

The Acorn

December 2025/January 2026



Monthly publication of Oak Chapel United Methodist Church
4203 West Old Lincoln Way • Wooster, OH 44691
330-264-2537 • www.oakchapelumc.com

When It Comes to Christmas, the Simpler the Better

Another Christmas season has begun, and the unmistakable sights, sounds, and smells of this Yuletide are in the air, including the sweet fragrance of glass candy wafting through the halls of Oak Chapel. All around our community, carols are playing on radio stations and department store loudspeakers, while decorations are appearing in churches, storefronts, and city squares.

As Andy Williams once crooned in his 1963 hit song, “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” My mother would play that festive tune over and over again on our Hi-Fi Stereo, and it has certainly withstood the test of time. However, would it be prudent for us to ask, “Is it really the most wonderful time of the year,” and if not what steps can we take to make it that way?

Instead of a commercial windfall, what could we do to make Christmas simpler and more sacred? This is obviously not a new concept. Conversations about the true meaning of Christmas have taken place for as long as I can remember. The only trouble with those conversations is that they seldom lead to change. Shopping and spending continue to escalate, and all too often people are less-than-courteous, sometimes even hostile, to one another this time of year.

I wonder if we might focus on the light of the Advent candles — Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and ultimately Christ our Savior. Christmas is a season of illumination and inspiration, not aggravation and altercation. Christmas is a time to relax and reflect on God’s many blessings, instead of fixating on our ever-growing list of things to do and buy.

How great would it be if we could enter 2026 with happiness and optimism? How wonderful would it be if we could envision a world in which conflict subsides and peace prevails? How terrific would it be if we finally, truly committed ourselves to loving our neighbor and even our enemy? How amazing would it be if, once-and-for-all, we put Christ front and center in our lives, not just during Christmas, but the whole year through?



Your initial reaction to this might be, “Yeah, right! Dream on!” My response to that would be that very often in life we have to dream it before

we do it. Allow yourselves to dream and let God guide you to words and actions that will make this Christmas season more joyful and this world more serene so that we might truly bring honor and glory to the Mighty Messiah’s Name.

The Gospel of Luke (2:13-14) summarizes the promise of our Savior’s birth with this encouraging passage: “ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Because of Jesus Christ, we have Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and so much more.

My hope for all of you is that you will embrace His promise and truly enjoy a Blessed



and a Happy, Holy New Year.

Pastor John

To view our CALENDAR, please visit
our website—oakchapelumc.com

Opportunities During Advent

December 2, 6:30—A Christmas Carol—
Wooster UMC, see page 3

December 13, 1:30—Hand Bell Concert—
Lincoln Way Vineyards, see page 3

December 20, 1:30—Burning River Brass—
Wooster UMC

December 21, 2:00—Hymn Sing—
Oak Chapel UMC, see page 3

December 24, 7:00—Worship—
Oak Chapel UMC



United Women in Faith

The UWF have had a busy month. The annual candy making has been a huge success

and we still have some for sale. Please don your salesperson's hat and Sell! Sell! Sell! Great gifts, stocking stuffers and of course, some for yourself.

The Fellowship carry-in lunches resume in January. Reminder that this event is on the 3rd Sunday of January, February and March. There's always plenty to eat and some to share. Bring your own tableware and join us. This is a good time to invite a guest. They can sample all the tasty foods and have an opportunity to see what a friendly church Oak Chapel UMC is.

The Craft Fair and Kitchen Corner was a success. We had a nice number of visitors and neighbors visiting, eating and shopping.

On November 7, UWF and Pastor John visited Wayne County Care Center where we assisted six residents in making a craft for their room doors. They had a good time (so did we) and enjoyed visiting with us and each other.

On November 14 we served a pasta dinner for Pastor John's year-end Volleyball Banquet.

We are still selling RADA knives which make great holiday gifts. Go to our website front page, oakchapelumc.com to find the link. See Elizabeth Feldman for assistance if you have trouble ordering online. There are catalogs in the Narthex.



Are you missing a coat? Jacket? Umbrella? Are you unaware you are missing any of these things? Check out the coat cubby in the Narthex. The rack and shelves are full of orphaned items. And also check in the kitchen.

Retirees Breakfast—Tuesday December 2. Join us at Buehler's Town Market at 8:30 a.m. for great food and great conversation. No agenda, just a good time to be together.

ACORN SOCIETY

In October, The Acorn Society met at The Wild Fox Coffee Shop and Cafe in Kidron. The food was great, the laughs and conversations plentiful. Our outing for November was at the Lyn-Way restaurant in Ashland. We had 15 women join us.

The December 10 outing will be at Troutman Winery where we'll have a tea-type luncheon. A small gift exchange (\$5) will no doubt bring some laughs. Wear your best tea party finery, if you wish, for added fun. A sign-up sheet will be in the narthex soon. We will need a headcount so we know how much food to prepare. So if you're bringing guests, please note how many. There will be a \$10 fee for each guest.

Where would you like to go? We are on the lookout for new and exciting places.



The Choseness Bible Study

group meets on Sunday morning at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall. The Bible is the sole source for the study.

Our Monday morning Bible Study group meets every Monday at 9:30 a.m. All are welcome as we continue our study of Deuteronomy. It provides valuable insight into Old Testament laws, customs, and spiritual guidance.

Men's Bible Study

Rich Boyer continues to host a Bible Study for men based on Mark Henry's book, *The Man Code*, on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at his home. (3595 Kister Road). A light dinner will be served followed by the study. If you would like to attend, please contact Cyndi at 330-641-6789.

An Invitation to Join Us

If you have been worshipping with us recently and would like to enter into membership at Oak Chapel, we would be honored and blessed to have you join our congregation. Just let Pastor John know.

OAK CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

presents
The

LIGHT WITHIN US

A Holiday Hymn Sing

DECEMBER 21, 2025

4203 W. OLD LINCOLN WAY, WOOSTER

2pm Refreshments to follow



Feed My Sheep

Oak Chapel continues to collect food on the first Sunday of each month as we come to the Lord's table. Food collected will help support our in-house food pantry. Any surplus items will be shared with People to People Ministries.

Thanks to everyone for the wonderful support of our food pantry! It is serving the community every single day! How exciting! As a reminder, we cannot accept anything that is not in tamper-resistant packaging. Nor can we take perishable foods. Please donate only SHELF STABLE items. If you like canned black beans, rice and/or carrots, please shop in our pantry after worship or anytime!

Since establishing our pantry in 2019, we have had the opportunity to provide basic food items for hundreds of people in and around our community. Those who have come in search of food are overflowing with gratitude. Your support of the pantry is vital so that we can continue to answer Christ's call to "Feed the Hungry."

Something to Remember This Winter!

(To the tune of Three Blind Mice)

Wipe your feet, Wipe your feet

Wipe them once again

Wipe them once again

When you leave the snow and the ice outdoors,

You won't make puddles all over the floors.

The Custodian once again implores,

Please Wipe Your Feet!

From our Custodian, Miriam Zech



Art and Soul will meet on Monday, December 1 at 7 p.m. We will fold ribbon or paper strips into stars. If you enjoy a particular craft at home, would you be willing to teach us? Think you can't lead? Of course you can. And we want to learn a craft from YOU! We will meet again on January 5.

The Christmas Carol

The Wooster Music Club is hosting a holiday program featuring a dramatic reading of "The Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens.

The event will take place at 6:30 p.m.

December 2 at Wooster United Methodist Church, 243 N. Market St. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m., and attendees are asked to enter through the glass doors at the rear of the church.

The evening will begin with seasonal music performed by club members and friends, followed by the reading by Richard Figge, a professor emeritus at The College of Wooster. A reception with holiday refreshments will follow the performance.

Christmas Benefit Handbell Concert

Saturday, December 13 at 1:30 p.m.

Lincoln Way Vineyards—

9050 West Old Lincoln Way, Wooster

Grace Ringers, Singers and Friends

Church of the Cross UMC

Donations will benefit West View Healthy Living Benevolent Fund and the Caring Closet in Smithville. Food is available Noon to 8 p.m. No reservation needed.

Membership Care Our Team sent Thanksgiving cards and will be sending Christmas cards to our shut-ins. We invite the congregation to join us in sending cards also. The names and addresses of the shut-ins are available in the Church Office.

Our Daily Bread

Copies of *Our Daily Bread* devotional books are in the Narthex. Feel free to pick one up at no charge.

Opportunities for Service at Oak Chapel

1. Counters' Team
2. Greeters for November
3. Librarian

If you would like to volunteer, see Elizabeth.

1. Currently we have four great people on our *Counting Team*. Six would be ideal. These faithful four meet in teams of two and count the offering after each worship service. This task takes about a half hour. Each team counts two Sundays in a row, and trade off when one has to be gone. See Elizabeth if you would like to join our team.

Winter Weather Emergency Provisions

Blankets/sleeping bags
Warm clothing, gloves, hats, scarves
Water (1 gallon per day per person for 3 days)
Non-perishable foods
Manual can opener
Candles/matches
Gas or charcoal grill (OUTDOOR use only)
Flashlight, extra batteries
Trash bags,
Bucket: use one for trash, extra for commode
Reading material, cards, board games; (not an emergency but helpful :)

Emergency Automobile Provisions

Blankets	Gloves
Coats	Hats and Scarves
Snacks	Water
Flares	Flashlight
Cat litter	Shovel

Phone Charger
Whistle (You all got one in Church on 11.16!)

Oak Chapel UWF has Layettes available for you to share with new mothers in our community. Pick one up in the room across from the office and sign the appropriate list. Supply donations are also appreciated.

Acorn Submissions

The next issue is **February 2026**. Deadline is **January 15**.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Joanne Jolliff
- Janice Kaser
- 7 Cyndi Boyer
- 9 Alice Giffin
- 10 Jen Moser
- 14 Caroline Lilburn
- 24 Alison Flanagan
- Carol Gossage



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Cindy and Stuart Mykrantz

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Jennifer Adair
- 5 Cheryl Rastetter
- 6 Cindy Myrantz
- 9 Susan Mykrantz
- Mark Ritchey
- 11 Shannan Jones
- Wendy Rife
- 12 Darrell Moser
- 17 Marie Houghton
- 21 Dave Zech
- 24 Simon Kitchen
- 26 Carol Gasser
- 27 Nancy Miller
- 28 Natalie Bunt

Wish your neighbors a Happy day!

This information comes from our membership database. Please contact the church office if there are any corrections or additions.

Jingly Buckets

On the 3rd Sunday of each month we will pass the buckets and collect all those pesky, heavy, noisy coins weighing you down! (We will gladly accept "quiet" money, too.) The December and January collection will go to Operation Christmas Child 2026.

The Days for Girls

This Team will meet December 11 and 25 at 2:00 p.m. in the room directly across from the church office. We would love to have new participants in this outreach ministry to girls in underdeveloped countries. We also welcome monetary donations to help cover the cost of materials and shipping. Join us the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 2 p.m.

The Advent Wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Lighting its candles is a common practice on the four Sundays leading to Christmas.

Oak Chapel uses three blue and one pink candle around the wreath with one white candle in the center.

The wreath, the candles and the colors all have symbolic significance. Here are just a few of the many and various interpretations:

- The circular green wreath symbolizes the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. Green represents eternal life.
- The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents one thousand years. They total 4,000 years — the time from Adam and Eve until the birth of Christ.
- Blue is a symbol of royalty and also the night sky and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.
- The first blue candle signifies Hope.
- The second blue candle stands for Peace.
- The pink candle for the third Sunday symbolizes Joy and signifies the halfway point of Advent.
- The final blue candle is for Love.
- The large white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ the Savior — “the light of the world.”

The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people — “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:5, NRSV)

January 6 marks the final celebratory day of the Christian holiday season! Christians believe that the 12 days of Christmas mark the amount of time it took after the birth of Jesus, for the magi, or wise men, to travel to Bethlehem for the Epiphany when they recognized him as the son of God.

Gifts that Do Not Cost a Cent

The Gift of Listening—but you must really listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response.

Just listen!

The Gift of a Compliment—a simple and sincere, “You look great in red.” “You did a super job!” can make someone's day.

The Gift of a Favor—every day, go out of your way to do something kind.

Love is a gift we can give every day!



Colors of Christmas

A fun tradition at Oak Chapel is to wear the colors of Christmas to worship during Advent.

- ♥ November 30: First Sunday of Advent
- ♥ December 7: Second Sunday of Advent
- ♥ December 14: Third Sunday of Advent
- ♥ December 21: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- ♥ December 24: Christmas Eve—7:00—white
- ♥ December 28: Gold



Willing servant, Dick Wiley, dons his winter gear to give the church and parsonage lawns one last cut this season. Picture taken October 25!



ACORN Newsletter
 Oak Chapel United Methodist Church
 4203 West Old Lincoln Way
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<http://www.oakchapelumc.com>

2025
December



WE INVITE YOU TO WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Worship	10:30 a.m.

Oak Chapel United Methodist Church

“Serving Christ and Community through Love, Compassion, Fellowship and Caring”

Rev. John Finn Pastor
 Elizabeth Feldman Secretary
 Jen Moser..... Organist and Choir Director
 Miriam ZechCustodian
Church Phone330-264-2537
 Pastor John’s Cell Phone.....330-988-2577

E-mail addresses:

pastor@oakchapelumc.com office@oakchapelumc.com

Visit our website: www.oakchapelumc.com

WE ARE ON FACEBOOK! CHECK US OUT!

CENTRAL VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE
 8800 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44720
 330-499-3972, ext. 202 or email centralvalley@eocumc.com
 Rev. Cara Stultz Costello, District Superintendent
 Megan Myers, Administrative Assistant