trees present an obstacle to the power washing process. Also, the trees along Garfield have grown in a way that they block the sight line of the church sign from the north (traveling South on Garfield). There are also trees in the rear of property that have had ice and wind damage and need attention.

After Christian from Davey Tree and Norm walked our property together, Christian gave us the following recommendations and proposals: prune the Arborvitae's and six trees along Garfield at a cost of \$910.00. On his inspection he found a thorny Hawthorn tree in the back of property that has large sharp spikes that could propose a hazard to anyone walking or brushing against the branches and he therefore suggested removing it. The cost for pruning the trees in the back and removing the Hawthorn tree would be \$1,820. If we decided to do both of these items at the same time, the price would be \$2,470.00 instead of \$2,730.00 if they were done separately (a savings of \$260.00). A stump would remain after removing the Hawthorn which could be ground up for an additional \$320.00. Steve volunteered that he and his family could take care of the stump for free if we decided to have Hawthorn removed.



BOTS Meeting Minutes

Steve told us we had until November 24th to make a decision on the proposals. After some discussion by the Board members, a motion was made by Linda Parsons with a second by Terri Hillman to accept the bid offer from Davey Tree Experts to do all the work now at a fee of \$2,470.00. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee – Steve Nielson: Steve requested a Board member be on this committee. Nancy Burnham volunteered. Steve mentioned that Rick Cole and Ida Eckert will also be on the committee. There will be five positions needing to be filled. Steve Nielson, Linda Parsons, Linda Rehm and Lori Sarnowski all have to come off the Board. Jerry Rogers does have the option to run again but does not want to run again but concentrate on his health and family. There was some discussion of some possible candidates for these vacancies. A motion was made by Kirk Schoenherr with a second from Nancy Burnham to form the Nominating Committee of Nancy Burnham, Rick Cole and Ida Eckert. Motion carried.

Insurance Update – Nancy Burnham: She had our Safe Church Policy reviewed by Terry Watmore who is an attorney who found a few little items needing correction or clarification due to the new insurance rules. The Sunday School leader needs to know who is picking up a child from the classroom. Every employee as well as all teachers and those working with the toddlers or youth must have a file including a criminal background check. The teachers and those working in the classrooms will need to undergo online training prior to our new insurance policy. Those undergoing the training will receive a certificate to put in their files.

CEC Committee Update – Pastor Meg: She has contacted four individuals to be on this committee. They are Jessica Hazelton, Carissa Spear, Kristin Miyamoto and Jordan Miyamoto. Nancy Burnham made a motion with a second by Lori Sarnowski to approve these four people to be on the CEC Committee. Motion Carried. The first meeting will take place in January 2025.

Pastor Meg has made a place in Fellowship Hall for the kids to play during Coffee Hour instead of playing in the Youth Room.

Spiritual Council Update – Pastor Meg: They met and would like Linda Smith to serve Hope Church as the Sunshine Lady. They would also like to recommend to the Board that Linda Smith serve as a member of the Spiritual Council. Kirk Schoenherr made a motion with a second by Linda Parsons to approve Linda Smith as a new member of the Spiritual Council. Motion carried.

Advent Season Update – Pastor Meg: December 1st – Hanging of the greens. We will have a pizza lunch first which will be needed by 11 am. Linda Rehm volunteered to order and pick up the pizza.

December 6th – Motor City Chorale. Posters are up. We will advertise on our sign. Will need a couple people to help with parking. Steve will help with the parking. Our choirs are hosting and decorating.

December 15th – Christmas Pageant, Wrap-it-Up, Santa. In the past we have had a breakfast the day of the Pageant but since the people that usually did the cooking are not available, Pastor Meg suggested a Continental Breakfast consisting of bagels, apple and orange juice and other items of our usual coffee hour for this year.

December 22nd – Blue Christmas – Since has been low attendance last few years, Pastor Meg will prerecord and put on Facebook and have it available on that date.

January 12th Epithany Celebration – Baby Shower for Jesus – The CMW will work with Board on the plans and Linda Rehm will assist. It will be held during Coffee Hour that date with addition of cake and cupcakes in blue and pink. Plans for a zoom meeting of Board and CMW to finalize after some discussion by Board.



BOTS Meeting Minutes

Move the Chili Cookoff to early February 2025.

Thanksgiving Potluck – Pastor Meg: This will be this coming Sunday, November 17th. Rev Lillian Daniel is speaking and wants to meet with church leaders at 9:15. We discussed set up details.

Pastor's Report - Pastor Meg for October 2024:

Worship: Last Sunday we celebrated All Saints Day. We will welcome Rev. Lillian Daniel on 11/17. We have several special worship services to plan for Advent.

Pastoral Care: I continue to meet with individuals in need of support during difficult times.

Church Business: The new format of the Beacon is getting lots of positive feedback.

Spiritual Council: We met last week. See the attached report.

Christian Education: We have 2 separate Sunday school classes. We are rebuilding the Christian Education Committee. Our Confirmation scheduling has been challenging but we are meeting weekly. We have set up some toys and a special kids table in Fellowship Hall to make sure the children have a fun and supervised space to be during coffee hour.

DMA & Conference Upcoming Involvement: I continue to serve as co-chair on the Committee on Ministry.

Community Outreach: We welcome visitors each week. We have welcome bags for first time visitors.

Pastor Meg also thanked all who came to the October Budget Meeting and for all of Terri's hard work. She would like us to consider having the February Board Meeting in person as it will be the last meeting of the current Board.

Consent Agenda Items – Steve Nielson: He received reports from Spiritual Council, Technology Committee and Property Committee. A motion was made to accept these reports by Linda Rehm with a second by Kirk Schoenherr. Motion carried.

These items are not for discussion. They are for review purposes only. Board will accept them as presented. If, however discussion is needed, a trustee can make a motion to remove them from the consent agenda for further discussion.

*MOTION TO ACCEPT CONSENT AGENDA ITEM
COMMITTEE/COUNCIL REPORTS
SPIRITUAL COUNCIL
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE
CHRISTIAN MISSION AND WITNESS COMMITTEE
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
HR COMMITTEE
PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MUSIC COMMITTEE





Adjournment: Motion by Kirk Schoenherr with a second by Nancy Burnham to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. Motion carried.

Meeting was closed with The Lord's Prayer

PENDING BOT'S APPROVAL



DECEMBER 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship 10am Communion Sunday Hanging of the Greens 	2 Hope Sparkles 11am-12pm	3 AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	4 Hope Sparkles 1pm-2pm	5 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	6 Motor City Chorale Christmas Concert 7:30pm 	7 AA 7-8:30pm
8 Worship 10am New Member Class	9 Hope Sparkles 11am-12pm Hope Fun Bunch Holiday Luncheon 12pm	10 CMWC 12:30pm BOTS 7pm AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	11 Hope Sparkles 1pm-2pm	12 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	13	14 FOOD PANTRY 10-12 Pageant Rehearsal 12pm AA 7-8:30pm 
15 Worship 10am Christmas Pageant Wrap it Up! 	16 Hope Sparkles 11am-12pm	17 AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	18 Hope Sparkles 1pm-2pm	19 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	20	21 AA 7-8:30pm
22 Worship 10am Blue Christmas 4pm (online only)	23	24  CHRISTMAS EVE 6:30PM AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm	25 Merry Christmas 	26 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7:30-9pm	27	28 AA 7-8:30pm
29 Worship 10am	30	31 PFLAG 6-8pm AA 7-8pm OA 7-8pm				

THE LEADERSHIP OF HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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