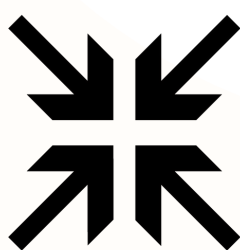


# MARCH

## Messenger

### 2025



Wakeman  
Congregational  
Church

# NEWS FROM THE DIACONATE BOARD

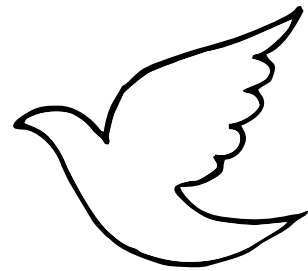
As you are reading this edition of The Messenger, the Lenten season will soon begin. This year, Lent, a special period of reflection, fasting and prayer, begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5 and ends on Thursday, April 17.



Christians around the world still take the 40 days preceding Easter to fast and prepare for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

During this Lenten season, devotionals will be mailed to all the children and devotionals for the adults will be available at the back of the sanctuary. If you would like a devotional mailed to you, please contact the church office at 440-839-2316.

We welcome each of you to join us not just during this Lenten season but every Sunday to worship and praise our Lord and Savior.



Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to he, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him. ~Matthew 4:1-11



## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." ~ Philippians 1:3-6

On Sunday, February 9, we made our formal covenant to work in partnership for the Gospel of Christ Jesus. You, as the Body of Christ known as the Wakeman Congregational Church, and me, a pastor of 33 years, acknowledged that God has brought us together. God has been at work in us – and now our paths have joined, and we will walk together to further God's mission for us and through us. It is a holy union.

I remember when Joel and I got married. We had dated for a couple of years and then, as our relationship deepened, we began to understand that God was bringing us together to walk hand in hand in covenant with one another. We learned how to listen to each another – and we're still learning. We learned how to speak our truth to each another – and we're still learning. We learned how to put aside our own individual desires for the greater good of our marriage – and we're still learning.

A partnership between a congregation and a pastor is much like a marriage ... a committed relationship in progress. We learn from one another – and then we learn some more.

On our wedding day, June 12, 2012, I went to the restroom downstairs to do my final primping. As I walked across Pilgrim Hall to go upstairs to marry this amazing man God had brought to me, I suddenly could feel the presence of many people in the room, like a potluck dinner. I "heard" people laughing, telling stories, children playing on the periphery – and I was walking upstairs to "get something for someone from my office." Huh?!? No, I was walking upstairs to say "I do" to Joel Ross. But the vision stayed with me.

God has been at work in each of us from the day we were born. Often, we have strayed – sometimes even getting tied up in bramble bushes as we veered off the path, but God has patiently and persistently called us back to our path. I rejoice that our paths have joined. I rejoice in the lessons each of us, individually and collectively, have learned along our journeys – even, and maybe especially, the hard lessons learned on the side of the road. I rejoice in the lessons yet to be learned, the ministry yet to unfold, the love and grace yet to deepen even more.

In ministry with you in Christ,  
Pastor Janet



# PASTOR JANET'S FORMAL INSTALLATION

On February 9th, Dr. Julie Murdock lead us in worship as we made our covenant to one another, officially recognizing Rev. Dr. Janet Ross as our pastor. A potluck luncheon followed in the the basement. The weather was not favorable but many braved the ice and snow to make it to church in support of pastor Janet.



Pilgrim Hall decorated for the luncheon.





Pastor Janet leading a prayer at the start of the service.



The children of the church had their own part in the installation of Pastor Janet. They were asked to do their best to come to church, learn about Jesus, be involved in church and listen to Pastor Janet. The children answered "I will with the help of God."

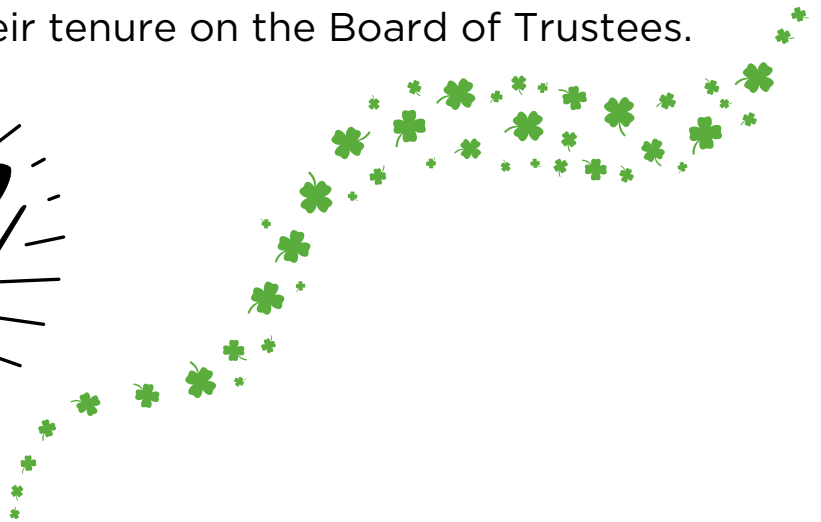


## TRUSTEES NEWS



The trustees recently welcomed three new members to their church board. These new members include Bruce Leimbach, Jerry Pickett and Dale Layport. They join current trustees, Brenda Friend and John Krumwiede, in the care of our church building and campus.

Pete Hazel and Steve Dillon, the two outgoing trustee members, deserve a heartfelt thank-you for their dedication and faithful service to our church during their tenure on the Board of Trustees.



## ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT UPDATE

The Trustees have received a quote from Access Solutions for a lift that would transport individuals from ground level to the basement and to the sanctuary level.

The Trustees have met with Janotta and Herner twice and expect to get quotes and architectural/engineering plans by March for the project. John Krumwiede has offered to help with the removal of the existing access ramp. Total scope, design, costs and funding are yet to be determined. Church Council and the congregation will be informed as more details become available.





# GriefShare®

## Support Group

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 meet at the church for 13 weeks on **Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00pm starting April 2.**

Cost: The course is FREE. However, participants will want to purchase a \$20 workbook. Scholarships for the workbook are available.

Any questions, speak with Pastor Janet or email

[pastor.wakemanchurch@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.wakemanchurch@gmail.com)

or use the QR code to register:



# CHURCH CORRESPONDENCE FROM OUR MISSIONS PARTNERS



## **Caring Community**

The Board of Caring Community would like to thank all of you for supporting Caring Community. We are grateful for the monetary support, the food donations and the time spent to support our mission of helping those in need in our community. Thank you also for coordinating the opening times of the Clothing Closet to coincide with Caring Community's monthly food distribution. That is a great service to our clients. We truly appreciate that you hosted the Thanksgiving Service last year. It was beautiful and heartwarming to have the community come together and worship and give thanks.

We are so blessed to have so many kind and generous people in this small community who come forward to help others who are not as fortunate. We look forward to many years of collaboration with you. May God bless you.



## **Wakeman Eagles Redcap Charity Board**

The Wakeman Eagles Redcap Charity Board is pleased to inform you we have awarded the Wakeman Clothing Closet the \$1000 requested for whatever is needed. We are happy to help such an incredible committee and thank you for all that you do for our community.

The Wakeman Eagles Redcap Charity Board is also pleased to inform you we have awarded the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Christmas Campaign the \$1000 requested. We are happy to help an important organization and are appreciative of all the volunteers.

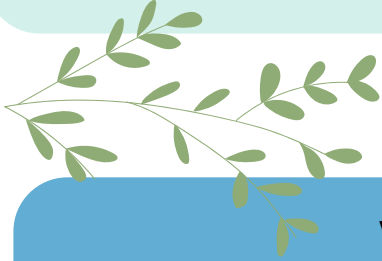
Thank you so much!



### **Operation Christmas Child**

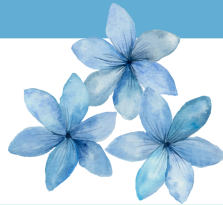
Thank you to Wakeman Congregational Church for Operation Christmas Child showboxes. The Firelands area collected 5,583 shoeboxes!

Pat Rockwell, Central Drop-off



### **Western Reserve Ruritan Club**

The Western Reserve Ruritan Club recently donated \$200 to the Wakeman Clothing Closet to use to purchase socks and underwear for the community clothing bank.



### **Reach Our Youth**

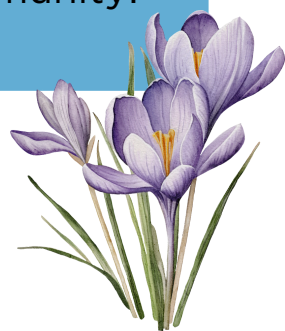
Thank you for the recent generous donation of \$496 to Reach Our Youth (ROY) Inc. in Huron County. Your gift supports our big brother/sister type program that provides guidance and friendship to local youth through one-on-one mentoring. This contribution will enable ROY to continue to help children reach their full potential.

Sarah Nutter, ROY Executive Director



### **Firelands Local School District**

The Firelands Board of Education greatly appreciates your donation of \$496 to our Food Service Department. We will use these funds to support students in need. Thank you for your support of our students. We are grateful for your contribution to our community!



# CHURCH MEMBER NOTES

## Cheer Baskets

I would like to thank you for the wonderful goodie box. I remember helping at church to make cheer baskets for people at Christmas time. Tell Diane and Melinda that I miss not working with them to make Christmas stuff.

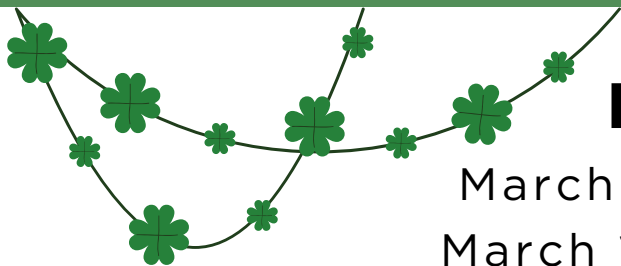
Health, I have good days and bad days. I know that God is always near to help with the bad ones. Miss not seeing and talking with you after church on Sunday.

Take care and God be with you. Love, Ginny Grady

Hi! Thanks so much for our bag of goodies. It means a lot that you haven't forgotten us. We miss church.

Love, Marge & Paul Brookover

## CLOTHING CLOSET DATES



### March

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



### April

April 5th 9 to noon  
April 10th 5:30-7:30  
April 19th 9 to noon  
April 22nd 9 to noon  
April 24th 5:30-7:30



### May

May 3rd 9 to noon  
May 8th 5:30-7:30  
May 17th 9 to noon  
May 22nd 5:30-7:30  
May 27th 9 to noon



# FORMER PASTOR NEWS

Reverend Dana Welch:

Reverend Dana Welch's wife, Flora Jean, is in the Glen Park Nursing Home, 14769 Sausman Road, Sherwood, Ohio, 43556.



Reverend Ed Shelly (excerpts from a card sent to Carol Todd):

Wishing you old-fashioned memories and every joy of the season. I still preach two times each month at First Faith Community Church. I am 94 now, but still have a few good brain cells left.

I have lunch with John Douds and Kenny Green once each year. I have been married to Nelda for seven years now. It sure beats loneliness. She is a believer – so we have much in common.

May Christ be at the center of your Christmas.

(Reverend Shelly's address is

225 East Jefferson St.

Sandusky, Ohio 44870.)



## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING



Church Council will meet March 17th at 7PM in the outreach center. All are welcome to attend.

# SENIOR FELLOWSHIP

The Moving Forward Team is currently planning to establish a monthly senior fellowship time. The senior group will meet in the outreach building at 11:00 to 12:30, on the second Wednesday of each month. The monthly program will include: **Faith** (prayer), **Fun** (a group activity), **Food** (a meal) and **Fellowship**.

The first meeting of this group will be on **Wednesday, April 9th**. Transportation can be arranged for anyone needing a ride. We encourage our seniors to attend this time of faith, fun, food and fellowship.



## **Name the Senior Fellowship Group!**

The Moving Forward Team members couldn't select a name for our new senior group, so we decided to ask our membership to help us choose a name.

### **Contest Rules:**

Text your group name to Melinda at 419-541-7528 by March 11th.

Winner will be announced at the worship service on Sunday, March 16th, and will receive a Cream of the Crop gift card!



Thanks for joining in the fun to help us choose a name for this new group!!!

VBS 2025



## SAVE THE DATE

Save the dates  
**June 16th-19th**  
for our 2025  
Vacation Bible School!

Embark on an exciting journey with Road Trip VBS is based on Joshua 1:9: “The LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Discover God’s presence everywhere as we explore new places, make new friends, and experience God’s goodness together.

Join us in a fun-filled adventure on the open road, taking all the kids (Travelers) on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Led by the Navigator and an adventurous dog named Scout (the VBS puppet), kids will learn that God is always with them. Through engaging stories from the Navigator’s Guide (the Bible), Travelers will delve into timeless tales of faith from the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as they face new challenges and find strength in God’s presence on this unforgettable trip!

Road trips are a great way to build strong relationships and create indelible memories. This makes Road Trip VBS not only a fun experience for kids but also an opportunity for them to strengthen their faith and bond with others in their community. With engaging activities, interactive games, and meaningful lessons, children will have a blast while they grow in their understanding of God’s love and promises for everyone.

Green Light (Theme Verse): “The LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)

# MISSIONS NEWS

- Thank you to everyone who shopped the after-Christmas sales to buy gift bags, tissue paper and gifts for the Mini Mall. We have a nice supply ready for next year's shop!



And... speaking of bargain hunting... the Clothing Closet recently received a large donation of winter hats and scarves, but we could still use kids' winter gloves. If you find any end-of-the-season deals on gloves, we'd appreciate your donation!

- Our church youth recently held their annual Super Bowl sub sale on Sunday, February 9th. This year, the profit of \$583 went to A New Beginning, a non-profit set up to help the victims of hurricane Helene in North Carolina.



## CHURCH PARSONAGE

At the January 2025 annual meeting, Trustee chairman, Steve Dillon, reported that the Trustees and Church Council would like the congregation to consider the sale of the church parsonage. Currently the house is vacant with no rent to cover expenses. Additionally, there are concerns associated with a non-profit organization operating as a landlord.

A motion was made at the meeting that the Trustees be authorized to offer the parsonage, located at 22 Cooper Street in Wakeman, for sale. Discussion followed, including how to proceed with a proposed sale. Brenda Friend and Bruce Leimbach have had experience in the sale of property, and they would be willing to take the lead on this project. During the sale, the trustees indicated that they will use an attorney to prepare a purchase agreement and a title company for the title transfer details.

A vote of the membership approved the proposed sale of the parsonage. Final sale and designation of the sale funds will be contingent upon congregational approval.

✧ ✧ Please pick up your furniture from the parsonage asap ✧ ✧  
✧ ✧ Anything left will be donated ✧ ✧



# MODERATOR MESSAGE

Message from your new Moderator, Susan Hazel.

On January 26, 2025, I was honored to be elected as the Moderator at our annual meeting. After hearing several Bible stories about saying “yes” to the Lord, I prayerfully said “yes” to our nominating committee. I will strive to do my best to represent our church and Lord as your Church Moderator. I am thankful for Trisha Palmer’s willingness to serve as our Church Clerk. I am also sincerely grateful for Nathan Murdock’s dedicated leadership as our Moderator through some challenging times.

Thanks to the commitment of our parents, John and Ruth Stackhouse, my sister, Sharon, and I were “raised” in the Wakeman Congregational Church. I was confirmed and married here. I chose to follow Jesus in this church. Our three children were baptized and confirmed in this church. Our five grandchildren are now also learning about Jesus and His teachings in this church. My husband Pete and I have been active members for more than forty years.

Our congregation is blessed with different individuals who come together to “grow in faith”; to continue to learn and share His Word. We are a “faith family.” God is our Guide. We may stumble along the way but with God’s Grace, we strive to follow His Path and move forward.

According to our church’s constitution, the Moderator “shares with the Pastor the responsibility for the general welfare of the church and serves as the lay spokesperson of the church as necessary.”



The Moderator also presides at all congregational meetings and church council meetings. The Council will meet at least quarterly with posted dates. The Council's mission is to coordinate the efforts of church officers, committees, and boards, and promote communication. "The function of the Church Council is to visualize the entire workings of the church to achieve a unity of purpose and action."

As your new Moderator, I welcome your ideas, suggestions and concerns. I challenge each of you to grow in your faith. Say "yes" to the Lord.



Susan Hazel  
419-706-3600  
shazel55@gmail.com



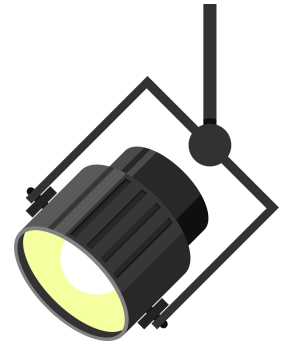
Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

# GETTING TO KNOW OUR YOUTH

For the next several Messenger issues, we will be highlighting our older church youth in our Spotlight articles. We are excited to get the chance to know these young people better, and we know that you will be, too!

## SPOTLIGHT ON LAKE BERGER



**Short Bio:** I live at home with my mother and soon-to-be father (Peter is in the process of adopting me.) I have two dogs, two cats and four hermit crabs. I am a sophomore at Western Reserve High School. I play basketball, baseball, and run cross country. Some of my hobbies are fixing my four-wheeler, playing video games and not listening to my parents.

**Hardest thing you've ever done:** Losing my biological father to a drug addiction at a young age or having to listen to my stepdad (Peter) eat.

**Favorite Bible verse:** Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

**Best advice you've been given:** The four points: work hard, make yourself better, be honest and treat people the way you want to be treated. - Peter, my stepdad

**Real life hero:** My mother because she has always put me before herself, and even when times are hard, I always felt well-loved.

**Song at the top of your playlist:**  
Don't Stop Believing by Journey



**Go-to place to pray:** The church sanctuary.



**Favorite vacation:** My family and I went to Hawks Cay Resort in the Florida Keys. It was special because we went with my two brothers, William and Xander. We sat by the pool while drinking summery drinks and went out and did a bunch of fun things.



**Favorite comfort food:** Chicken Alfredo, because it is one of the few meals my mom can make and not burn or mess it up.

**Occupation you'd like to pursue after high school:**  
Anesthesiologist or engineer.