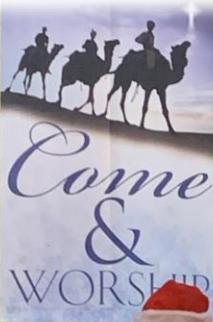


# January Updates 2026

## Christmas Program 2025 "A Christmas Variety"



# Pastor

With the passing of another year, we begin to reflect on the ministries we have accomplished together in helping to feed and support our local community through our donations to the Bluffton Community Assistance Program, to our neighboring communities in working with Crossroad Child & Family Services in Fort Wayne, IN., Spread the Love out of Lima, OH., The Wheelhouse bicycle cooperative in Lima, OH., and many more. We have provided livestock to farmers, blankets to those in need around the world, gifts to our friends and family locally, Christmas donations through our local Adopt-a-Family program, and the list continues on and on. It warms my heart to know that we have so many caring members in our church families.

Every time a new donation or ministry opportunity presents itself to the leadership of our congregations we ask ourselves, 'Do we really want to continue asking for more?' and yet each time our churches respond, we are happy to have said 'Yes.' The historic John Wesley, reformer and founder of the Methodist Church, was famously known for giving everything he had away to the poor. It was once said that the church elders had to lock up the silver plates and cup for Communion during the week, just so Rev. Wesley wouldn't give those away too. Sometimes it feels like we give, and we give, and we give, so much so that we keep nothing for ourselves, but is that not what Christ has taught us, called us, if not, shown us, to do?

It is one thing for a church congregation to say that they exist, but it is quite another to say that they have succeeded. What does success look like in the Christian Church? If it is members in the seats on a Sunday morning, then let us open a coffee shop, offer deals on special days, hire a famous performer to play, and draw in the crowds. If it is money in our accounts, then let us spend nothing, invest wisely, and store our gifts in the ground, hidden from the world. But if success in the church looks like resources spent on bettering the community, providing for those in need, and, yes, even giving away the silver communion plate and cup, then I would rather have success and be poor for it, than comfortable, wealthy, and surrounded by people who have no concern for the Lord or the teachings of Jesus.

As we are in the season of giving, let us be mindful of what God has given to us. Let us be aware that what we have is not our own, nor earned by our own hard labor, but a blessing bestowed upon us by the one who has created all that we see, hear, touch, smell and taste. None of what we have was ever ours to begin with and none of it will be coming with us as we move onto the next stage of our eternal existence. And so I thank you, I applaud you and your efforts, I encourage you to continue on your pathway to eternal happiness, wholeness, and health. And when we

end up in the poor house next to one another, I will be happy to share a meager meal with you together. For one day we will hear the words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.” And for that we can all say, “Praise be to God!”

Blessings,

Pastor Jeremy



### **Women's Outreach**

Women's Outreach would like to thank everyone who helped with the Adopt a family.

**Thank you for your generous support in this mission!**

Monday, January 19

Cards, games and fellowship afternoon at 1:00pm  
(Bring a snack to share, water and punch provided)

**The Flower Chart for 2026 is up.** If you would like to sign up and are not coming to church you can call the church - 419-358-1561

New Membership Classes

Talk to Pastor Jeremy  
If you are interested

**\*\*\*You can turn in 2025 Annual Reports to the office by  
email or papercopy\*\*\***

Hospitality, Community Dinner, Buildings & Grounds, Women's Outreach, Faith Formation, Congregational Life, Release Time, Audit



Noisy Collection this year for 2026 will go to **“Wheelhouse Bike Mission”**



The Wheelhouse is a missional/service designed as a “refurbish a bike” program for those in need. Upon completion, the recipient will receive the bike, a helmet and lock. Christian volunteers will use the shared project time to build relationships, share their faith and encourage clients to connect with a church.

This is how it works:

**The public donates bicycles to The Wheelhouse**

This occurs through Churches holding bike drives, the Lima police department unclaimed bikes, and the public donating used bikes.

**Local social agencies and local church leaders determine financial need of individuals needing bicycle transportation.**

The Wheelhouse is financed in three ways. **(This is where the Noisy collection will come in)**

**The Wheel of Churches** is local congregations who support The Wheelhouse through donations, bike drives or communication of need to their members (St. John's has teamed up with the Wheelhouse mission)

**Pedal Partners** are individuals make donations to support a bicycle transportation to those in need. Approximately \$30 provides a bike, helmet lock and lights to a new Wheelhouse cyclist.

**Business Partners** are local businesses who support The Wheelhouse through donations

**Local social agencies and local church leaders determine financial need of individuals needing bicycle transportation.** They complete an online form which comes to Wheelhouse management.

Relief services such as Our Daily Bread, Salvation Army, Lima Rescue Mission, Mental Health Services such as Coleman Health

Recovery Houses such as Ohio Link, Full Circle, Restoration House

Local church Pastors

Government Support services such as Allen County Probation, Allen County Senior Citizens, etc.

Local Employers such as Lima Pallet Company, Temporary Job Placement

**Referred clients are scheduled for an appointment at The Wheelhouse. A volunteer helps them refurbish a bike to meet their needs. This time provides an opportunity for the clients and volunteers to build a relationship.**

### **Side notes**

The Wheelhouse refurbishes or repairs over 300 bikes per year. Our work includes:

150+ bikes to new clients

140+ bikes repaired for returning clients

80+ Youth Bikes sent to restore to support Habitat

50+ Youth bikes are donated to special projects for schools or churches

25+ Youth bikes are repaired for Safety City, Lima Police Department, and Noon Optimist.

Mechanics and Support Volunteers are always welcome help at The Wheelhouse.

[wheelhouselima.com](http://wheelhouselima.com) to know more

January 4 John 1:1-18

January 11 Matthew 3:13-17

January 18 John 1:1-29-42

January 25 Matthew 4:12-23



**NOTE: TIME CHANGE  
STARTING JANUARY 4, 2026  
WORSHIP 10:30AM  
ADULT FAITH FORMATION 9:30**

Letter from Weekday Release Time to share,  
Emmanuel United Church of Christ,  
With Thanksgiving behind us. One of things we are so thankful for and  
continue to be thankful for are the churches and their support of  
The Bluffton Weekday Release Program. The program is so blessed and  
we give all the glory to God. One of the ways the church supports the  
program is by providing walkers for the classes.

We do have a few walkers that are weekly walkers and some that walk  
every other week in a few of the grades.

If you know of someone that might be interested in walking on a more  
consistent basis. Please let your church representative know or give them  
my contact information. A few reminders to pass on to your walkers:

Thank you so much for arriving 10 minutes early to check in at the  
Methodist Church and picking up the flag

The walker is to hold the flag at all times

The walker is to push the button at the School

On two hour delays we will still have classes starting with the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade  
classes. Sincerely, Renee Caskie 419-890-6213

#### **Weekday Release Time Walker Schedule for Emmanuel UCC**

**Tuesday, January 13 - 10:15:11:15 – (McCafferty & Leichty – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**

**Tuesday, February 10 - 12:30:1:30 – (Slaughterbeck & Inniger – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)**

1:50 – 2:50 – (Noble & McCauley – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Tuesday, March 10 - 10:15:11:15 – (McCafferty & Leichty – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**

**Tuesday, April 7 - 12:30:1:30 – (Slaughterbeck & Inniger – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)**

1:50 – 2:50 – (Noble & McCauley – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Thursday, April 16 - 1:00 – 2:00 – (Diemer & Richards – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

**Tuesday, May 2 - 10:15:11:15 – (McCafferty & Leichty – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**



**Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wed.      Thurs.      Friday      Sat.**

				1 NEW YEARS DAY	2	3
4 Worship 10:30 Noisy collection	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Worship 10:30 Communion Installation of Officers	12 Consistory 6:30	13	14	15	16	17
18 Worship 10:30	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Women's Outreach 1pm	20	21	22	23	24
25 Worship 10:30	26	27	28	29	30	31

01/01 Regena Mummert

01/02 Elnora Moser

01/04 Lauren Alt

01/07 Jill Burkholder

Lindsey Kiene

01/08 Kinzley Lutz

Reese Fruchey

01/10 Cindy Kelly

Tony Rumer

01/14 Ethan Luginbuhl

Rae Lynn Reichenbach

01/16 Tony Pinks

01/22 Steve Stark

Todd Steele

01/25 Gerry Fett

01/26 Kayl Aller

01/27 Maryn Cottrell

Mary Fett



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Office hours Monday & Wednesday 8am to 1pm

Facebook: Emmanuel United Church of Christ  
Bluffton OH

Twitter: EmmanuelUCC Bluffton  
(@EmmanuelUCC1561)

<http://www.emmanueluccbluffton.com/>

(Today's and past Sermons can be heard on the  
Emmanuel UCC Bluffton website under media)

Instagram #EmmanuelUcc