

DECEMBER

MESSENGER

2024



Wakeman
Congregational
Church

NEWS FROM THE DIACONATE BOARD



The Advent season began on Sunday, December 1. Each Sunday during the month of December a family will read scripture and light an Advent candle during worship service. Advent devotionals are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary. If you would like one mailed to your home, please contact the church office.


Cheer bags will be distributed in mid-December to those who are unable to attend a church service or who may not have family nearby during the holidays. If you know someone who would welcome a cheer bag during this time of year, please call the church office.

A traditional Christmas Eve service will be held on Tuesday, December 24 at 4:30 pm.

Both the bell choir and vocal choir will perform as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. We will close this evening service with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight. All are welcome.

*Silent
night
Holy Night*

During this holiday season, and throughout the New Year, share the peace and love of Jesus Christ, that friends, family, and complete strangers may come to know our Savior.



For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

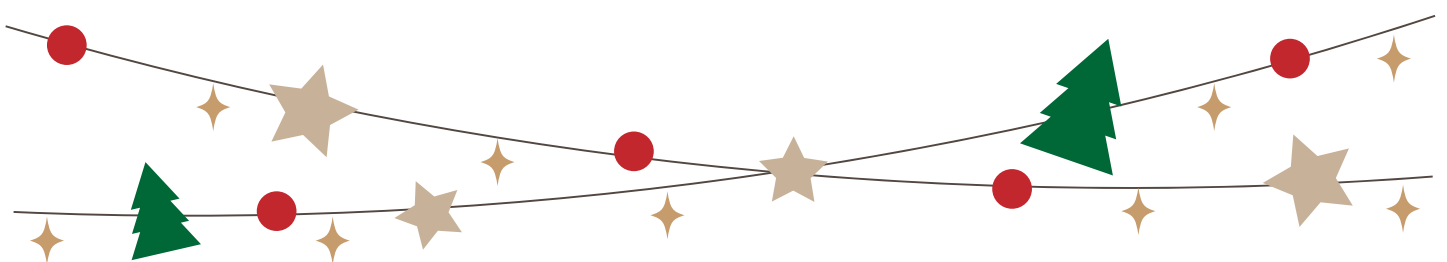
MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

In the early church, new members were accepted into the church annually on Easter Sunday. After three years of study and mentoring from mature Christians, new believers would be baptized and there would be a prayer through the laying on of hands on this holy day remembering Jesus's resurrection. The 40 days before Easter (known as Lent) was a time of prayer and fasting in preparation for baptism. Our forbears met in private homes and endured persecution for their faith from those who misunderstood these earlier believers whom they called "cannibals" because they ate the body and drank the blood of Christ. Christians held fast to their commitment to Jesus, even amidst misunderstanding, turmoil and persecution, some even unto death.

The persistent faithfulness of those early believers eventually bore fruit. In 312, almost 300 years after Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead, Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity. A few emperors later, Theodosius, made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire in 380. After this Edict of Thessalonica, Christianity's influence on the world was solidified and many people began to seek baptism into the faith of Jesus Christ. So much so, that a second season of penitence was needed to prepare for that final initiation into the Christian faith, baptism. The season of Advent filled that need.

New believers entered Advent with fasting and a prayerful heart as they prepared to give their life to Jesus Christ. It was a season to reflect on their sins, the attitudes and adjustments that they sought for their new life. Advent means "coming" or "arrival." In addition to the celebration of the coming, the arrival of Jesus, God Incarnate (literally, in human form), Advent was - and IS - a time for the believer to anticipate the coming of new life in Christ.



In the spirit of your spiritual ancestors: What attitude or adjustment do you seek as you anticipate the coming of Christ anew in your life? Is there a sin you have clung to for far too long? Perhaps join me and write out a prayer on a post-it note placed in a frequently noticed spot. Mine, placed on my laptop, is:

Lord, come anew
to me, IN me that
I may live more
freely in Your
Spirit, speaking
truth with love
and kindness.
Amen.

With Much Love,
Pastor Janet

PASTOR JANET'S FORMAL INSTALLATION



The Wakeman Congregational Church is pleased to announce that we will be hosting a formal installation for the Reverend Doctor Janet Ross (known to us as Pastor Janet!) as pastor of our church on Sunday, February 9, 2025, at 10:00 am. The Reverend Doctor Julie Murdock will be officiating the ceremony during the worship service.

A church pastor's installation is a worship service that celebrates the union between a new pastor and their congregation. It clarifies and underscores the pastor's responsibility to the church, and the church's responsibility toward its pastor, thereby reaffirming the relationship between the church and its pastor. The installation service formally certifies the pastor's acceptance of the call that has been received and allows the pastor to take on their newly appointed role.

A potluck lunch will follow the installation service in Pilgrim Hall in honor of newly installed Pastor Janet. Diaconate will provide the main dish, along with beverages, for the meal. If you are able, please bring a side dish or dessert to share. All are welcome and encouraged to join us for lunch and fellowship!

CHRISTMAS EVE SPECIAL DONATION

Each year at the Christmas Eve service, the missions committee designates a special place to send our Christmas Eve donation. This year, we have decided to split this donation between the following two organizations:

- The Firelands Local School District student cafeteria fund. This donation will be used by food service workers to pay for lunches for students not having enough money to purchase a meal.
- Reach Our Youth Program. Reach Our Youth (ROY) is a one-to-one mentoring program that matches volunteers with local children in Huron County who need a role model and an extra friend in life. ROY aims to help youth grow into well-adjusted adults who can contribute positively to their community.

Donations to this program help kids in the program by providing fun activities for them to participate in, purchases supplies that the program may need, and some program development.

Proverbs 11:25 A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



On November 17 we officially welcomed 9 new members into our church.

From left to right.
Dana & Bruce Leimbach
Pam Massey
Michael Cress
Bethany Gardner
Dwight & Janet Siron
Not pictured:
Neil & Paula Koester

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE CAMPAIGN



This year's November pledge campaign, One Church for All, has concluded, but if you didn't get your pledge turned in, the Financial Secretary will still gladly accept your pledge card. The number of 2025 pledge cards returned, and the amount of pledged money toward the general operating fund and building fund will be presented in the annual report in January. Thank you for your pledge, and for supporting the Wakeman Congregational Church.

ANNUAL REPORTS AND ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting is scheduled for after the worship service on Sunday, January 26, 2025. The meeting will include board and committee reports, next year's budget, 2024 financial information, and the list of 2025 church officers and committee members.

Members will receive a copy of the annual report in the mail the second week of January. Because of this time-line, annual reports are due to Olivia no later than Monday, December 30th. (Although she would appreciate them sooner, if possible.)

Thank you for getting your reports completed in a timely manner, and for attending the January annual meeting.



DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING



The Wakeman Congregational Church Council will meet on **Monday, December 16th at 7:00 in** the outreach building. The 2025 church budget will be discussed and voted on at this meeting, so please be sure to have someone from your board or committee there to represent you.

GREIFSHARE GREIF SUPPORT GROUP NOW FORMING



This 13-week grief support group program focuses on important grief topics associated with the death of a loved one. The weekly videos feature nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people, and the video is followed by a small group discussion about what was viewed. Past participants have related how helpful the information and follow-up discussions were to them.

Many grieving people find they are only beginning the work of healing when friends or family have returned to their daily life routines. Too often people, including Christians, tend to stuff their grief instead of allowing it to do the God-given work for which it is intended. Don't allow fear of what others may think to keep you from what could help you. Confidentiality is very much a part of this program.

Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. You will find encouragement, comfort, and help in grieving the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, other family member, or friend. No matter what the cause of your loved one's death, this is an opportunity to be around people who understand what you are feeling. You will learn how to recognize the symptoms of being stuck in grief and that you do not need to live in bondage to certain emotions. You will learn valuable information about dealing with the changes in your life and renewing your hope for the future.

GriefShare will start in January on a day of the week and time, according to the scheduling needs of the participants.

Cost: The course is FREE. However, participants will want to purchase a \$33 workbook.

Scholarships for the workbook are available to those in need.

Any questions, speak with Pastor Janet or email at pastor.wakemanchurch@gmail.com

Registration information will be available in early 2025.

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

It's not too late to plan to join Pastor Janet for this 2-hour special event planned for people who have lost a loved one and are grieving a death. This Christian-based program will provide ways to successfully navigate the season's changes after suffering a loss. The program is planned for **Saturday, December 14th at 10:00** in the church sanctuary. If you are grieving a death, or know of someone in our community who is facing a bleak holiday season, please share this event date and time with them.

All are welcome to attend!



Surviving the *Holidays*

Encouragement, support, and valuable tools to navigate the challenges of the season.

Register Here:



or

call 440-839-2316

Join us for this 2-hour seminar

Saturday, December 14

10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Wakeman Congregational Church

14 Abbott St.

Wakeman, OH

Led by Pastor Janet Ross

pastor.wakemanchurch@gmail.com

CLOTHING CLOSET DATES

December

December 7th 9 to noon
 December 12th 5:30-7:30
 December 17th 9 to noon
 December 21st 9 to noon
 December 26th CLOSED



January

January 4th 9 to noon
 January 9th 5:30-7:30
 January 18th 9 to noon
 January 23rd 5:30-7:30
 January 28th 9 to noon

February

February 1st 9 to noon
 February 13th 5:30-7:30
 February 15th 9 to noon
 February 25th 9 to noon
 February 27th 5:30-7:30



TREASURE SNAPSHOT



TREASURER'S MONTHLY SNAPSHOT 10/31/2024

October	General Operating Income	\$5,013.61
October	General Operating Expense	<u>\$ 9,200.69</u>
	Income Exceed Expense	-\$4,187.08
	Year to Date GO Income	\$96,931.85
	Year to Date GO Expense	<u>\$95,450.01</u>
	Income Exceed Expense	\$1,481.84
	Budget Year to Date	\$101,233.33
	Budget Items Spent Year-to-Date	<u>\$95,583.44</u>
	Under Budget	\$5,649.89

Ken Green, Treasurer

WAKEMAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH LOGO



You have often seen this symbol in our church correspondence to show that Wakeman Congregational Church is growing faith, family and fellowship.



But, have you ever really thought about what the image means? When individuals look at the black and white image, they first notice one of two things: four arrows pointing to the center, or a cross in the center of four arrows. Which one did you see first? (There's no right answer, our brains all process images differently, so both answers are correct.)

Our moderator, Nathan Murdock, recently explained the meaning behind the image. He noted that the four arrows are pointing inward to the center of the cross, which is Christ, who is the sole focus of the church.

Nathan states that the image reminds us to focus on Christ with whatever we are doing for the church. We should always focus back, and make sure that what we are doing is done in Christ's name, as he has commanded us to do.

As fallible humans, we can tend to wander away from this Christ-center approach to church activities, and sometimes do them for other reasons. Our church logo reminds us to always center on Christ.

The colored version of the logo was designed by Olivia Krumwiede to use for our monthly Family Worship Services. You'll notice that two of the arrows are smaller to demonstrate that both adults and children are part of our church family.

*1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever.
Amen.*

FAITH = Forsaking All, I Trust Him

A MOMENT IN TIME

While doing research in the archives I came upon a folder titled "Voice." The "Voice" was the church's monthly communication prior to the mid 1960's. During the mid-60's the name was changed to the "Messenger" and has remained the same as such. In the December 19, 1962 issue is the story about the hymn "Silent Night." I would like to share it with you as we are entering the advent Season. Enjoy and have a Merry Christmas!

THE

VOICE

Vol. I Issue 31

Wakeman Congregational Church

December 19, 1962

IT WAS CHRISTMAS EVE, 1818, in the little village of Oberndorf, high up in the Austrian Alps.

The young parish priest, Joseph Mohr, was discussing preparations for the Christmas celebration. Father Mohr had given much thought to the composing of a beautiful Christmas song.

But in the church nearby, where Franz Gruber, the organist, was practicing, a calamity occurred. The organ broke down!

Franz Gruber, organist of Oberndorf, broke the sad news to Father Mohr that the organ had broken down on Christmas Eve. "We shall have music tomorrow anyway", said the priest.

He then agreed to write some verses of a Christmas song if Gruber would set them to simple music.

That evening a howling blizzard swept down from the Alpine peaks and there came a call for Father Mohr to go to a home where a baby boy had just been born. It was far from a tranquil Christmas Eve that night in 1818. Outside a blizzard raged. Inside the Alpine home the young priest, Joseph Mohr, gave his blessing to a new-born babe.

On his way home from his mission the wind died down and the storm stopped. The moon came out and stars twinkled in the sky.

Inspired by the calm and beauty, as well as by his visit to the young mother and child, he hurried home and began writing. The first words were "Silent Night, Holy Night."

Father Mohr brought the verses of his song to Franz Gruber, the organist. Gruber's setting of the music to the inspired words was almost spontaneous.

When the people of the little Alpine town gathered for Christmas worship there was no sound from the organ, for it was put out of repair. But the organist strummed his guitar and, joined by Father Mohr, sang "Silent Night, Holy Night",

An organ repairman arrived a few days later, heard the song and sang it when he got home.

It was many years before the lovely carol, "Silent Night, Holy Night", came into its own. Roving choral groups carried it to other parts of Austria. Not until 1842, twenty-four years after its birth, was it printed.

In 1854 the full choir of the Imperial Church of Berlin sang it before Emperor Frederick William IV. He immediately ordered it to be placed first in all religious Christmas programs.

"Silent Night" is sung all over the world. It has been immortalized by the unmusical and by the great voice of Madam Schumann-Heink. And in the little Alpine town of Berndorf a statue honors Father Mohr and Franz Gruber for their great gift to Christendom.

CHURCH LIFT UPDATE

- The trustees have contracted with Janotta & Herner, Monroeville, to build and install a lift to replace our current handicap ramp. This company will also be providing the architect and engineer expertise needed to safely complete this remodeling project on our 147-year-old church building.
- Why a lift instead of an elevator? A lift and elevator are essentially the same thing, as they both refer to a device that moves people between floors of a building. The difference is that lifts have minimum space and only have enough room to allow for one or two people, while an elevator has a large space and the power to carry more people and/or cargo. Installing a lift, instead of an elevator, will be much more cost effective for the church.
- Along with the lift, trustees are planning to add a portico (a covered area over the west entrance to the church) that will provide shelter from the rain, snow or sun while people enter/exit that doorway or use the lift.
- The trustees will share more information about the church lift and portico (cost, time-line, funding, placement) as the project progresses.

Luke 14: 13-14 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

SUPER BOWL SUBS

FEBRUARY

9

Save the Date - Keely will be working with the youth of our church to make subs to sell on February 9, 2025, Super Bowl Sunday. More information about ordering and cost will be available closer to the sale date, but be sure to mark your calendars now so that you don't miss out on this annual youth event!

CHURCH CORRESPONDENCE



October 2, 2024

Dear Wakeman Friends,

I'm happy to send this gift to you to support your many ministries I read about in your excellent newsletter. (The best in format, info, graphics, etc., I've seen in all my years of ministry in many churches and conferences.) I'm so thankful for the life of caring you are doing. You share the love of Christ beautifully!

I especially note your gifts to Heifer. I'll enclose a page of info on my belief and support of Heifer over recent years of my adult lifetime. It was through the church (churches, going back to my growing up long ago now, I'm 88 ½ and still in good health) that I learned of Heifer's work and methods of sharing.

With good memories of my life and ministry with you, 1990-97, I send you

-

Grace & Peace, Jeff Atwater



*** If you would like to respond, send mail to:

Reverend Jeffery Atwater, 4445 Veto Road, Vincent, Ohio 45784-5127.

We're sure that he would love to hear from you!

SALVATION ARMY RED KETTLE CAMPAIGN

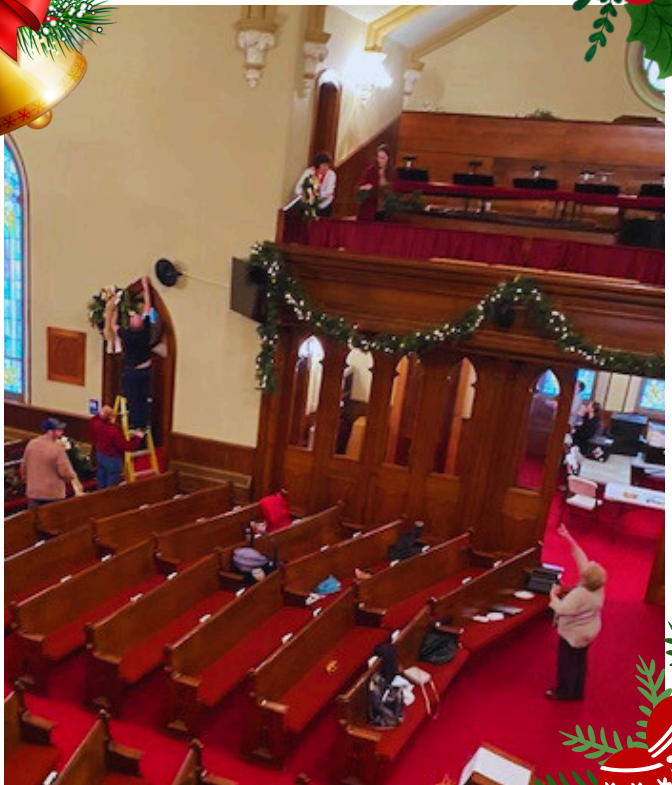
Thank you to everyone who signed up for a one-hour bell ringing shift for the Salvation

Army's annual Christmas campaign. All donations received during this campaign will be used locally to support the New London/Wakeman Salvation Army service unit. A kettle will be set-

up at the Wakeman Dollar General on Friday afternoon and all-day Saturday during the four weekends between Thanksgiving and Christmas. A second kettle will be available for donations in front of Wakeman bank on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning on the last weekend before Christmas.



HANGING OF THE GREENS



CARING COMMUNITY DECEMBER NEEDS



Canned chicken/tuna, Pancake mix, Pancake syrup, Paper towels, Toilet paper, & Muffin mix

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

WOW!



Join us on Sunday, December 15 during worship to watch the youth of our church tell the story of Jesus birth in the play WOW! by Gwynne Watkins.

We will be rehearsing during Sunday School time (10:15 to 11:00) on December 1st and 8th. All children are invited to participate!

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

Cookies by the Pound

&

Holiday Mini Mall



- **Saturday, December 7**
 - **11am-3pm**
 - **Outreach Center**



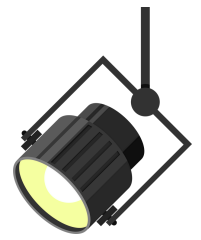
Holiday Mini Mall

Limit two gifts per child

Kids 0-14 years old



Kids select gifts - we do the wrapping



SPOTLIGHT ON MONA (WOLFE) DAUCH

Short Bio: I grew up on St. Johns Road in Wakeman, along with my 3 brothers and 2 sisters. My father passed away young, so my mom raised us 6 kids alone with the help of my Grandma and Grandpa Puder. My Uncle Clay Puder rented us a home to live in and only charged us \$15 a month for many, many years, until my mom could purchase it.

My mom remarried to a kind man named Walt Flew. He never had children of his own but he treated all of us as his children. He walked me down the aisle, in this same Wakeman Congregational Church in 1954. Bill and I were married for 69 full years.

As a young girl, I worked for a school teacher, Pat Stall. I would clean her home every Saturday for 25 cents an hour. I also did ironing for the Daughtery family, who lived on Fitchville River Road. After I married, and Bill had left for the service, I worked for Heiser Photography. Eventually, I and our young son, Billy, traveled to San Francisco to join Bill in the armed services.

When we returned to Wakeman, we rented a home at 27 Pleasant Street. Eventually we would purchase our forever home at 5069 State Rte. 303, where all of our 5 children were raised. Together we would begin a journey in trucking and concrete, which is still family-owned today.

My heart is, and always will be, at this Wakeman Congregational Church and all of the caring people who are a part of it. The church helped me through some horribly hard times of losing loved ones. The loss of our oldest son Bill in a car accident on Father's Day was devastating. I was angry at God and couldn't understand. It took me a long time to come to terms and to reach out to God for comfort and healing.

And recently, the loss of my husband, Bill. That loss weighs heavily on me, too. I think I miss him the most in the mornings. It was the time of day when we would drink our coffee and talk. I also miss our evening Kubota rides through our woods. Again, I had to search for God. I prayed for His love and support and grace to help me through. Without Him, I could not have continued to tread through this changed life of mine. I take it one day at a time, but I know God is with me. I am blessed with good family and church friends.

Go-to place to pray: I usually pray on my knees in the early mornings, in the peacefulness of my den, where Bill and I spent much of our time.



Songs at the top of your playlist: My favorite church songs are “On Eagles Wings” and “Here I am Lord”. They both bring peace to me and help me to know that God is always near.



Favorite Comfort Foods: Two favorite desserts I enjoyed with our family was always German chocolate cake and homemade cream puffs. The cream puff recipe I learned from Mrs. Hurst in high school. She was very instrumental in my life, because she always took me to the Mother’s Day Banquet at our church, and she purchased me a Betty Crocker cookbook. It’s the book that is still kept in my drawer and I continue to use it today.



Mona, holding her Betty Crocker cookbook. It is obviously well-loved, as evidenced by the torn binding and the rubber band holding it together!