

December 2025

The Guide

*We embrace all
as we journey
the way of Jesus*



CHRIST
CHURCH UCC

15 South Ft. Thomas Ave.
Ft. Thomas KY 41075
Phone: 859-441-2565
Fax: 859-441-3117

office@christchurchft.org
www.christchurchft.org
facebook.com/christchurchuccft
Twitter@ChristChurch_FT

Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday
9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Closed on Fridays

Worship Schedule:

Check calendar on back for
worship, study groups, and
Youth & Children's Ministry

Christ Church Staff:

Rev. Diane Vego
Interim Pastor

Madeline Queen
Director of Christian Education

Max Gise
Worship Coordinator

Talia Zoll
Worship Coordinator

Danny Manning
Choir Director

Barb Walkenhorst Derby
Bookkeeper

Michele Wright,
Communications Director

Jeff Searcy
Custodian



Photo by Michele Wright

Slow Down and Be Still

Greetings! By the time you receive this newsletter, Advent will be well underway. On November 23, we said goodbye to one church calendar year and — one week later — we are saying hello to another. It's hard to believe!

"Advent" marks the time of preparation for the coming of Christ. As always, we will have four weeks to "prepare him room." This is a challenge because so many of us get caught up in the decorations, the meal preparations and the shopping that we forget what is really essential at this time of year. Can we *all* slow down at this time of year? Can we *all* sit still a few minutes each day or, at the very least, a few minutes each week?

Many of us think we are simply reviewing history in our preparations and our celebrations, but we are not. We are embarking on some-

thing radically new because this year was not like the year prior. In 2025, Jesus can and will be born in us anew — that is, if we allow him.

The problem is, we all have worries and deep concerns that keep us from being present to this mystery as it unfolds. Those worries consume us. Furthermore, those deep concerns about our community, our nation, and our world distract us from the message that Christ has to offer.

What I recommend is this: carve out a little time, preferably each day, to set a spell with God in order to allow God to speak to you. Light a candle perhaps, or burn some incense. And after you read the scripture passage for the week, and answer a question or two, then simply "be" with the Holy Spirit and see what happens. Just wait and see!

Continued on next page

Nov. Attendance

	In Person	Online
11/2/25	86	N/A
11/9/25	80	N/A
11/16/25	72	N/A
11/23/25	84	N/A
11/30/25	83	N/A



Prayer Requests

Covenant Cluster Prayer Partner:
Washington UCC, Cincinnati, OH

Jeff McDonald, Nancy Castleman, Fred Nippert, The family of Maxine Noble, Makayla, Jamie & Kelly Greenwalt, Mike Bizzarro, Dave Jager, Chris P., Bènè, Mike & Laura Randall, Shane, Dave, Tim, Karen, Jan Kennedy, Allen, Tammy Weidinger, Jim Rechten Jr., Carol Manning, Danny Manning, Jana Guido, Nelly, Carol Blair, Tony Asher, Shelley, Steve McCall, Jackson Vanderpool, Warren Witt, Jason Pierce, Donna Hoffman, Tim Kennedy, Barbara Walkenhorst-Derby, Mark Helminiak, Donna Prues and family, Tom Raney, General Fernbach, Gordon Braun, Karma Klingenberg, Marcia & David Hosea, Jeff K., Richard Lloyd, Katie Leftin, Barb Stinnett, Amber, Amirah, Tim, Suzanne Jones, Kelsey Morgan, Michael, Tina Weitkamp, Naomi Carroll, Michael

(Underlining indicates anonymity)

If you would like to make a change, please contact the office.
(859) 441-2565



Please Join Us!

From Danny Manning,
Choir Director

Greetings! I am so happy to be at Christ Church and very excited about the future. As we look toward 2026, I would love to see an increase in our choir membership. If you have any singing experience or just want to give it a try, we rehearse from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. every Sunday. We also have a brief review before every service at 10 a.m. **All are welcome!**

Continued from front page

The mystery of this season is such that when we least expect it, Christmas just happens to us as we are awakened to the fact that "God is with us." It may not happen right on Christmas Eve. It might come before or after, but our willingness to wait and to stay open will be the very preparation we need to welcome the mystery that is certainly beyond all comprehension.

This season, I will be turning to my colleague, Erin Wathen, and her advent study on fearlessness and strength entitled, [Calling All Angels](#). In the pages of her study, Erin is inviting us to "Fear Not" as she summons the messages of the Angels we all know and love!

Please join me this Advent with prayer-filled minds and hearts as we remain open to something brand new. God will speak to us! God is still speaking, but we must be ready to receive the message so that we can proclaim the Good News with



Christmas Walk

On December 7, from 4-7 p.m., is the citywide Christmas Walk. It is always a fun night for our church as we provide music, serve barbecue, hot chocolate, and greet friends and neighbors in our beautifully decorated church. As you would expect, it takes a team of folks to set up, clean up, make barbecue, serve the food and beverages, and greet folks. We would love for you to join in the fun.

Please contact:

Jean Braun or Linda Gracey.

joyous and fervent hearts.

So, let go of your fears and your worries and trust. God will do something marvelous in your life, and you won't want to miss it!

Friends, in addition to our regular services at Advent and on Christmas Eve, we will have a **Blue Christmas on the 21 at 4 p.m.**

This service is meant for those who may be struggling with this season because of grief, loss, sickness, or discomfort, but everyone is welcome!

The entire staff and I wish you and your families a prayer-filled Advent and a joyous Christmas — ones that may open the doors of your heart in ways that have never happened before. Merry Christmas, Christ Church!

Peace be with you!

Pastor Diane Vego

Christian Education Update

From Madeline Queen

Director of Christian Education

November has been a meaningful month in Children's Ministry as we explored the story of Joseph. Each week, the kids learned how Joseph stayed faithful through difficult moments and how God used his courage, patience, and forgiveness for good. We talked about big themes—trusting God, making wise choices, and showing kindness even when it's hard—and the kids had great questions and insights!

We also took time to celebrate Thanksgiving together. The children shared things they are grateful for, and it was such a joy to hear their heartfelt answers—family, friends, pets, church, and of course, plenty of food! It was a sweet reminder of how blessed we are as a community.

Looking ahead to December:

Mark your calendars!

● **Saturday, December 7:**

PJ & Gingerbread House Day! Kids are invited to come cozy and ready for creativity as we build gingerbread houses together.

● **Saturday, December 14:**

No-Prep Christmas Pageant!

A relaxed, joy-filled morning where every child has a part waiting for them—just show up and join the story.



We're excited for the Advent season and all the wonderful ways we'll continue to grow, learn, and worship together!

Please contact Miss Madeline if you are interested in helping!

Mission Team Update

From Melissa Cox

As 2025 comes to a close, the Mission Team will be evaluating any remaining needs to be met from organizations we regularly support as well as any emergency requests.

Our main Christmas-related project, the sponsorship of families served by Washington UCC, is well underway. All gift tags were taken from the Giving Tree on the first Sunday the tree appeared!

Thank you to everyone who selected a tag and is shopping for the children. **Please remember to return all items, unwrapped, to the conference room no later than December 7** (you are welcome to drop off earlier).

There is a remaining opportunity to serve at Ronald McDonald



House on December 15. You should have received an email message with sign up details.

Finally, a big thank you to all who volunteered to work with our crew on Saturday, November 15 for Prepare Affair. Our hardworking team raked leaves, cleaned gutters, and cut tree limbs for four

homeowners to help them stay safely in their homes this winter. We had glorious weather and a delicious lunch prepared by Judy Land and Barb Korpik, which was greatly appreciated.

We wish everyone a joyous Christmas.



Recycling Electronics

Don't forget about our electronics recycling bin furnished by Reboot that is on the Audubon side of the church. You can put computers, monitors, printers, phones, computer accessories, small electronics, power cords, unused ink and toner, and lots of other electronics in the bin as long as it fits in the slot.

If you have any questions, please go to rebootrecyclers.com.



Schedules for December

Liturgists

December 7	Carolyn Tyler
December 14	Scott Turner
December 21	Nancy Barre
December 24	Bert Bathiany
December 28	Jean Braun

Deacons

December 7	Marie Cunningham
December 14	Greg Vogel
December 21	Jean Braun
December 24	TBD
December 28	Marie Cunningham

Ushers

December 7	Marie Cunningham Audrey Bernhard Mike Evans Marcia Storm
December 14	Greg Vogel Debbie Paillette Thierry Paillette Andy Borah
December 21	Jean Braun Ellen Turner Scott Turner Jay Wainscott
December 24	TBD
Christmas Eve	
December 28	Marie Cunningham Pattie Miller Nancy Pinguely Jeff Pinguely

Update on Remodeling

From Linda Gracey

Have you walked around the outside of the church and checked the foundation? Have you toured Hoffman Hall and the kitchen? If not, you are in for a treat! You will be amazed at how clean everything looks.

Prior to the foundation work, new ledges at the top of the steps on Audubon Street were built by Ramiro Solano and Barry Petracco. The Ramirez Brothers painted the foundation, Hoffman Hall, and the kitchen using colors chosen by Shari (Witte) Thompson, an interior designer.

Chair decisions, window treatments, baseboards, etc. still need to be made but an incredible amount of work has been completed within a month thanks to members of our congregation: Nancy Hunter collected all the bids and communicated with the Ramirez Brothers. Bert Bathiany single handily painted the hallway from the Narthex to the hall. Barry is our wonderful expert and leader in all construction advice and help. The new tread covering the steps from the elevator to Hoffman Hall will be laid soon.

Once the hall is finished, additional work will be completed by our members in other areas of the church in 2026.

We are continuing to collect donations for these projects and appreciate all that you give in addition to your Stewardship Giving. Thank you!





Church Council Meeting Notes

November 24, 2025

In Attendance:

Pastor Diane, Snezana Tenhundfeld, Bert Bathiany, Beckie Borah, Linda Gracey, Jen Korpik, Jane Petracco, Marcia Storm, Greg Vogel, Josh Woodward

• ***Gathering/Centering Prayer***

• ***Approval of Minutes***

Josh made a motion to approve the minutes from October 27
Greg seconded.

Minutes approved

• ***Financial Report***

- We are \$16,000 down in giving but are hopeful we can make up some of the difference with end of year giving.
- Please send in your pledges for next year.
- If you are interested in automatic withdrawal, please see Steve McAllister.
- We talked about renting out parts of the church, and are looking into how much to charge, how to advertise, and where. If you are interested in serving on a committee to discuss this, please let us know.
- Josh made a motion to approve the Financial Report, Snezana seconded. **Report approved.**

• ***Pastor's Report***

- Pastor Diane and Beckie reported they got some great ideas from the book, "Thriving Churches" after they attended a retreat

by the authors of the book in Marysville, OH. The following are some of their take-away points.

Thriving Churches:

- Are Rooted in Scripture
 - Know Their Mission and Vision
 - Understand Community and (when members need to) Rest and Recharge
 - Reject Fear Mentality
 - Are Collaborative
 - Are Generous
 - Are Flexible
 - Are Willing to Take Risks
 - Are Forward Thinkers
 - Refuse to be Stagnant
- Diane read some of the responses from the Church Café that was held Sunday, Nov. 16 and was pleased with the turnout. More to come.
 - **We are still in need of another council member for Christian Education.** Please let Diane or any council member know if you are interested.
 - We are going to be collecting **Instant Mashed Potatoes** this year for the Brighton Center until Dec. 1.
 - Members of the Transition Team so far:
 - Larry Stinson
 - Nancy Pingley
 - Donna Hoffman
 - The Youth Group of Crystal Lake UCC from Crystal Lake, IL would like to come and lead worship on April 19 and will need a place to sleep on the 18 and 19. They

have been here before (2013, 2017). The council agreed we would like to host them again.

- We are going to have a **Blue Christmas program on the evening of Sunday, December 21** to help those grieving this holiday season. More details to follow.

• ***Fellowship/Hospitality Report***

- We are having a Diaper Drive for the Randalls (twin girls expected in early Dec.)
- The Ft. Thomas Holiday Walk will be Dec. 7. Volunteers needed.

• ***Building and Grounds***

- Most of the painting is completed and looks great!! Check out the kitchen and Hoffman Hall if you haven't already.
- The painters did a great job with the outside painting as well.
- We are looking into window treatments and chairs to purchase for Hoffman Hall.

• ***Nominating Committee***

- Those going off Council will form a committee for next year.
- The next Council meeting will be **December 14, after church, if needed.**

• ***Meeting concluded with prayer.***

Are You Having a Blue Christmas?

We will have a **Blue Christmas service on Dec. 21 at 4 p.m.** This is for those who may be struggling this season because of grief, sickness, etc., but everyone is welcome!



End of Year Donations

From Steve McAllister

Just a reminder. In order to have your donation included in your end of year Giving Statement, it **must be received in the church no later than December 31.** Even if the donation is dated in 2025 it will not make your tax statement unless we have it in the church by end of year.



Diapers! Diapers! Diapers!

Josh and Erin Vogel are having a baby in March! Excited grandparents are Ramel and Greg Vogel. Please support this mission by filling the diaper bin in the Narthex with diapers and wipes.



Music Highlights!

From the Christ Church Music Team

Throughout the coming weeks, we'll be sharing a wide range of Advent and Christmas music—everything from beloved traditional hymns to fresh, contemporary seasonal favorites. You'll hear performances from our talented Christ Church Choir and other members, along with special guests and featured soloists who will help make this season truly shine.

And don't forget, the Children's Christmas Pageant, which will be on December 14, is just around the corner. It is always a highlight filled with wonder, joy, and heart-warming moments.

We look forward to making unforgettable memories with you and celebrating the hope, warmth, and beauty of Advent together!

Electronic Giving Option

From Steve McAllister

For the past 12 years Christ Church has offered a secure electronic transfer giving option through Vanco, an Automated Clearing House company that the UCC established as an easy way for member churches to provide electronic giving.

Contributions are debited automatically from your checking or savings account. Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. Your donation can be changed at any time if your personal financial situation changes.

If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from

attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis. You have the option to give weekly, semi-monthly or monthly.

An authorization form and a "Frequently Asked Questions" flyer are available in the church office. Just complete the form, put it in an envelope addressed to me, and give it to Michele in the office or send it to Steve McAllister

Also, Vanco now has a link on the Church website that allows individuals to setup their electronic giving themselves. Just click on the giving tab, setup your account and follow the directions to complete your donation setup. You have to setup an account in order to do a recurring payment.

You can send questions to Steve McAllister

Renting Hoffman Hall

The Bathianys are the first renters in the newly painted Hoffman Hall. It was a Thanksgiving success with their large family. The kids had a fun time on the

stage with a karaoke machine. Check Dee out in her apron! If you or someone you know is interested in renting it, please contact the office for information.



Free Art

Is anyone interested in the large canvass that has been hanging in Hoffman Hall? It was reproduced by Howard Strom from a wood engraving by Fritz Eichenberg showing a contemporary version of the Last Supper. Eichenberg was a Jewish man who escaped Nazi Germany with his family and became a Quaker. Eichenberg had a prolific career as a book illustrator and as a long-time contributor to *The Nation*. He was also head of the art department at the University of Rhode Island.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Carole Lukjan
Lauren Thomas
Ryan Vogel
Nancy Hunter
Barb Stinnett
Julie Mai
Lela Bach
Susan Houben
Linda Gracey
Bill Hitch
Tom Pendery
Max Gise
Marcia Storm
Jeanne Karrick
Snezana Tenhunfeld

David Pendery
Nancy Witte
Carolyn Watts
Christi Stevenson
Scott Turner
Richard Pendery
Kevin Siple

Robert & Nancy Witte
Tom & Amy Pendery
Michael & Carolyn Cook
Mike & Nancy Evans
Cynthia & Bob Blau
Jeff & Cherie Draper
Toni & Mark Sheffer



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10 am – Bloom Homeschool	2 10 am–Coffee with Pastor Diane 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous	3 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group	4 12 pm – Study Group	5	6
7 8:30 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children's Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship 4-7 pm–Christmas Walk	8 7 pm – Finance Meeting	9 10 am–Coffee with Pastor Diane 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous	10 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group	11 12 pm – Study Group	12	13
14 8:30 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children's Christmas Pageant 10:30 am–Worship 11:30 am–Mission Team	15 7 pm – Survivors of Suicide	16 10 am–Coffee with Pastor Diane 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous	17 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group	18 12 pm – Study Group 7 pm– Doll Group	19	20
21 8:30 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children's Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship	22	23 10 am–Coffee with Pastor Diane 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous	24 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group 10 pm–Christmas Eve Service	25 OFFICE CLOSED Christmas	26	27
28 8:30 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children's Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship	29 OFFICE CLOSED Staff working from home	30 OFFICE CLOSED Staff working from home 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous	31 OFFICE CLOSED Staff working from home NO Small Group 7 pm– AA Group	OFFICE CLOSED New Year's Day		