

THE CARILLON



SCRIPTURE LESSONS

December 7 Matthew 3: 1-12
"Peace in the Wilderness"

December 14 Matthew 11: 2-11
"Joy-filled Waiting"

December 21 Matthew 1: 18-25
"God's Greatest Gift: Out of Love Comes New Life"

December 28 Matthew 2: 13-23
"A History of Christmas"

DECEMBER 2025

6	9:00 am	Cookie Walk
8	7:00 pm	Trustees meeting
14	11:30 am	Deacons meeting 2-5pm "The Star" movie for children
16	5:00 pm	Claridon Community Helps dinner
21	Birthday Party for Jesus	
24	6:00 pm	Sing-a-long 6:30 pm Christmas Eve service

Each Sunday: Worship 10:00 am

Each Wednesday: Choir Practice 5:30 pm
 Bell Choir 6:30 pm

Each Thursday: Bible Study 6:30 pm

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CLARIDON

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“X-ing out Christmas with Xmas”

I am sure many of you grew up knowing that many people used Xmas as a real word to shorten Christmas when writing it out longhand. I can remember my own mother, who had very pretty handwriting, doing so. This was back in the days when shorthand was a class taught in high school. That class is no longer in our world. Yet, we still have Christmas and what an emoji can't substitute for, misspelling often happens, thanks to smartphones!

I used to think my mother, who was a very faith-filled woman and Christ-centered was doing something sacrilegious by not spelling out the Christ in Christmas and just X-ing him out. However, it wasn't until seminary, much later on in years where I came to understand that the X really was a religious icon representing the name Christ. How so you might ask?

The “X” in Christmas (Xmas) comes from the Greek letter Chi (X), which is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, “Christos.” Early Christians used the abbreviation as a symbol for Christ, with the practice of shortening the word “Christmas” to “Xmas” dating back to at least the 16th century.

Isn't it amazing what a little education can do for the mind, body and spirit? It is amazing to me when we make assumptions based upon the limited knowledge we have instead of seeking out wandering questions in wonderment for the gaining and exploring of seeking to understand and make connection with life and those in it.

This Christmas Season, let us kindly take a moment each day to explore the newness (even if it is only new to us) in life for the purpose of becoming fully present. When we are present in life at any given moment, we become a present in life to God our Creator who created us to work through us. We can begin this journey of exploring by remembering it is safe to trust in the Lord each moment we willingly become present in this gift of life God has given to us. Remember: X marks the spot. The spot is Christ. The gift this season is to be present. Present to learn, love, grow in God as we continue to celebrate life together in his Name.

Blessings to All!
In God's love,
Pastor Julie ☺



PRAYER LIST

Doris Wilson	August Speziale
Bree Ellis Banks	Norm Zepp
Julie Webb Hunt	Sharon Hunter
Joyce Vargo	Beth Christian Sharp
Dale Baptie	Kevin Playman
Rick Juhasz	Denny Bihary
Connie & Wayne Streble	Thomas Woods
Kelly Wagner	Rheta Crowley
Ed Ward	Gary Branstein
Joe Berninger	Jeffery Przybysz
Lee McCurry	Dee Hayman Armes
Tim Engelman	Ben Armstrong
Scott Pricer	Esther Miller
Sandra Trotten	Kevin Reed
Lumadue Watson family	Sara Mellott
Don and Marilyn Hornak	Ellen Bonner
Laura Vokoun	

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We hope everyone enjoyed the Advent Workshop this year! Throughout the Advent season, we will be meeting together as a combined Sunday School and focusing on the various characters of the Christmas story. Each week, kids will work on different pieces of a nativity set.

There is a movie party for kids to watch The Star on Sunday, December 14th at 2-5pm at the Dye house (please note the date change from what we originally shared). The party gives time to hang out with one another, enjoy Christmas treats, watch a fun movie, and make a few crafts! Kids can be dropped off for the event, as we will have enough adult volunteers.

We will have cake for a Birthday Party for Jesus after church on December 21st. There will be no Sunday School on December 28.

DEACONS

The deacons set up the remembrance table for the service in November. We also served communion that day. November 29th we will be decorating the sanctuary for the Christmas season.

The deacons will be meeting on the second Sunday of the month at 11:30 a.m. until further notice.

We meet at least once a month and send cards, make calls, etc.

~Linda Angstrom

PRESIDENT

There will NOT be a Cabinet meeting in December 2025.

TIME CHANGE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE December 24, 2025: Sing-A-Long starts at 6 pm and Service at 6:30 pm

The Annual Church Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25, 2026 promptly at 11:30 a.m.

TRUSTEES

Although our new front doors are painted and ready to be installed, there is a problem. The sill beam running across the whole entrance is rotten and will have to be replaced. That is what the contractor is working on, how to do it best.... I don't have to tell you that this will not be ideal weather for some months.

The AED has been ordered. After Christmas we will have a training session for all after we get it installed.

Cookie Walk Reminder! Saturday December 6 is the date. We are in competition with other cookie walks so may I remind you we are famous bakers, let's live up to those standards and produce beautiful and tasty cookies. Bring on Friday please, or very, very early on Saturday morning. It takes several people to plate them all on Saturday morning, so they are fresh! Thank you

CLARIDON COMMUNITY HELPS

Hello Everyone!

I just wanted to update you as to what Claridon Community Helps has been doing this past few weeks downstairs.

- Students of Berkshire's Badger Lab came out on 2 mornings to make pumpkin pies for the Thanksgiving meals.
- Berkshire Administrative staff came after school this past Monday to make Thanksgiving dinner for 22 families consisting of 86 people. This included mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole, turkey, stuffing and gravy.
- On Tuesday afternoon members of Burton/Middlefield Rotary arrived to bag up the dinners for families. Then take them out to deliver them.
- Just before they arrived, Mary of Geauga Growth Partnership contacted me to ask if I had a need for boxes of produce as she was volunteering at Auburn Career's food distribution. I explained that we had dinner going out for 22 families in an hour. She brought over 22 boxes of produce from Auburn to go along with the dinners we were sharing.
- The previous week was our community dinner in which we provided 113 meals to members of the community. Students and volunteers from Torchlight Mentoring (formerly Big Brothers Big Sisters) helped prepare the meal. We were having applesauce that night. They continued making applesauce in which we froze to go with the Thanksgiving dinner.
- Finally, Matt, a summer lunch volunteer, and I have been trying to figure out how to get food into the hands of children whom don't attend Berkshire school, as they already have a program, on the weekends. This would be shelf stable food that the kids could make themselves. Not like our summer lunch program with freshly prepared meals. The week before Thanksgiving, I was contacted by an anonymous donor to see if I had a need for single serving shelf stable products for kids. God opened the door, so I ran with it. I contacted families in Middlefield village, because you have to start somewhere, and asked them if they needed, not wanted the food dropped off at their homes on Fridays? Two families said they were good and the other 7 families said yes. We began that week and now have dropped off shelf stable food for the kids on two fridays. We have enough items to run through the end of December. I expect another donation. If that comes through we will keep going. The food boxes are stored in the food room and on Fridays we come in and pick up what is needed to deliver.