

# Buffalo United Methodist Church

December 2023

1000 30<sup>th</sup> Street NE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402



## Pastor Carol's Desk

I do wish each and everyone a wonderful Christmas. We wait all year for this special day to celebrate the birth of Christ. It is amazing to think that this little boy, born to the Virgin Mary, would be our Lord and Savior.

Although this year has been hard for some of us, we all have so much to be grateful for. The Buffalo Church family has been so strong and supportive for so many of us. I know that I will be forever thankful for all of you.

I trust Christmas will be a day when each of you can be blessed with the joy of spending time with family and friends. For many of us the celebration of Christmas will include watching our children and grandchildren unwrapping their gifts and observing the smiling faces and the feeling of love around the room. We all have a lot to be thankful for.

*Merry Christmas,*

*Pastor Carol*

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## The Season of Advent

The history of Christian Advent finds its origins in the fourth century, drawing its name from the Latin term "adventus," which translates to "coming" or "arrival." Initially, Advent was a season of fasting and penance, similar in tone and purpose to the Lenten season. It served as a time for believers to reflect on the significance of Christ's incarnation and to anticipate his return or second coming.

Over time, the observance of Advent has undergone an evolution in emphasis and practices. The somber and penitential aspects of the season have shifted to a more joyful anticipation of Christ's birth, embracing a spirit of hope, expectation, and joyful waiting for the coming of the Messiah.

## Matthew 25

On Sunday, December 10 we will collect a noisy offering for Matthew 25. The organization's Executive Director, Clint Twedt-Ball, will speak to us about Matthew 25 and the many ways this nonprofit serves the Cedar Rapids Community. According to their website, the people at Matthew 25 believe in the God-given potential of all people and places. "Our work often takes place in neighborhoods some would describe as rundown, low-income, dangerous or plagued with problems. Instead, we choose to see possibilities, and to build upon the good."

Two notable Matthew 25 activities are their Groundswell Café and the Cultivate Hope Corner Store. The café, located at 201 3rd Ave SW, serves breakfast and lunch, featuring soup, salads, sandwiches, wraps, omelets, smoothies, and pastries. A variety of coffees, teas, and other beverages are also available. Hours are Monday-Saturday, from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The non-profit grocery store has recently opened in the historic Hosmer Building on the corner of Ellis Boulevard and E Avenue NW. This beautifully remodeled space provides reduced-cost produce that is fresh and local, as well as other dry goods and food staples. The survival of this store depends on people shopping there and donating funds or free produce to assist community members in need. The store hours are Monday-Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

## Neighborhood Potluck & Bingo

Join us at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 14 for a neighborly potluck. Feel free to bring along a friend, neighbor, relative, or anyone who might benefit from a good meal and good conversation. As always, beverages and tableware will be provided. Since we will be playing Bingo after the lunch, please plan to bring two or three inexpensive wrapped gifts to share.

## January Christmas Lunch & Bingo

The annual Sunday Christmas Lunch is in the planning stages. More information will be shared as it becomes available. You will be asked to make a reservation for the lunch. Just like the Neighborhood Potluck in December, we will be playing Bingo after the lunch, so please plan to bring two or three more inexpensive wrapped gifts to share—which could be the gifts you won in December?

<b>B I N G O</b>				
8	25	39	54	66
10	17	42	52	63
7	26	33	56	74
15	19	32	59	73
6	21	40	46	67

### Mission of Hope

– in the back of the sanctuary is a large box – the large box has a label that reads “Mission of Hope” – the box is intended for donations of cereal, canned goods, personal hygiene products, and toilet paper – the donations are greatly appreciated – please consider helping us fill the box --



## Taizé Prayer Service

A Taizé-style prayer service is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 30. The candlelight service features silent meditation, private prayer, reading of scripture, and singing of traditional Taizé hymns. This ecumenical event is an ideal opportunity for inviting friends, neighbors, and family members to join us for a beautiful pre-Advent experience. It's likely that following the one-hour prayer service, refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall.



## Ingathering Kits Shipped

In early November twenty school kits and twenty personal dignity kits were transported to Cedar Falls by United Women in Faith members from Kenwood Park UMC. Thanks to Judy Hackney for completing the paperwork and making sure the kits were complete. Thanks to Gary Hackney for moving the boxes of kits.

## November City/School Election Bake Sale

We collected \$66 from the Election Day Bake Sale. Buffalo had 396 citizens voting at our polling station for Precinct 15. Thanks to everyone who donated baked goods for the sale and treats for the poll workers.

## Christmas Eve Service Treat Bags

Donations of wrapped candy or other treats are needed for the treat bags to be handed out after the Christmas Eve service. Please bring enough for 40 bags. The bags will be assembled after church on Sunday, December 17.



# December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
The United Women in Faith will not be meeting in December. Everyone is invited to their next meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 18. There will be a short business meeting, followed by a timely program.			29 November Decorate the Church for the Holidays (9:00 am)	30 Taizé Prayer Service (7:00 pm)	1	2 Tomorrow is the first Sunday in Advent
3 Worship Service & Communion (9:00 am)	4	5	6	7 Christmas Music at St. Paul's (7:00 pm)	8	9
10 Worship Service (9:00 am) Noisy Offering	11	12	13 Church Cleaning (9:00 am)	14 Neighborhood Potluck & Bingo (11:30 am)	15	16 Don't forget donations of goodies for Xmas Eve bags.
17 Worship Service (9:00 am) Pack Xmas Eve Bags	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31 Worship (9:00 am) Christmas Eve (4:00 pm)	25 <b>Christmas</b>	26	27	28	29	30

**December (and early January) Birthdays:** 7 – Pastor Carol Mart 9 – Eileen Kaplan 11- Gary Hackney  
12 – Susan Harapat 18 -- Faye Reynolds 24 – Jim McKibbin 28 – Ben Griffith  
January 6 -- Charlotte Stanford

**Anniversaries:** January 1 – Hep Hentrich & Eileen Kaplan



## Jobs Well Done

- A Thank You in advance to everyone who helped decorate the church on November 29 and donated poinsettias for the alter during Advent.
- Thanks to Pat Ferguson for vacuuming the church before cleaning day. It is wonderful to have that job done ahead of time.
- Thanks for those who brighten someone's day with an expression of appreciation and love in a post card or a most welcome phone call.
- Thanks to Fred Himes for his donation enabling us to purchase apples, oranges and peanuts for the Christmas Eve treat bags.

## Buffalo Calendar

- November 29: Decorating the Church in preparation for Advent and Christmas (9:00 a.m.)  
November 30: Taizé Prayer Service (7:00 p.m.)  
December 3: Communion Sunday  
December 10: Noisy Offering for Matthew 25; special guest speaker at Worship Service will be Clint Twedt-Ball, Executive Director of Matthew 25  
December 13: Church Cleaning (9:00 a.m.)  
December 14: Neighborhood Potluck (11:30 a.m.)  
December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (4:00 p.m.)

## Scripture Readings for Worship Services in December

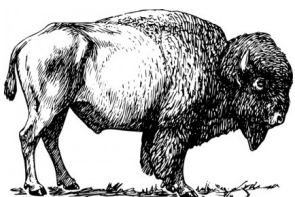
- December 3: Gospel Mark 13: 24-37 & Psalm: 80: 1-7, 17-19  
December 10: Mark 1: 1-8 & 2nd Peter 3:8-15a  
December 17: Gospel John 1: 6-8, 19-28 & Psalm 126  
December 24: Gospel Luke 1:26-38 & Romans 16: 25-27  
Christmas Eve: Luke 2: 1-20 & Psalm 96  
December 31: Luke 2: 22-40 & Galatians 4: 4-7

## Christmas Music Extravaganza

The Metro United Methodist Laity Board is sponsoring the Christmas Music Extravaganza at St. Paul's UMC at 7:00 p.m. on December 7. The Christmas story from the Gospel of St. Luke will be read and music will be provided by musicians from the choirs of St. Paul's, Trinity St James, Palo, and Lovely Lane. Admission is free but there will be a goodwill offering for a local food bank. No reception afterwards.



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**Since 1876**

Church Website: <http://buffalounitedmethodist.weebly.com/>