

Amherst United Methodist Church

396 Park Avenue

Amherst, OH 44001

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Worship at 10:30 AM

AUMC DECEMBER NEWSLETTER



The Miracle of Christmas!

To my beloved church family,

As we gather in this holy season, we are reminded that Christmas is not simply a date on the calendar or a festive tradition it is the miracle of God's love breaking into our world. In the stillness of Bethlehem, heaven touched earth. The infinite became an infant, and the Word was made flesh to dwell among us.

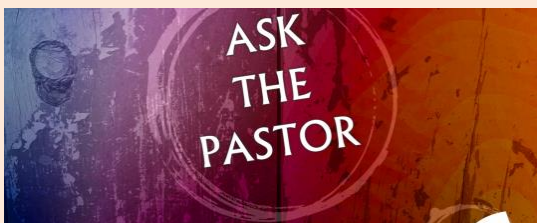
The miracle of Christmas is that God chose to come near, not in power or grandeur, but in humility and vulnerability. A child wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, reveals to us that divine love is not distant, but present in the ordinary and unexpected places of life.

This miracle continues today. Every act of kindness, every word of hope, every gesture of reconciliation carries the light of Christ into a world that longs for peace. When we open our hearts to the Christ child, we discover that God's love is not only for us, but through us, and it is a love meant to be shared with neighbors, strangers, and all creation.

May this Christmas be for you a time of wonder and renewal. May you see the miracle of God's presence in your family, your community, and even in the quiet corners of your own heart. And may the joy of the angels, the faith of the shepherds, and the love of Mary and Joseph inspire you to live as people of hope.

On a personal note, Karen and I wish you all a blessed Christmas, filled with peace, joy, and the miracle of God's love. May this holy season bring warmth to your heart, hope to your spirit, and the gentle assurance that you are deeply cherished by God. Together, we pray that the wonder of Christmas surrounds you and your loved ones, inspiring renewed faith and lasting happiness throughout the coming year.

Pastor Joe



For any spiritual guidance or questions you may have, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Joe at umcpastorjoe@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS FOR DECEMBER 2025

Welcome to the month of December with its joyous celebration of the birth of our Lord! The sanctuary and the altar will be decorated. Our youth are hosting a cookie social time after worship service. Pastor Joe's sermons and Jesse's and our Singing Saints' musical selections will highlight the birth of our Lord!

Your Leadership Team met on Monday, November 10th. Pastor announced the church conference in Medina on Sunday, November 16th at 3pm. (Pastor, Judy, and Aleah were able to represent our church. Much appreciated! At that conference, Aleah was officially appointed as Amherst UMC's Lay Leader! Pastor suggested that Christmas Eve service be at 4pm rather than 7pm so driving could be done during daylight. Team agreed. (Pastor surveyed our congregation at the Sunday worship service and 4pm was agreed upon.)

Our treasurer Jim will have a proposed 2026 budget for the December Leadership team meeting. The craft show and bake sale profited \$846.75 for the general fund. For the Ark Encounter trip in June of 2026, the children have raised \$1,019.30 of their \$2,500.00 goal. If the children are unable to attain their goal, Leadership Team will discuss ways to cover the remaining balance. Aleah said that at this time no money needs to be expended for the trip. JoAnn and Diane reported that fifteen pledge cards for 2026 have been turned in with an estimated pledge amount of \$30,080. (Thank you to Diane for attending and assuming the financial secretary's role in January 2026! JoAnn will continue to assist and remain on Leadership Team.)

Bob, trustee chair, reported that the air conditioner for the office and Elsie Snell room is installed. Unfortunately, there is no electrical hook up. There is seventeen inches of solid sandstone that separates location of electrical panel for the hook up. Bob has contacted an electrician so that a remedy may be found. (Fortunately, the air conditioner will not be needed at this time of year!) Doug Haney attended our meeting and asked about installation of a hand rail leading to the altar to make it more convenient for the Pastor, Singing Saints, and liturgists. Doug provided printed copies of suggested installations. Team felt that this would be beneficial. Bob and Doug will pursue various installation options. (Thank you to Doug for his stewardship!) Jennifer Clark provided an update on the cost of painting the sanctuary ceiling. Tad and Jennifer Clark are donating their time and talents! Jennifer will bring paint sample strips to the next Leadership Team meeting so that a choice can be made. The paint will cost between six hundred and one thousand dollars, depending upon our choice. This work will be done during the winter months. (Thank you to the Clarks for their stewardship!)

Kathy with nurturing reported that our church Christmas party is Saturday, December 6th at 2pm at Martino's in Vermilion. Sign up is available with three menu choices of beef, fish, or chicken. Kathy also noted that postage has increased and also food items needed for St. Elizabeth's meals and our church social time celebrations

ie. New membership and consecration Sundays

These expenses support our church's goal to effectively interact with our homebound and continue community outreach.

Judy, worship chair, advised that the first week of Advent will be November 30th and hanging of the Greens will be on November 29th at 10am. Poinsettias from PineHaven are ten dollars each and order forms are in the pews.

Chris with Raise Right is taking Christmas gift card orders. Also, Chris is working with Pastor and others on the website. This is another way that our church goal to emphasis community outreach is being accomplished.

Polly with Missions reported that currently we are collecting socks for St. Elizabeth with a goal of one hundred. Next mission's project will be collection of hats and mittens plus canned goods for Second Harvest. (Last year our altar was adorned with a tower of canned goods! Thank all for their giving!) Polly asked that our youth write a prayer or words of encouragement to put with the hats and mittens before they are distributed.

Jill, SPRC chair, reported that she had spoken with Colleen, our custodian, regarding cleaning of the pews. Colleen does do a deep vacuum cleaning, but the dusty look is due to faded pews. After the sanctuary ceiling is painted, a professional company will be contacted for further cleaning.

Aleah, our lay leader and youth education coordinator, reported that the craft show vendors enjoyed themselves and sixteen of the twenty-one vendors wish to return. (Your Leadership team applauded Aleah for completing a successful craft show! She indicated that this was her very first one. Super job!!) Aleah reported that the youth group evacuation drill went well and that she and Pastor Joe had attended a safe house of worship training, too. (As you have been informed, our church doors are locked shortly after 10:30am on Sunday. Ring the bell, if you arrive late. Another way we wish to engage in safe practices.) Aleah reported on upcoming Amherst Main Street event (see Aleah's information within this newsletter). Another way to emphasis community outreach church goal. Aleah said that Main Street Amherst is compiling welcome packets for new residents. The leadership team decided to include our brochure, hall rental flyer, and clothing shed flyer within the packets.

Jennifer Clark announced that another photo day is scheduled for Sunday, December 14th after worship service. (These photos are for the church directory which is being updated. (Please look at the directory on the table outside the sanctuary and make any additions/corrections needed. If you are unable to attend church, you will be contacted to update/confirm your information. We will continue to work on the directory into 2026 to provide as much accuracy as possible. Thank you, Jennifer, for your donation of photographic skills. Much appreciated!

Next Leadership Team meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 8 at 11am. All are welcome to attend! A thank you to Jennifer and Diane and Doug and Jay for attending our

November meeting and for their valuable contributions!

In closing, may the Spirit of the Season be within your hearts, minds, and souls! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Hugs from a social distance,

Jean Rounds

Poinsettia orders due	December 1 st
Nurturing Committee	December 4 th 10:30AM
Christmas Dinner at Martino's	December 6 th 2:00PM
Communion Sunday	December 7 th
Second Sunday of Advent	December 7 th
Leadership team meeting	December 8 th 11:00AM
Third Sunday of Advent	December 14 th
Cookies with Santa	December 14 th after worship service
St. Elizabeth meal prep	December 19 th at 2:30PM
Fourth Sunday of Advent	December 21 st
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	December 24 th 4:00PM
Christmas Day	December 25 th
AUMC practices safe sanctuary and we do lock our doors for Sunday Service at 10:40AM. If you are running behind please ring the door bell and we will let you in.	
CALL IN NUMBER for CHURCH SERVICE (440) 462-2193 Or watch us on Zoom at amherstchurches.org	



If there is a Sunday with severe weather please be advised that the church will always be open for service. But if you do not feel comfortable driving in bad weather we ask that you stay home and watch on Zoom.

Tuesday – 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Wednesday 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Office phone: (440)988-8330
Pastor Joe: (440)724-2433

Office will be closed Christmas Eve and Christmas day. Office will be open December 22nd and 23rd from 9:00am to 12:30PM



God blesses us daily with answered prayers. If you have a situation that could use a prayer, we are here for you. Please contact Pastor Joe or Judy Gutman



Susan Kasper Dec 5th Keith Butler Dec 6th

Sandi Kastl Dec 16th Cal Clark Dec 21st

Jared Holbrook Dec 30th Walter Waitt Dec 30th



Picture retake day for the photo directory will be Sunday, December 14th after worship service. Signup sheet will be located on the bulletin board by the Dr. Elsie room! With our new photo directory coming soon, we want to ensure that all your information is correct. Please look at our current directory out on the table in the Narthex and if any changes need to be made please fill out a blue church directory form. Thank you for your help!



Join us on Sunday, December 14th after worship service for Cookies with Santa. We will have cookies, coffee and cocoa. Crafts for the kids & you can take your picture with Santa! All are welcome to attend!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the socks donated to St. Elizabeth. Socks we delivered on November 21st along with our monthly meal delivery. St. Elizabeth shelters 50 homeless men nightly and your contributions are greatly appreciated. Our current missions are collecting hats and mittens! Donations will be placed on our hat and mittens tree until they are delivered. This is a long-standing tradition at AUMC and gifts stay locally. Thank you in advance for your help. We will also be collecting canned foods to be taken to Second Harvest food bank.

Veteran's Day Service

Not just today, but every single day, Thank you Veterans!



Thank you to all those who helped with the Craft Show and Bake sale! We raised \$846.75 from the both bake sale and vendor table rentals that will greatly benefit our church. Amherst UMC also received great praise for be gracious vendor and wish to return next year. We also had a lot of foot traffic from member of the community coming in and seeing our church and even gained 20 more followers on Facebook.



Would you like to help your church without committing too much time? There are openings on several committees: Trustees, scholarship, mission, outreach - as little time as an hour a month. If interested, ask anyone on Leadership Team.

The Christmas Cross

**From Bethlehem's manger
to Calvary's hill, His
purpose Clear, His Love for
us still, the connection
strong, from birth to cross,
Redemption's gift, our
gain, not loss. So as we
celebrate this Christmas
night, let's remember the
gift of purest light, the
birth of Christ, his
sacrifice true, bringing
hope and salvation to me
and you.**



AUMC 2026 Events

Please note the scheduled dates for your 2026 Fun with Fellowship events, with some dates and times still pending confirmation.

Amherst Churches Tour- TBA

Easter egg Hunt- March 29, 2026 (Palm Sunday)

Rummage Sale- May 15, 2026 9am to 3pm & May
16, 2026 9am to noon

Amherst Memorial Day Parade- May 25, 2026 time
TBA

June Movie Night- TBA

The Ark Encounter Trip- June 25-27, 2026

Vacation Bible Study- TBA

August Movie Night- TBA

National Back to Church Sunday (Ice Cream Social)
- September 20, 2026

Trunk or Treat- TBA

Fall Craft Show- TBA

Miracle on Main Street Parade- December 4, 2026

Cookies with Santa- December 13, 2026

advent & christmas wordsearch

U O N N Y R A M H E P R R B Y O J V D H L C Y L
S R C S J B Q X E E Z N O U A B X H R X C Y S X
J U B D M P T C P A F X J Q Q O K E Z I U S V L
U D S R A T O J S Y L B P D I F P T I S P B L E
L A C E M W A Y O B L H D N V E H M L E G I Y I
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frankincense
innkeeper
Gabriel
Coming
Jesus
gold

antiphons
shepherds
Advent
donkey
kings
lamb

bethlehem
Immanuel
angels
Josphe
myrrh
Mary

Christmas
candles
carols
stable
peace
joy