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### **BLESSINGS OF THE SEASON**

November 27 began the Season of Advent, a season of waiting, a season of anticipation, a season of preparation through reflection and repentance, as we prepare for the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child.

The church building is decorated with garland and wreaths and a beautiful tree. Advent Candles will be lighted during the services on Sundays and Christmas Eve. The candles represent Prophecy, Preparation, Joy, and Peace. The center candle, the Christ Candle, will be lighted on Christmas Eve.

The sanctuary is filled with many kinds of symbols. It is the season of light, the light of Christ, so on Christmas Eve we will have a service that closes with lighted candles throughout the sanctuary.

During this season, when we reflect upon the mission of Christ in this world, there appears in the sanctuary the Chrismon tree with its many Christian symbols. On the Chrismon tree there are

- mangers, symbolizing the simplicity of the beginning of Jesus' life on earth,
- circles, symbolizing eternal life,
- shepherd's staffs, symbolizing Jesus, the Good Shepherd,
- crosses, symbolizing the ultimate mission of Jesus, that of giving his life for our salvation,
- the Greek symbols for *alpha* and *omega*, symbolizing that Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end of everything,
- the dove, representing the Holy Spirit, the Comforter,
- and many more.

The Advent Wreath is prominently located on the chancel. Upon it there rests five candles, three blue, one pink, and one white. These candles represent Prophecy, Preparation, Joy, and Peace. The center white candle is the Christ candle. Beginning with the candle of Prophecy, one additional candle will be lighted each Sunday. The Christ candle will be lighted during the Christmas Eve service.

Even as the lights of Advent illuminate our sanctuary, may this be the season in which the Light of the Christ Child who has become our Savior and Lord illuminate our lives with his presence.

*Pastor Louise*

# Church News & Events



*Mission of the Month*

## **December Mission of the Month Christmas Boxes**

**Cookies for the Christmas Boxes** should be labeled “For UUC Christmas Boxes” and put in Loretta’s Room. **Boxes will be distributed on Monday morning, December 5.**

If you were unable to sponsor a family you can help by making a financial donation to offset the cost of additional items for the boxes. Donations labeled “Christmas Boxes” can be turned in at the Church Office .



## **Holiday Luncheon**

*Submitted by Jan Porter*

With the committee's help and Dave's support, I am busy readying everything for the holiday luncheon on Dec. 2nd.

I have been asking for soups and pies in church and with email. With a good response, hopefully, we will be well prepared.

Many are working on mugs to sell, with creative ideas, and thinking of baked goods to donate.

Anyone I have asked to work **before or at or after** the luncheon has been most willing to work.

Gretchen Schulze's beautiful gift certificates are available for those who like to give them to others. They will sell for \$8.00 each: the cost of a bowl of soup, a delicious sandwich roll filled with ham, chicken, or egg salad, beverage, and pie. Committee members and I have been trying to publicize our event

Now, please, everyone ask friends and community members to attend and enjoy our delicious luncheon and good fellowship. Remember that this is UUC's only fundraiser.

## **Cookies for Food Pantry**

The food pantry is requesting cookies for their Christmas boxes. Please notify Laurel Buckwalter if you can contribute. Cookies should be labeled and left in the Church Center. **The deadline is Friday, December 16.**



## **Search Committee Survey**

*Submitted by Dave Porter*

In the coming months, we will work together to begin our search for a permanent pastor. As part of that work, we are asking everyone in the UUC family to complete a few short surveys, to know what you believe and what we need in leadership.

If you would, please take a few minutes to answer the questions in our first survey via this link: <https://forms.gle/TFEgcEfTG3KtDGqV7>. If you would prefer a paper copy, please contact the church office and one can be mailed to you or they will also be available in the church sanctuary and in the Church Center foyer. This link will also be available in UUC this week and in the Google forum.

Thank you for participating.

## **ACC-FFW Plant Pick Up**

If you ordered plants from the Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua-Fund for Women you may pick them up at the Church Center on Monday, December 5 from 12 until 5.



## **Pastor's Benevolence Fund**

The Pastor's Benevolence Fund is for use at the discretion of the Pastor to assist those in need. In the past this had been a regular part of our UUC budget but was eliminated in recent years.

# Church News & Events, cont.

## **Sunday School News**

*Submitted by Mary Perkins*

The youth enthusiastically entered the 2022-2023 church year at our Rally Day Brunch making bookmarks with those who attended the service. The bookmarks featured a space where one could write their favorite past memory at UUC and their hopes for the future of UUC. This year our youth have been meeting for breakfast and fellowship on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 9:30 AM, before worship. Youth breakfasts are open to youth of all ages where they can expect to enjoy food, faith, friendship, and fun. The youth have been busy baking, planting bulbs for the Fund for Women at the Alfred Montessori School, decorating Chrismon ornaments for the tree in the sanctuary and learning of scripture surrounding the concept of what unconditional love means.

*The youth are looking forward to engaging with the congregation for a Family Feud Bible Challenge at our Christmas program on the evening of December 18<sup>th</sup>*

***It has been simply wonderful to be able to come together again to learn about the word of God, share thoughts and have fellowship together.***

## **Adult Bible Study**

*Submitted by Larry Casey*

The adult Bible study has begun a second 5-session video series called "Promised Land." The videos were all shot on location in Israel and aim to study the people and events of the Bible in their geographical, historical, and cultural contexts. We have completed only the first session in this series, so it's not too late to join the group and participate. We meet at 9:30 on Sunday mornings in the King David Room.

Session II, "Wet Feet" (crossing the Jordan) is this Sunday, December 4. We will meet again on December 11 and at that time decide which Sundays we will meet around the Holidays.

## **Welcome Rima!**

Rima begins her "official" administrative duties at UUC on December 1, 2022 and has already had an opportunity to learn the ropes. Rima and Peter first came to Alfred in 1991 when Rima was hired as a reference librarian at Herrick Library. Rima's interests, skills, and experiences are many and varied. She will be an outstanding addition to UUC.

From Rima: "Hello! My name is Rima O'Connor and I am the new Administrative Secretary for the Church. Many of you already know me from my work at AU's Herrick Library, and/or the Box of Books Library, and/or Dr. Lillian Ramos' veterinary practice in Hornell. I love books and libraries, and all creatures Great and Small! Oh, yes, and Peter is my husband, in case you are wondering. I hear lots of hymns being practiced at home! I look forward to seeing you (or at least, hearing from you!) and learning all about my new job at the Church."



# Church News & Events, cont.



*All are invited to the  
UUC Christmas Party*

*December 18, 2022*

## **A Festival of Lessons, Carols, & Candlelight**

*Submitted by Pastor Louise*



At 5:00pm on Christmas Eve the Union University Church will once again host a Community Christmas Eve service. The service will feature readings from the Scriptures that tell of the prophecy proclaiming the coming of the Messiah and then record the life-changing event of his birth.

Featured will be music that involves congregational singing and gifts of music throughout the evening. The service will close with the lighting of our candles from the Christ candle as we sing *Silent Night*, a beloved hymn of peace written in 1816 by a young priest, Joseph Mohr, in Austria.

### **AND THEN**

We shall gather in worship on Christmas morning to worship the King of kings, the Lord of lords, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, come to earth.

*I Will Light Candles This Christmas*  
By Howard Thurman

*I will light candles this Christmas,  
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,  
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,  
Candles of courage for fears ever present,  
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,  
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,  
Candles of love to inspire all my living,  
Candles that will burn all year long*



## **January Worship Services**

Pastor Louise will be on vacation immediately following worship on December 25. She plans to travel home to spend time with her family. While she is away, the Elders will lead a prayer service in the King David Room on January 1, 2023 to welcome the new year. We are delighted to welcome Bob Donius to fill the pulpit on January 8, 2023.



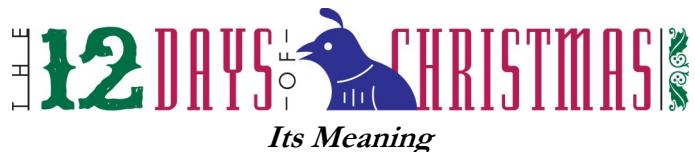
Please contact Sharon Burdick via phone or text if you can help greet or host coffee hour during January, February, or March. Her number is 607.769.8344

# Church News & Events, cont.

## There's a song in the air

Submitted by Pastor Louise

It's that repeating song that some historians believe was first sung in France; others in England. It was first published in 1780 in an English children's book *Austin*. Historically, the song was used as a memory-and-forfeit game, and if one could not remember all of the gifts that went before, you had to forfeit and give your opponent a kiss or a piece of candy. Of course, the song is the *Twelve Days of Christmas*, the twelve days being the days between Christmas and Epiphany when the Magi discovered the Christ child.



The **Partridge in a Pear Tree** is Jesus Christ crucified

The **2 Turtle Doves** are the Old and New Testaments

The **3 French Hens** are Faith, Hope, and Charity (Love), theological virtues

The **4 Calling Birds** are the four gospels and/or the four evangelists

The **5 Golden Rings** are the first 5 books of the Old Testament, Pentateuch

The **6 Geese A-laying** are the six days of creation

The **7 Swans A-swimming** are the seven sacraments

The **8 Maids A-milking** are the eight beatitudes

The **9 Ladies Dancing** are the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

The **10 Lords A-leaping** are the ten commandments

The **11 Pipers Piping** are the 11 faithful disciples

The **12 Drummers drumming** are the 12 points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed

If you gave all of these gifts, because they repeat each day, the number of gifts would total 364, and, as of 2022, according to the [PNC Christmas Price Index](#) would cost \$41,205.58 (swans cost \$1,875 each).

"Break forth and sing for joy" (Psalm 98:4b).



### *A Christmas Blessing*

*God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith;*

*the warmth of Christmas, which is love;*

*the radiance of Christmas, which is purity;*

*the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice;*

*the belief in Christmas, which is truth;*

*the all of Christmas, which is Christ.*

*Wilda English 1916-1997*



1	2	3	4	5
Luke 1:1-4	John 1:1-5, 18	John 1:1-5, 18	Isaiah 9:6-7 & 11:1-5	Micah 5:2-4
6	7	8	9	10
Matthew 1:1-17	Luke 1:5-25	Luke 1:26-38	Luke 1:39-45	Luke 1:46-56
11	12	13	14	15
Luke 1:57-66	Luke 1:67-80	Luke 2:1-7	Matthew 1:18-25	Luke 2:8-21
16	17	18	19	20
Matthew 2:1-12	Luke 2:22-40	Matthew 2:13-15	Matthew 2:16-18	Matthew 2:19-23
21	22	23	24	25
John 1:6-8, 15	John 1:9-14	John 1:16-17	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Revelation 21:1-8

## **December Board Members of the Month**

Deacon.....MaryBeth McDonough (marybethmcdonough1@gmail.com; 607.661.2529)

Elder.....John Buckwalter (buckwajd@gmail.com; 607.968.0540)

BOCE.....

Fellowship.....

Trustee.....Walt Schulze (Schulze@alfred.edu; 607.587.9529)

**Who do you call?** Flowers or lay leading—call an Elder; greeting or coffee hour—call a Deacon;

Sunday school—call BOCE; building issues—call a Trustee.

## **January Board Members of the Month**

Deacon.....Sharon Burdick (vernsharon57@gmail.com; 607.769.8344)

Elder.....Mary Lou Cartledge (cartledge@zoominternet.net; 607.587.8071)

BOCE.....

Fellowship.....Catherine Chambers (icatchambers@icloud.com; 607.221.7869)

Trustee.....Jerry Jusianiec (607.329.5390)

**Who do you call?** Flowers or lay leading—call an Elder; greeting or coffee hour—call a Deacon;

Sunday school—call BOCE; building issues—call a Trustee.

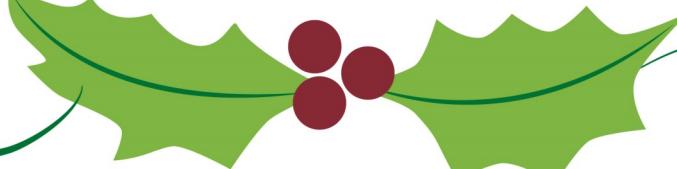
## **Upcoming Sunday Leaders**

If you are not able to serve as scheduled, please switch with someone listed on the charts below and notify the Church Office. If you are unable to find someone to switch with you, please contact either the Elder of the Month or the Deacon of the Month.

Date	Greeter	Worship Leader	Flowers	Coffee	Usher
Dec 4	Riber	Buckwalter	Advent Wreath	Schulze	Jan Porter
Dec 11	Casey	Slack	Advent Wreath	Mindy Smith	Jan Porter
Dec 18	Henry	Porter	Meissner	Casey	Jan Porter
Dec 25	Burdick	Meissner	Christmas	None	Jan Porter
Jan 1		Elders	King David Rm		Jan Porter
Jan 8		Casey	Epiphany		Jan Porter
Jan 15		Cartledge	Acton		Jan Porter
Jan 22		Dewey	Soule		Jan Porter
Jan 29		Sharon Smith	Sharon Smith		Jan Porter

**Greeters and Coffee Hour Hosts are needed for January, February, and March. Please call or text Sharon Burdick if you are willing to help: 607.769.8344**

# December




## Christmas Boxes

*In Whistling in the Dark (HarperOne), Frederick Buechner compares Advent to the moments right before a symphony conductor raises the baton to begin a much-anticipated performance. “You hold your breath to listen,” he writes. “You are aware of the beating of your heart. The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment.”*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 <i>Holiday Luncheon, etc</i>	3
4 <i>Advent 2</i> 10:30 Worship, Communion	5 <i>Christmas</i> box dist., AC- CFFW Plant pick-up	6	7 <i>10:30</i> <i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>planning</i> 12 Book Grp 5:30 AAUW	8 <i>1:00</i> <i>Advisory</i> <i>Committee</i>	9	10
11 <i>Advent 3</i> 10:30 Worship	12	13	14 12 Book Grp 4:00 pm Elders	15	16	17
18 <i>Advent 4</i> 9:30 Sunday School, 10:30 Worship, Christmas Party	19	20	21 12 Book Grp	22	23	24
25 <i>Christmas</i> Sunday	26	27	28	29	30	31

# Just for Fun

## **The Weather Man**

A long time ago, in Communist Russia, there was a famous weather man named Rudolf.

He's always had a 100% accuracy rate for his forecasts of the Russian weather conditions. His people loved him and respected him for his faultless foresight. He was particularly good at predicting rain. One night, despite clear skies, he made the prediction on the 6:00pm news broadcast that a violent storm was approaching. It would flood the town in which he and his wife lived. He warned the people to take proper precautions and prepare for the worst.

After he arrived home later that evening, his wife met him at the door and started arguing with him that his weather prediction was the most ridiculous thing she had ever heard. This time, she said, he had made a terrible mistake. There wasn't a cloud anywhere within 10 miles of the village. As a matter of fact, that day had been the most beautiful day that the town had ever had and it was quite obvious to everyone it simply wasn't going to rain.

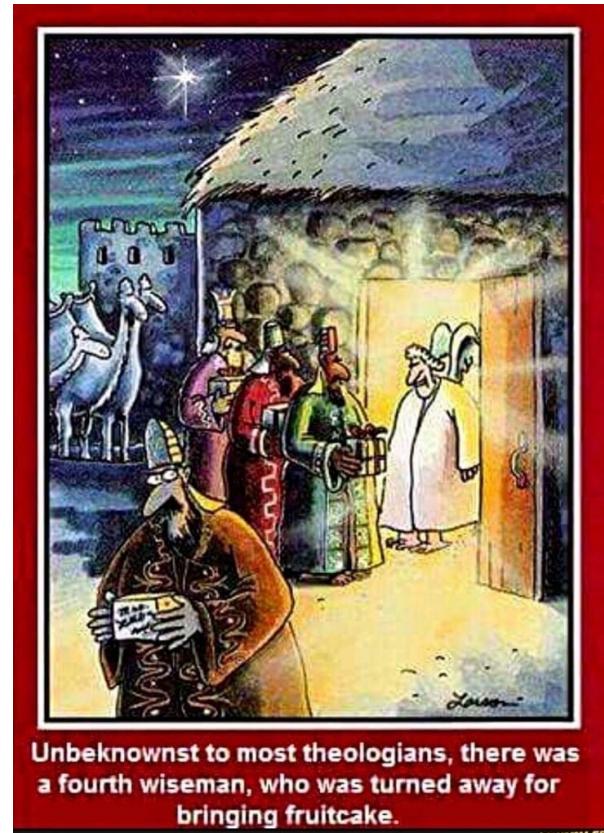
He told her she was to be quiet and listen to him. If he said it was going to rain, IT WAS GOING TO RAIN. He had all of his Russian heritage behind him and he knew what he was talking about. She argued that although he came from a proud heritage, IT STILL WASN'T GOING TO RAIN.

They argued back and forth for hours, so much that they went to bed mad at each other. During the night, sure enough one of the worst rainstorms hit the village the likes of which they had never seen. That morning when Rudolf and his wife arose, they looked out the window and saw all the water that had fallen that night.

"See," said Rudolf, "I told you it was going to rain."

His wife admitted: "Once again your prediction came true. But I want to know, just how were you so accurate, Rudolf?"

To which he replied, "You see, Rudolf the Red knows rain, dear!"



## **A Car for Christmas**

Danny had recently passed his driving test and decided to ask his clergyman father if there was any chance of him getting a car for Christmas, which was yet some months away. 'Okay!' said his father 'I tell you what I'll do. If you can get your 'C' grades up to 'A's and 'B's, study your bible and get your hair cut, I'll consider the matter very seriously.'

A couple of months later Danny went back to his father who said 'I'm really impressed by your commitment to your studies. Your grades are excellent and the work you have put into your bible studies is very encouraging. However, I have to say I'm very disappointed that you haven't had your hair cut yet.'

Danny was a smart young man who was never lost for an answer. 'Look dad. In the course of my bible studies I've noticed in the illustrations that Moses, John the Baptist, Samson and even Jesus had long hair.'

'Yes. I'm aware of that...' replied his father '... but did you also notice they walked wherever they went?'



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**December 2022/January, 2023**