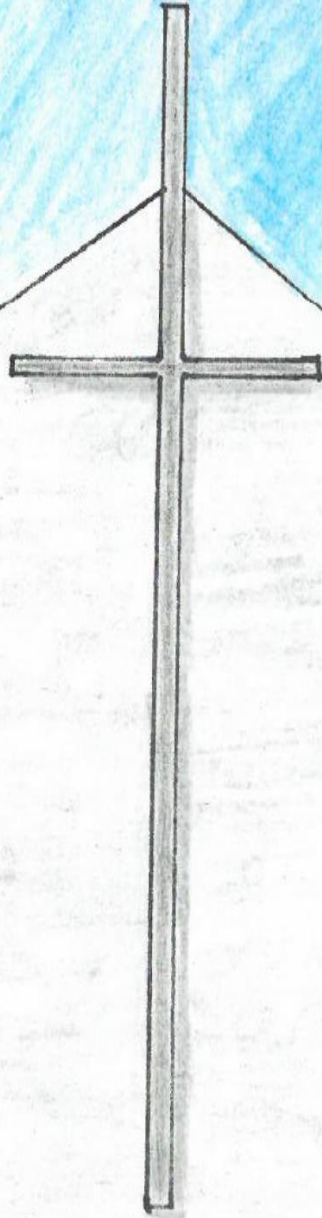


Emmanuel United Church of Christ

January 2021

Family Spirituality
Joy Stewardship
Love



John 19:17-19

049/06 Len Pinta

Look for the symbols and scriptures of Easter throughout this newsletter. You will find a cross, lily, where Jesus was tempted, purple cloth, ashes in the shape of a cross, empty tomb, silver coins, rooster.

PASTORS PAGE

Snow is falling on the ground as I write this letter to you and the season of Christmas is only a few short days away. Christ is coming and the Light of the World is breaking through! Praise be to God! There is pretty much *everything* to look forward to in 2021 for our congregation, our community, our society, and humanity as a whole. We are, just now, on the brink of the next phase of living with a global pandemic, one in which we have a vaccine to help protect us from the infectious disease COVID-19. Yet the changes and effects of this catastrophic and global event will still play out in the months to come.

One of the questions my ministerial/pastor groups are beginning to ask is, "What will we keep with us and change after this is 'over'?" To be honest I don't know that this will ever be completely over. After all we have vaccinations for many infectious diseases in this world and yet there are still those who refuse to take them or use them. I, myself, only got a Flu shot this year for the first time since I was a teenager; and I only did so to protect my family. Some of you forgo the Flu shot depending on how effective it is supposed to be, because, after all, they are only guessing based on last year's data. So, again, I don't know that this will ever be 'over' completely. Yet we look to what remains with us.

Ultimately the timeline of the history of the church has been advanced by many years by this disease. Now when I say that the church has advanced I simply mean that the church is catching up. I've mentioned before that the internet has existed since the 1980's and only in the last decade did our congregation create a website, Facebook page, Instagram, and YouTube account. For many of you, I've just typed gibberish and for others I apologize for cursing at you. While these things seem trivial and pop-culturally motivated, they have become integral parts of the Church as they were always going to be, just a few years, if not decades, sooner.

We have entire generations of members who are saying, "It's about time!" while others are scratching their heads and wondering, "What is this even about?" My friends, we are in a Great Awakening. It is the Great Awakening of the 21st century; online. Now begins the questioning, 'Does it count if you attend church online?', 'How do we take attendance if we can't see everyone in the pews?', 'Are we really gathered together if we can't see one another, touch one another, or even hear one another?' 'How do we conduct fellowship and time together if we are not actually, physically, together?!' The answer to this, ask your kids and grandkids. They interact with their friends and 'gather' all the time. They are the wave of the future and it is a wave which will overcome us all one day, until we are swimming in the ocean of the next age.

We imagine sharks, sea monsters, creatures from the deep which will ravage and tear the fabric of our community and society apart; already we point to fraying edges and cry out for help, but my friends, my brothers and sisters, the worst thing in Christian history has already happened. The worse possible catastrophe known to man has already come to pass and WE ARE STILL HERE. Christ was betrayed, crucified, died and was buried. Yet still he lives. Just as we live. Still the Body of Christ lives on in the actions, words, and deeds we carry out in our lives for one another. The Church will live on and it will live on in the form of God's children; us and the next generation.

Fear not for the future. Believe that 2021 and beyond has great hope for us. Understand that things are naturally going to shift and change and that we will do our best to adapt to those changes. Yet still we will hold on to the truths of the Church; that Christ has died and lives again. That Jesus is the head of the Church. That we are stronger and better for and with one another than we ever will be apart. That we bring out the best in each other and draw upon one another for strength, hope and love. Know that 2021 and the promises which lie within are for our betterment and not destruction. Thanks be to God.

Blessings,
Pastor Jeremy



Mark 15:16-20

CHURCH UPDATES

Consistory for 2021: Elders: Julie Oberly, Bev Shepler, Erin Stark, Sherry Stratton

Deacons: Jaret Geiser, Kristen Parkins, Ron Geiser, Amy Muniz

Financial Secretary: Michele Geiser, Treasurer: Teresa Pinks

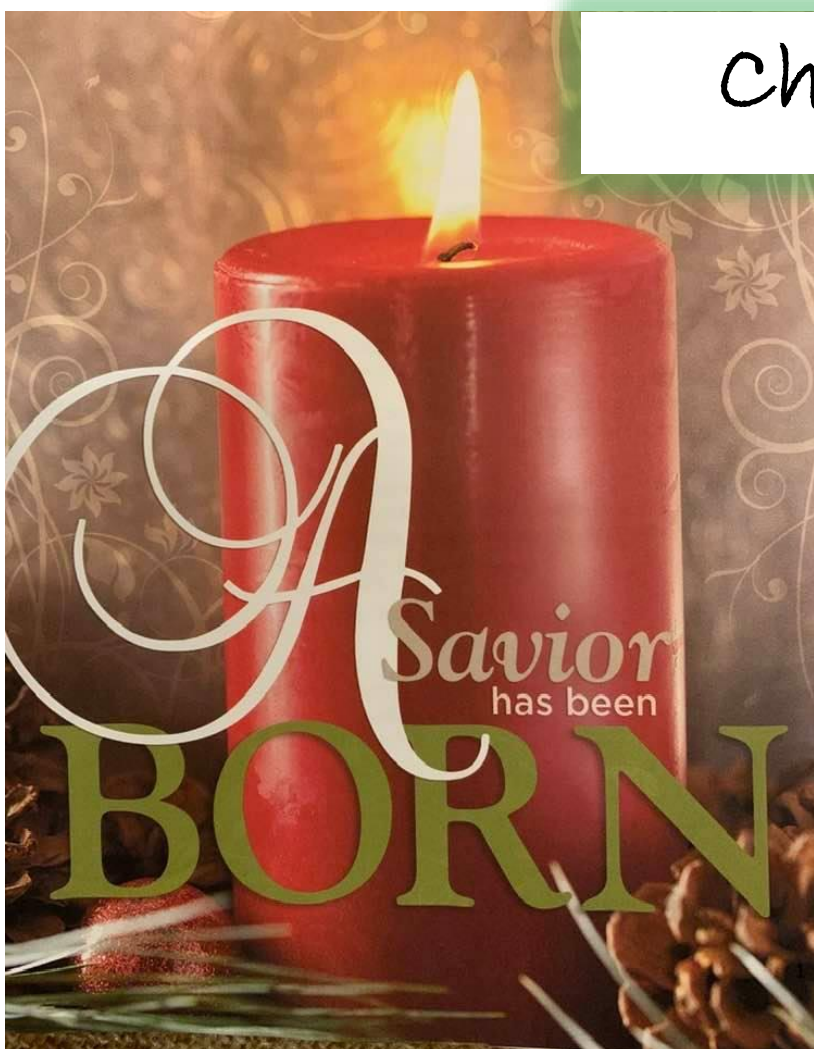


Matthew 4:1-4

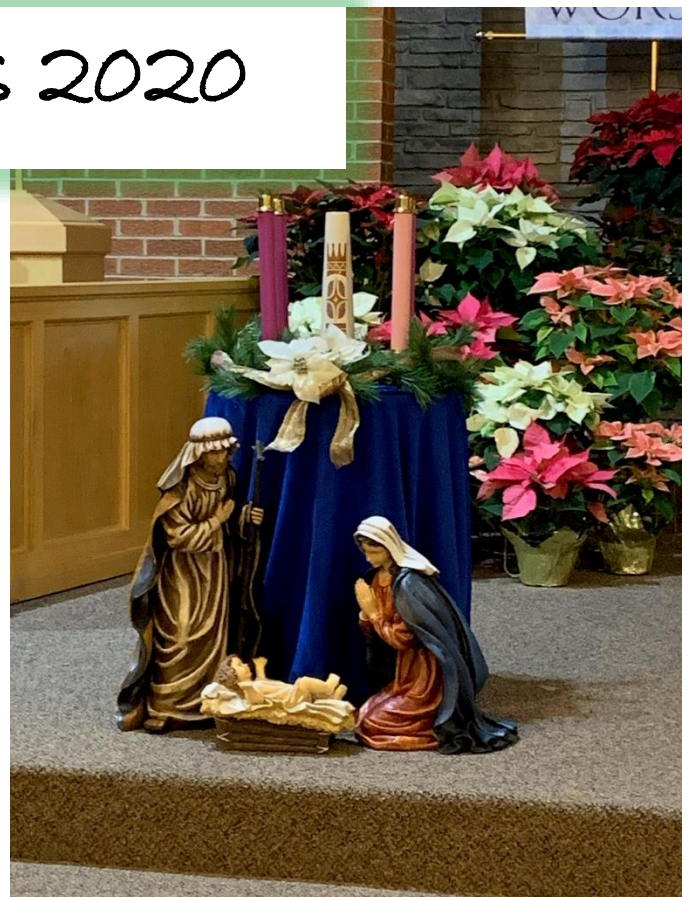
Online picture directory coming soon... We need your help

We are working on an online church directory. You will be able to access this directory through email or an app on your phone. We will still be able to print directories for the people who want a printed copy of the directory. This will make it easier to keep our information updated in a timely manner and easier for people to have access to correct information. The online church directory is password protected. There will be no need to sign up for a time to come and have your picture taken. You can bring a picture in you would like added to the directory, we can add it and return the picture to you or you will be able to upload your own picture. Pictures can be taken by your phone. If we have your email address, you will be getting an email asking you to upload a picture. Then the administrator will okay the picture before it gets added. You will have the option as to whether you want your information private. The goal is to have this online version and app available by the annual meeting with as much information as we have available. Thank you so much for working to get this church directory available.

Questions can be directed to the church office,
Renee Caskie 419-358-1561



Christmas 2020



Thank you to the Holy Hymn Ringers, Onalee Shepler, Regena Mummert, Jalon Martin, Jeff Bowlus, all the readers and Pastor Jeremy for the Christmas Eve Service 2020

Your church Family



Matthew 26:14-16
Matthew 27:3-4

Praying the
SCRIPTURES
eliasapulliam.com

January 3rd

John 1:(1-9), 10-18

January 10th

Mark 1:4-11

January 31st Mark 1:21-28

January 17th

John 1:43-51

January 24th

Mark 1:14-20



Matthew 26:69-75

*****Annual Reports due January 15*****

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Bluffton Community Meal - Thursday, January 21

(The community meal is served the 1st and the 3rd Thursday of the month. This food is provided by churches and service groups. Due to COVID a few organizations have opted out helping out at this time. The meals can be picked up as a drive through at the back of the Senior Citizens Center)

*Emmanuel will be providing, lasagna and brownies
You can call the church (419-358-1561) if you would like to make one of those items or would like to provide a monetary donation for the purchase of the lasagna or brownies.
Thank you for your continued support of this mission.*

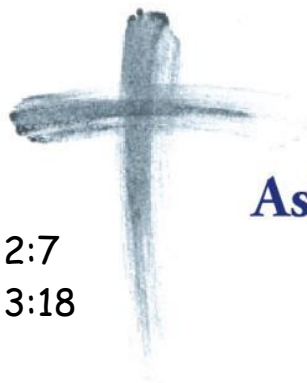
Kira Kohli and Jane Aaner

FEBRUARY EVENTS

February 7 - Souper Bowl Sunday

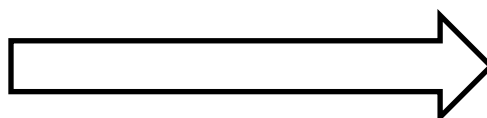
Annual Meeting - Congregational Life committee will be handing out a bowl of soup to take home after annual meeting

Bring in a can of soup to donate to the Bluffton Food Pantry



Genesis 2:7
Genesis 3:18

Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins



February 17,
2021

Setting out on a Lenten journey

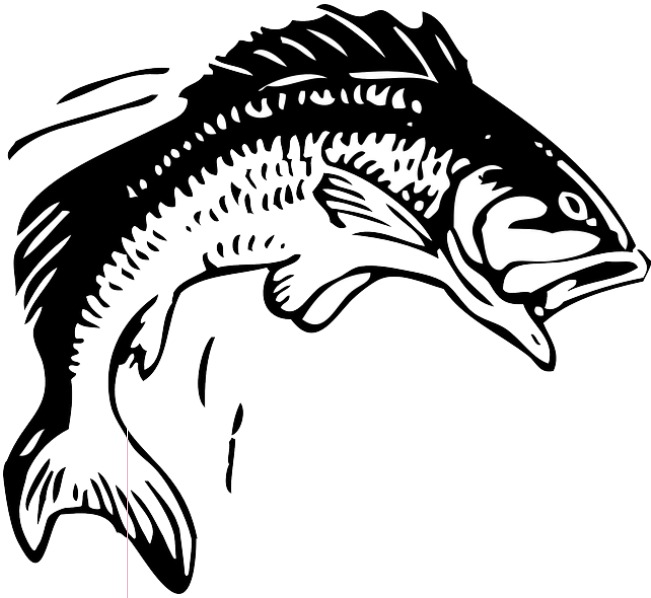
The Lenten season is the 40 days before Easter...

- Which new direction will you take in the coming weeks?*
- What do you want to be like by the time Easter arrives?*
- How can you choose to walk more closely with Jesus during Lent?*

As you begin your Lenten journey...

- Wash your hands in the bowl of sand as a sign of your humanity, created from the earth, connected to the earth.*
- Talk to God about where you want to be, and where God wants you to be.*
- Now wash your hands in the bowl of water, allowing God to refresh you.
Let the Living Water encourage you as you journey with Jesus through Lent.*

March



Spring Fish Fry
Friday, March 12



Luke 12:27

Check monthly calendar and website for days and times of events and services:

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4



Mark 16: 1-7

Prayers for

- Fred Arnold
- Janice Brewster
- Linda Steele
- Raelene Wilch
- LouAnn Leiber
- Sean Burrell
- Sally Fruchey
- Rick Bassett
- Lane Rossman
- Sharl Steiner

Women's Outreach

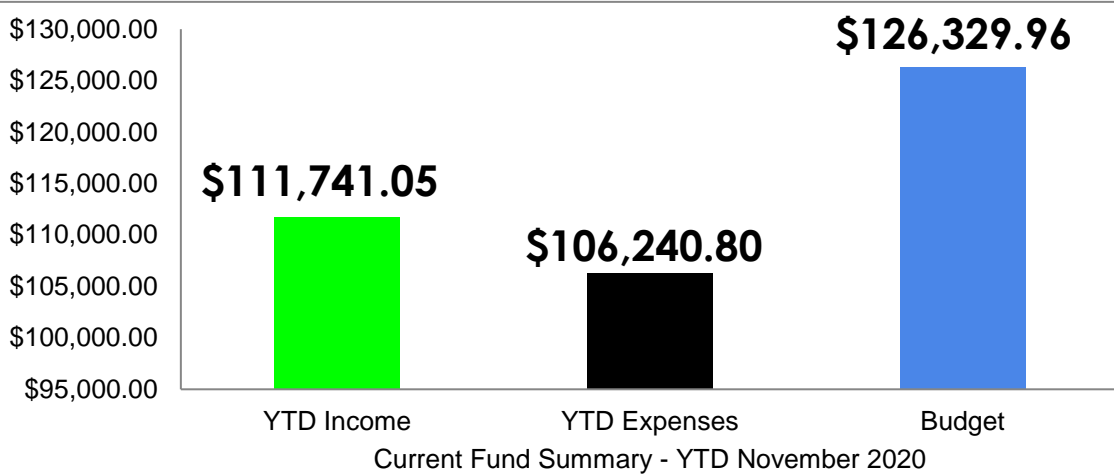
Women's Outreach would like to thank everyone who helped with the Adopt a family. Comforter, sheets and pillow cases were bought. Shoes, coats, clothes. games, toys, books. Gift cards including food, gas and a card for game stop. Also, a box with food, cleaning supplies, and paper supplies all through your support.

Thank you for your generous support in this mission!

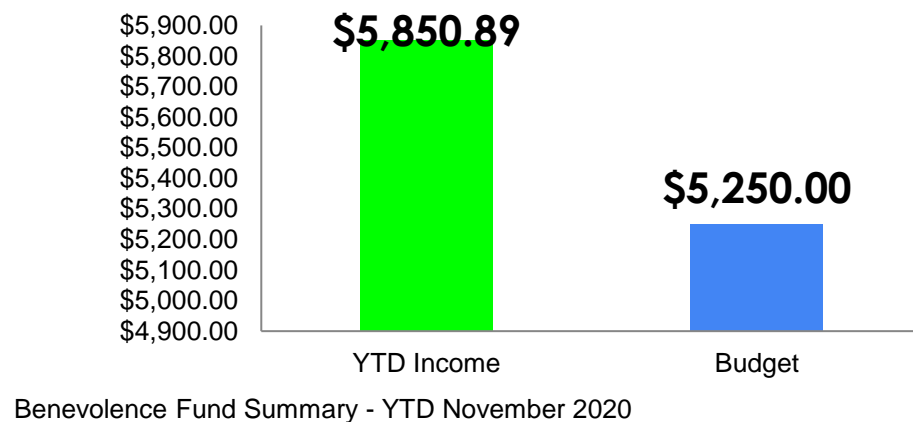
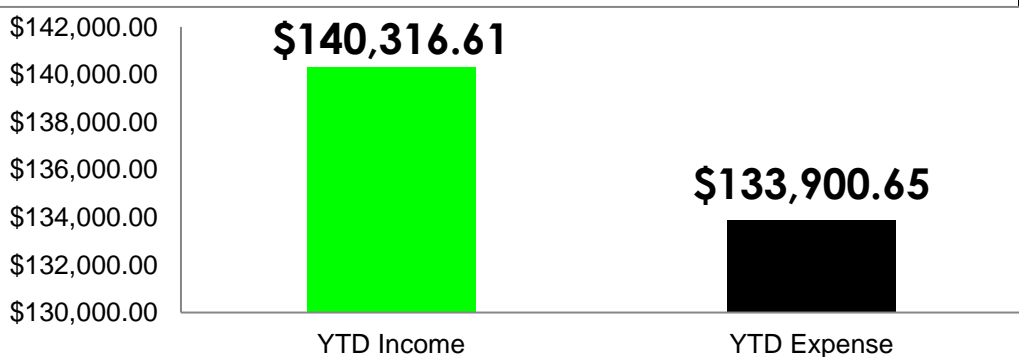
The Flower Chart for 2021 is up. If you would like to sign up and are not coming to church you can call the church.

Any questions call the church 419-358-1561 or Renee Caskie 419-890-6213

Next Women's Outreach meeting is February 15



Financial Information through November 2020



Emmanuel United Church of Christ

8375 Phillips Rd

Bluffton, OH 45817

419-358-1561

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor, Jeremy Mann	419-420-5052	Julie Oberly, Consistory President	419-236-3030
Michele Geiser, Financial Sec.	419-303-7577	Teresa Pinks, Treasurer	419-234-1817
Kathy Moser, Faith Formation	419-296-6243	Dick & Connie Baker, Maintenance	567-712-0119
Renee Caskie, Secretary	419-890-6213	Church Number	419-358-1561

 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

E-Mail: emmanuelucc8375@gmail.com

"As the old year retires and a new one is born, we commit into the hands of our Creator the happenings of the past year and ask for direction and guidance in the new one. May He grant us His grace, His tranquility and His wisdom!"

quote by Peggy Toney Horton

Psalm 96: 1-3

Sing to the Lord a new song;

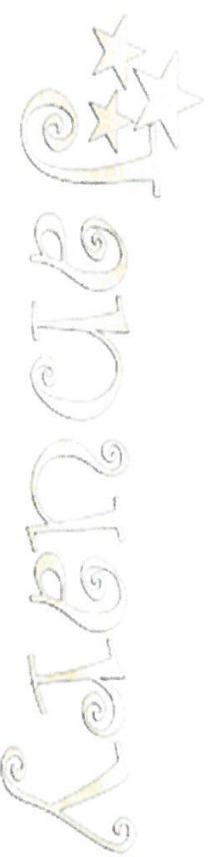
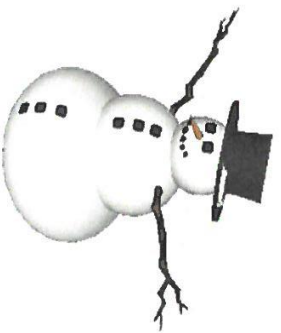
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, praise his name;

proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations,



his marvelous deeds among all peoples.



2021 Emmanuel UCC Calendar

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

BIRTHDAYS

					New Year's Day 1	2
3 New Year New Year Epiphany Sunday	4	5	6 	7	8	9
10 Communion Induction of new consistency	11 Consistory 6:30pm	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 <u>Community Meal</u>	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 1/01 Leah Fett
- Regena Mummert
- 1/02 Elnora Moser
- 1/04 Lauren Alt
- 1/07 Jill Burkholder
- Lindsey Kiene
- 1/08 Carolyn Shaw
- Kinzley Lutz
- 1/10 Tony Rumer
- Cindy Kelley
- 1/11 Ashley Ruhlen
- 1/14 Ethan Luginbuhl
- Rae Lynn Reichenbach
- 1/16 Tony Pinks
- Terri Wilch*
- Jessie Caskie*
- 1/17 Addison Vance
- 1/18 Pat Arnold
- 1/22 Steve Stark*
- Todd Steele
- 1/25 Gerry Fett
- 1/27 Mary Fett
- Maryn Cottrell
- Olivia Welch
- 1/31 Jordan Wehrly