

CHUM NEWS

December 2025 Newsletter

"Joy to the World" was never meant to be background noise.

It was written to be a bold, glad announcement: the Lord has come, and everything—hearts, homes, and even creation itself—is invited to make room for Him. Isaac Watts originally penned the text in 1719 as a paraphrase of Psalm 98, and over time it was paired with the tune we know and love (often attributed to influences from Handel). For more than 300 years the church has been singing this hymn, not because life is always easy or peaceful, but because Christ has come into the very middle of our real lives.

That's why I love that we're focusing on joy this Advent. Not the thin, hurried, "I've-got-20-things-to-do" version of joy—but the deep, settled, Christ-centered joy that says: God is with us. Joy doesn't demand that everything be perfect; joy declares that Jesus has stepped into an imperfect world.

Advent actually invites us to slow down so we don't miss that.

I know December can feel like a sprint—programs, shopping, school events, family gatherings. But what if, this year, you chose to make worship the non-negotiable? What if you let the words of "Joy to the World" shape your December instead of your calendar shaping your soul?

So I want to invite you—and I hope you will invite others—to celebrate Christ's birth with us on Christmas Eve:

Church Hill UMC – 6:00 p.m.

Come early! At **5:30 p.m.** the **Warren Brass Quintet** will offer special music to set a beautiful, festive spirit in the sanctuary. Then at 6:00 we will gather for carols, scripture, message, and candlelight.

Trinity UMC – 8:00 p.m.

Beginning at **7:30 p.m.** our own **Jeffrey A. Trimble** will offer a special organ "vespers" prelude—quiet, reverent, and perfect for arriving early, breathing deeply, and preparing your heart. At 8:00 we will celebrate the Christ child in word, song, and candlelight.

These are wonderful opportunities to bring a friend, a neighbor, or a family member who may be looking for a place to worship at Christmas. People are more open to an invitation this time of year than we think—sometimes they're just waiting for someone to ask.

My prayer is that as we sing "Joy to the World" this Advent, it won't just be a carol we know, but a truth we live: the Lord has come, He is coming again, and we can receive Him with joy.

Preparing Him room with you,

Pastor Sam



December Birthdays

12/1 Zachary Camardese,

Patrick Burke

12/4 Katie Taylor

12/7 Nolan Sefcik,

Virginia DeLuco

12/8 Mackenzie Seifert

12/9 Lynne Edwards

12/13 Barbara Taylor

12/14 Abby Sampson

12/16 Svana Pekalla

12/20 Karen Tomlinson

12/24 Tammy Sampson

12/25 Emily Moyers

12/28 Patricia Chen

Audean Patterson

12/29 Jeffery Hecker

12/30 Julie Green

12/31 Susan Draghi



Worship 101: Part 3

The Table of Grace: Holy Communion in the United Methodist Church

In the United Methodist tradition, Holy Communion—or the Lord’s Supper—is far more than a ritual we occasionally observe. It is the heart of Christian life, a place where heaven and earth meet, and where Christ promises to be truly present with us. What we do at the Communion table each month traces its roots deep into Scripture and deep into history.

Holy Communion is, in many ways, a Christian adaptation of ancient Jewish mealtime traditions. In the world of Jesus, sharing a table was about more than eating—it was about belonging, reconciliation, community, and covenant. Meals marked identity and relationship. When Jesus gathered with his disciples on the night before his death, he took this familiar practice and breathed into it new meaning. “This is my body... this is my blood... do this in remembrance of me.” At an ordinary table, Jesus offered extraordinary grace.

For United Methodists, this holy meal follows the proclamation of the Word. After hearing Scripture read and preached, the Table becomes our response—a physical “yes” to God’s invitation. John Wesley called Communion “the grand channel” of God’s grace, believing that Christ meets us in the bread and cup to forgive, heal, renew, and send us forth as witnesses of God’s love.

We gather as one family, not because we have earned our place, but because Christ invites us. At the Table, no one is singled out and no one is excluded. It is Christ’s table—not the church’s, not the pastor’s—and all who seek to follow him are welcome to receive. In a world hungry for belonging, hope, and healing, this open Table stands as a powerful witness.

As we move through this season of Advent and into Christmas, may we come to the Table with open hands and open hearts. May we taste again the goodness of God, and may the grace we receive become grace we offer to the world.

Hymn History: The Story Behind “It Came Upon A Midnight Clear”

Few Christmas hymns capture both the beauty and the ache of the human condition quite like “*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*.” Written in 1849 by **Rev. Edmund Hamilton Sears**, a Unitarian minister in Wayland, Massachusetts, the hymn emerged not from a time of peace and festivity, but from deep concern over the state of the world.

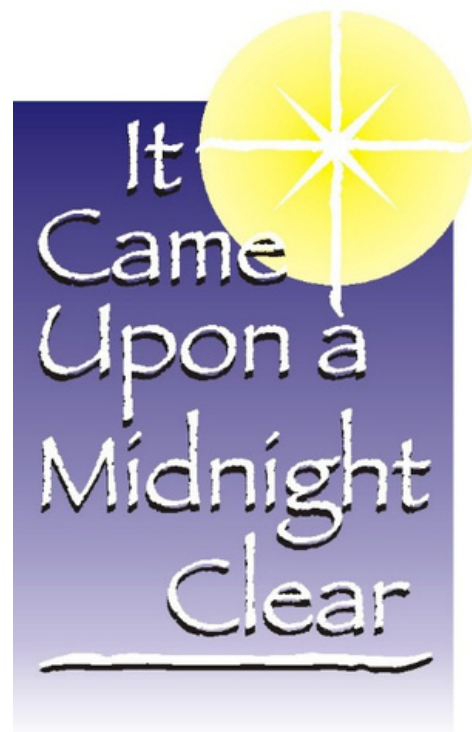
Sears, a Harvard-educated pastor and poet, composed the text just after the **Mexican-American War** and amid growing tensions that would lead to the **Civil War**. He was deeply troubled by violence, injustice, and division—yet longed to remind people of the angels’ ancient message of peace and goodwill. The poem first appeared in the *Christian Register* in December 1849 and was later set to music by **Richard Storrs Willis**, a composer who had studied under the famous Felix Mendelssohn.

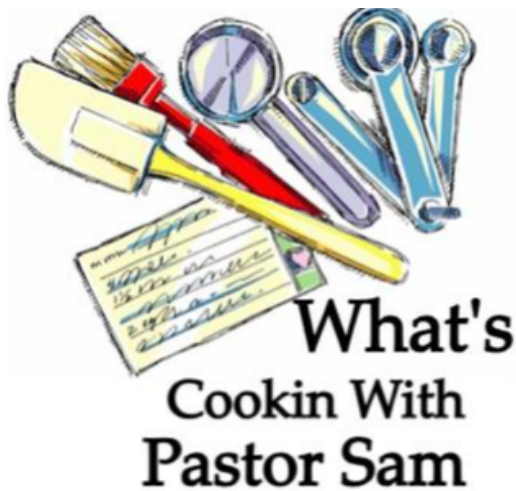
Unlike many Christmas carols that focus on the nativity scene in Bethlehem, Sears’ hymn reflects on the **message** the angels proclaimed rather than the event itself. The “midnight clear” points to that moment when heaven and earth meet—when divine peace breaks into human turmoil. Sears invites us to listen, once again, for the “angels bending near the earth,” still singing of peace amid a weary world.

The hymn’s hauntingly gentle melody and contemplative words make it a powerful reminder that the Christmas message is not just for one night long ago, but for every generation yearning for peace.

More than 170 years later, “*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*” continues to speak with surprising relevance. Its plea—“O hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing”—feels written for our own anxious and divided age.

This Advent and Christmas season, may we quiet our hearts long enough to hear that song again. May its melody of peace fill our homes, its harmony of hope mend our divisions, and its refrain of love remind us that heaven still bends near the earth—whispering, even now, “*Peace on the earth, good will to all.*”





Great Grandma Mohn's Coffee Cake

Ingredients

- 3c. flour
- 2c. sugar
- ½ c. shortening and ½ c. butter
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 ¼ c. buttermilk
- *Fruits and nuts optional

Directions

1. Pre heat oven to 350°
2. Combine flour, sugar, butter & shortening mix until fine crumbs. Set aside 1 cup.
3. To the remaining mixture add the other ingredients.
4. Pour into 2 8" greased and floured pans.
5. Sprinkle the remaining 1 cup mixture you set aside on each cake & sprinkle with cinnamon
6. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean.

Notes

- For fruits grate 1 apple and mix into butter.
- Mash a ripe banana.
- Throw in some blueberries
- Nuts add ¾ cup—pecans, walnuts to the butter
- Freezes well
- No buttermilk?? Add 1T of lemon juice or vinegar to 1 c. of milk add 1t more then add milk to = 1 ¼ c

On the longest nights, God's
light still shines.

You're invited to a **Longest
Night / Blue Christmas Service**
Thursday, December 18
7:00 PM
Boardman United Methodist
Church



Pastor Sam will be one of the
clergy participating

Carpool from CHUM parking lot at 6pm

This gentle, reflective service is especially for those who are grieving, lonely, overwhelmed, or simply not feeling "merry and bright" this season. Through scripture, prayer, quiet music, and candlelight, we'll make space for honest emotions and God's comforting presence.

Come as you are. There is room for your sadness, your memories, and your hope.



THE WARREN CIVIC CHOURS



Presents

George Frideric Handel's "Messiah"

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7, 2025

AT 6:00 PM

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA PARISH

BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH

3020 REEVES ROAD NE

WARREN, OHIO 44483

Admission is free.

A free-will offering will be collected



Connect with us!

Website:

www.churchhillumc.com

Facebook: facebook.com/ChurchHillUMC

Worship with us Sundays at 10am!

**Church Hill United
Methodist Church**

189 Churchill-Hubbard Rd.
Youngstown, OH 44505

Livestream available at:

www.youtube.com/@churchhillumc6144



Our Team

Sam Mohn, Pastor

Jane Page, Director of
Worship

Carla Jenkins, Pianist

Terri West, Children's
Director

Deanna Slifka, Youth
Director

Joe Seifert, Sound Room
Tech

Charity Washington,
Custodian

Prayer Requests

Lee Elmo, Dora Baker, Ron Baker, Nancy and Carol Smith, Helen Hess, David Moyers, Eileen and Jeff Hawkins, Darlene Capitola, Andre Williams and Dianne, his mother, Jimmy Quinlan, Joette Sondheimer (Viv Seifert's sister), Jane Doughton, Lori and Kevin Vara, Ron Miller (Ken Miller's cousin), Burce MacLellan (Ken Miller's friend), Friends and Family of Alma Knupp, Jimmy Weller, DeeAnn (Carla Jenkins' sister), Samuel M, Margie Ryan, John Baksa, Bella, Mike (Nancy Smith's brother), Jerry (Jan Ferry's nephew), Tiffany Orwig, Lori Furlong, Carla Jenkins, Mrs. Pirlozzi (Felicia Brown's mother), Jean Dutko, John (Clara Jones' nephew) Sandy (Terri West's sister), Hope Warner, Natalie D'orzio (friend of the Ahlswede family), Roger Bartlett (Helen Hess's son - in-law), Frank Zedek (Kathy Zedek's son, from Bible study), Ed (Jane Page's Brother-in-law), Bev Clinton, Irene O'Hara, Family of June Byo, Bill (Carla Jenkins' cousin), Linda Baker (Neighbor of Catchpoles), Angelina Vince (Christian Denning), Shawn and Jade Sweitzer Prayers for teachers and military members and their families

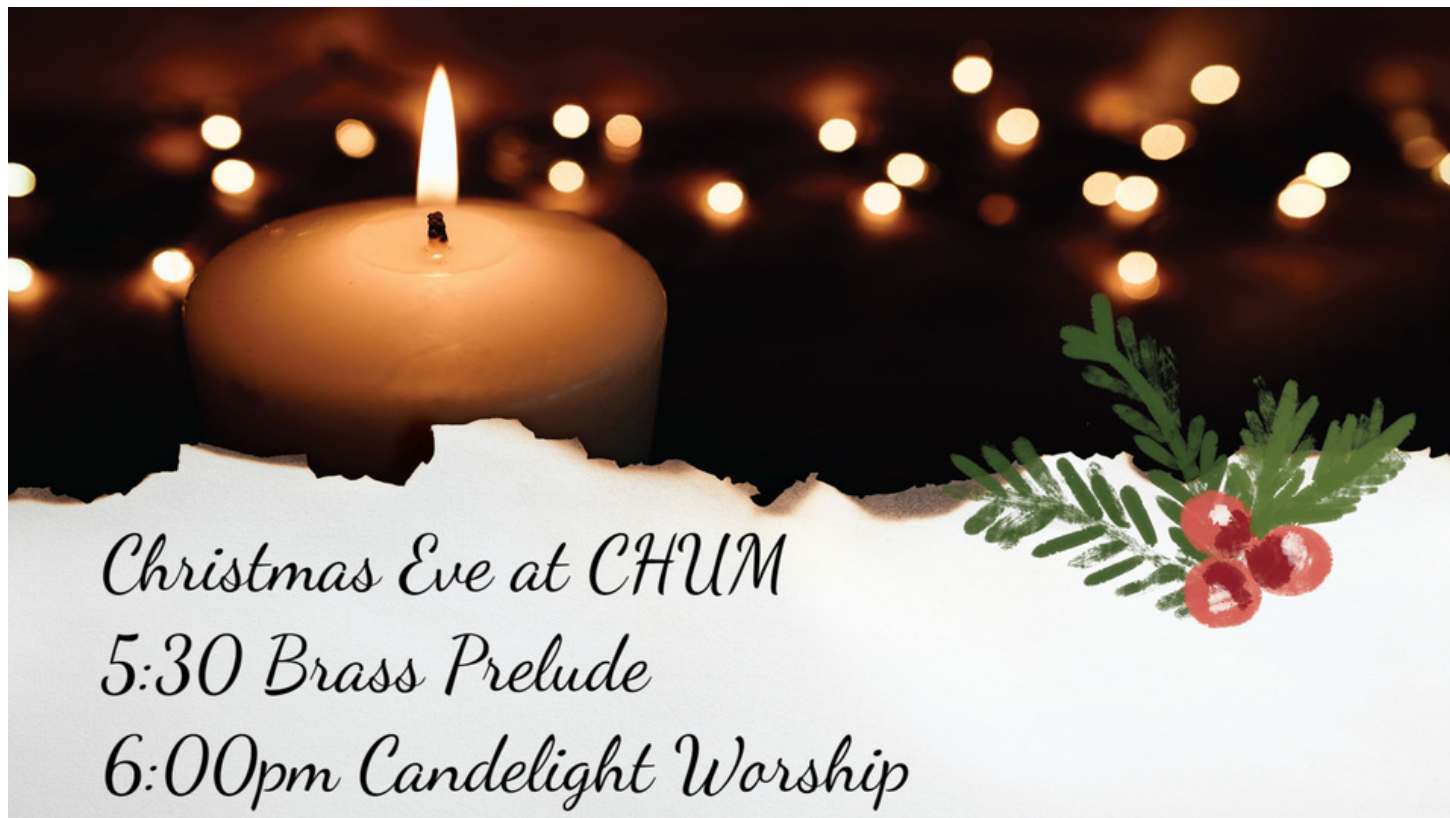
Contact Linda Toepfer at 330-718-2361 for the current prayer list and to request prayers.



DECEMBER



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 4:45-7pm KK/YG 7:30 Choir <i>Pastor Sam back in the office</i>	4 9:30 Pantry Set up 10:30 Bible Study 6:00 Pantry Set Up 6-8 Grief Share	5 10-Noon Food Pantry	6 Byo Funeral 11am Blott Gift drop off 9-2
7 9:30 Bible Brew 10:00 Worship Blott Gift Drop off Noon-2	8 Blott Gift Drop off 5-7pm	9 Gift Inventory 9am	10 4:45-7pm KK/YG 7:30 Choir	11 Blott Gift Wrap 9-2 10:30 Bible Study 6-8 Grief Share	12 Blott Gift pick up 9-2	13
14 9:30 Bible Brew 10:00 Worship	15	16	17 7:30 Choir	18 10:30 Bible Study	19	20
21 9:30 Bible Brew 10:00 Worship 1pm Liberty Lesson Center concert	22	23	24 6pm Candlelight Worship  CHRISTMAS EVE	25  <i>O Come Let Us Adore Him</i>	26	27
28 9:30 Bible Brew 10:00 Worship	29	30	31  New Year's Eve			



Christmas Eve at CHUM

5:30 Brass Prelude

6:00pm Candelight Worship



Church Hill United Methodist Church

189 Church Hill Hubbard Road

Youngstown, Ohio 44505