

Local Missions



Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf is open Tuesdays from 3:00-6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m.-noon.



Volunteers are always welcome! Please bring donations to church on the first Sunday of each month.



The Well Youth Center hours are Tuesdays-Fridays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. The mission jar will be in the back of the Sanctuary on the third Sunday of each month.

Loaves & Fishes “Love Item”

Each month, The United Church features a “love item” of special focus for members to donate to Loaves & Fishes. This helps stock the shelves at Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf and helps increase our giving to this worthy and much needed mission in our own town. **Our Love Item for December is cereal!**

This summer, Loaves & Fishes noticed they needed more breakfast and lunch items than during the school year to help feed kids who rely on schools for those meals. So, for December, let’s help stock their shelves so they can be ready to help out families over the upcoming winter break! Cereals can be an important source of nutrients, especially for kids in low-income households.

Loaves & Fishes Holiday Boxes

Maple River Loaves & Fishes will be packing these boxes December 14th at 1:00 p.m. at St. Teresa’s and handing them out December 16th from 3-6 p.m. at St. Teresa’s in Mapleton. We can always use volunteers to help!

The United Church of Mapleton

201 Troendle St SW; PO Box 413 Mapleton, MN 56065

(507) 524-3141

www.unitedchurchmapleton.org

secretary@unitedchurchmapleton.org

Our Mission:

The United Church of Mapleton is a Christian fellowship of mission, worship, and faith formation dedicated to the Maple River community.

Order of Worship

Sunday, December 14th, 2014 ~ Third Sunday of Advent

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

*Call to Worship and Advent Candle Lighting



Pastor: We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice and an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share with the world.

(Please keep silence as the third candle is lit.)

One: We have joy, for Christ is coming.

Many: Loving God, we open ourselves to you.

Show us the creative power of hope.

Teach us the peace that comes from justice.

Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

**Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
that we may walk in the light of Christ.**

One: Rejoice in God always, again I say, rejoice!

God has created you with a heart meant for abundant joy.

**Many: We will find what makes us joyful,
and make that our gift to the world.**

Continued

One: Trust in God's good will for all of creation
and open yourself to God's gentle, transforming love.

Many: We will welcome new possibilities in our lives.

We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.

We will shape our lives in Christ-like joy.

***Opening Hymn**

“Angels We Have Heard on High” #188

***Prayer of Invocation**

***Gloria Patri**

Sung a whole step lower than printed in hymnal

“Glory Be to the Father” #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen, Amen!

***Moment of Fellowship**

Children and Youth Christmas Program: *A Spontaneous Nativity*

Mission Moment

Rebecca Benson

Worship with Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

***Doxology**

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #34

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;

Praise him above, ye heavenly host:

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen!

***Prayer of Dedication**

Sharing Prayer Requests and Praises

You are invited to take a Prayer Requests and Praises sheet from the pew rack in front of you to write your prayer requests and praises.

These will be collected by the ushers in a moment and shared with the congregation anonymously before our Preparation for Prayer.

Preparation for Prayer (*Moment of Silence*)

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

“Once in Royal David's City” #183

***Benediction**

Please be mindful of others who continue to worship through the Postlude.

Postlude

Please rise in body or spirit.

Children and Youth of the 2014 Christmas Program

Narrators:

Alec Bair

Carter Bair

Kylie Black

Sam Shubert

Nick Shubert

Cody Walters

Brady Walters

Characters:

Angel of the Lord: Annalivia Bair

Prophet: Ashton Samuelson

Wise Man: Carson Urban

Priestess: Madison Ward

King Herod: Emmitt Johnson

Shepherd: Greysen Samuelson

Sheep: Hudson Samuelson

Angel: Brody Bair

Mary: Merritt Ward

Joseph: Chase Urban

Wise Men: Miles Bowen



Serving Us Today: Sunday, December 14th, 2014

Preacher—Ashley Whitaker

Lay Leaders—Joyce Johnson

Organist—Kathy Byram

Greeters—Randy and Linda Cumming

Head Usher—Diaconate

Coffee Hour Host—Women's Fellowship

Today's Worship & Fellowship

9:00 a.m. Morning Worship with Children's Christmas Program

(*Sanctuary*)

9:00-10:40 a.m. Nursery Childcare (*Babies-Toddlers*),

Crib/Toddler Room, upstairs

10:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship (*Fellowship Hall*)

10:00 a.m. Choir Practice

9:15 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School (*PreK-5th Grade*)

Classroom A, upstairs

10:10-10:40 a.m. Youth Sunday School (*6th-12th Grade*)

Youth Lounge, upstairs

10:10-10:40 a.m. Adult Sunday School, Classroom B, downstairs

Our **Call to Worship** today is by and Advent Candle Lighting Litany is by Jeanyne Slettom at processandfaith.org/resources/liturgy/advent-candle-liturgy.

Today's **Children and Youth Christmas Program:**

A Spontaneous Nativity is by Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell at rev-o-lution.org. It is based on Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2:1-12.

The **paraments** are purple for Advent, a season of spiritual preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ (Christmas) while looking forward to the future reign of Christ. Eschatological expectation rather than personal penitence is the central theme of the season. Advent is the preparation for, rather than a celebration of, Christmas. The liturgical color purple symbolizes the sovereignty of Christ and communal penitence. (ucc.org)

Worship & Care Connections

Children's Worship Bags with creative supplies are available at the back of the Sanctuary for children during worship.

The **Nursery/Toddler Room** for infants and toddlers is available throughout the morning worship service and is located at the north end of the hallway opposite the Sanctuary.

The **Family Space**, located in the Overflow Room in the back of the Sanctuary, is for our families with infants and small children. This space is available for families in addition to the nursery so that families can both see and hear what's going on in worship.

If you are in need of **wheelchair assistance** on Sunday mornings, please let us know by calling the church office at (507) 524-3141 ahead of time to make arrangements *or* you may have an usher assist you on Sunday morning when you arrive at the church. There is a ramp located on the east side of the church which can be utilized by parking in the east parking lot.

If you or a family member would like a **pastoral care visit** for any reason, or would like to be added to our weekly prayer list, please let the church know! Feel free to contact Pastor Ashley, a Deacon, or the church office so that we may serve you. The church phone number is (507) 524-3141. Pastor Ashley's phone number is (507) 381-8199 and her email is pastor@unitedchurchmapleton.org.

If you have a prayer request for the **Prayer Chain**, please call Karen Stanton at 327-8168 or Joyce Johnson at 524-3727. Please let them know your prayer request, including the name of the person to pray for, and whether you would like your request included in the church's public prayer list or if you'd prefer the request be kept privately within the prayer chain. There is also a prayer request submission form available on the United Church website under the "Ministries" tab.

In Our Prayers

- The ministries of The United Church, including our local missions: The Well Youth Center, Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf
- The local, regional, and national leaders of the church, including all ministers and missionaries
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living, a nursing home, or who are homebound, and all those who are caregivers
- Those who are grieving and mourning

Our church prayer list includes:

- Those with ongoing health concerns: Norma Baack, Shirley Bowen, Benjamin Brockmann, Hutch Cramer, Kathy Cox, Dawn Dietz, Jodie Gerds, David Keller, Stan Solie, Alberta Samuelson, Marge Walters, Jonathan Ziert, Isaac Kolstad
- Family members and loved ones who are ill
- Traveling mercies for our members, family, and friends
- All who are grieving and mourning
- The 2015 American Baptist Churches, USA Biennial Mission Summit, to be held June 26-28 in Overland Park, KS
- The 2015 United Church of Christ General Synod 30, to be held June 26-30 in Cleveland, OH
- Hutch Cramer, who is recovering at the Mapleton Community Home after a fall and hip surgery. He is expected to recover; last Sunday's report of his failing health was incorrect, due to medical confusion.

The prayer requests and praises shared during last week's worship service include:

Thanksgiving:

- To God that I can be here today with my family and reverend sister
- For a good four-month cancer checkup

Prayers:

- For the family and friends of Karen Shweim Mitchell, who passed away December 1st

Welcome to The United Church of Mapleton!

This announcement insert includes information about upcoming church, community, and area events. Please also take advantage of the many opportunities listed here to serve our community!

This Week at The United Church of Mapleton Sunday, December 14th, 2014

Sunday, December 14th, 9:00 a.m. Children's Christmas Program
Sunday, December 14th, 1:00 p.m. Youth Group Service Project
Monday, December 15th, 6:30 p.m. Christmas Choir Practice
Tuesday, December 16th, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT
Tuesday, December 16th, 3:00 p.m. Youth Group Service Project
Wednesday, December 17th, 7:00 p.m. Trustees
Thursday, December 18th, 2:30 p.m. Bible Study
Thursday, December 18th, 7:00 p.m. Pastoral Relations
Saturday, December 20th, 9:00 a.m. Kilties

Planning Ahead

Sunday, December 21st, 6:00 p.m. Youth Group Fun & Fellowship Christmas Party
Monday, December 22nd, 6:30 p.m. Christmas Choir practice
Tuesday, December 23rd, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT
Tuesday, December 30th, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT

Christmas Tissue Boxes

The Women's Fellowship has purchased boxes of tissues to be given to our golden members and homebound. The boxes may be found in the narthex area. Each box has our members names written on them. Please pick one up today and pay a visit to our members.



The United Church News and Announcements
Sunday, December 14th, 2014

Children and Youth Christmas Program—Today!

The **Children and Youth Christmas Program** will be held today during our regular worship service. Youth and children are welcome to pick up a goodie bag after the program.

Thank you to Pastor Ashley Whitaker and the Board of Christian Education members: Liz Bair (also SS teacher), Louise Webb (Louise also put together the goodie bags), Linda Whitney (also SS teacher), Jeff Whitaker, and Joe Bowen. Thank you to others who helped with this year's program: Kathy Kunkel and Keith and Jessica McCutchen (costumes and scenery); Kathy Byram (organ); Dave Byram and Dan Prenzlów (carpentry skills); Dick Dietz, Marissa Pfeffer, and Sheila Samuelson (guitar); Sarah Ward and Melissa Urban (parent helpers); Sharon Shuck (SS teacher, costumes).

The Well Youth Center

Sunday, December 21st, Coffee Hour and the Mission Collection jar will go towards helping support our local youth at The Well Youth Center.

The United Church supports The Well Youth Center in this way each month.

Christmas Poinsettias

The Ambience Team is looking for donations of **poinsettia plants** to decorate our sanctuary area for the Christmas season.

Please purchase the plant/plants on your own. Place your name on the bottom of your plant and bring the plant to the church. Thank you for helping beautify our sanctuary!



The United Church News and Announcements
Sunday, December 14th, 2014

Youth Sunday School Teacher Needed

Beginning in January, the Youth Group will need a Sunday School teacher for the duration of Pastor Ashley's family leave (about 12 weeks). A user-friendly curriculum, *Nooma*, will be provided. *Nooma* is a series of short videos on DVD about faith and life with discussion questions included. If you're able and willing to help out with this important ministry, please let Pastor Ashley, the church office, or Liz Bair (Chair, Board of Christian Education) know. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Youth Summer Camp Adult Leaders Needed

Our Youth had a great time at Youth Summer Camp last year! We hope to be able to send a group of Youth to camp again this summer. However, Pastor Ashley and Jeff will not be able to go with our Youth as Adult Leaders this year. Is God calling you to help our Youth ministry thrive in this important way?

We will likely go to camp at Pilgrim Point Camp in Alexandria, MN again this year, since we had such a good experience last year. Summer Youth Camp is one week long (Sunday afternoon—Friday lunch) and will either be July 19-24, July 26-31, or August 8-14. Adult Leaders help not only as chaperones, but also as small group leaders for spiritual formation, education, fun, and fellowship. The United Church will pay the registration free for any Adult Leaders that are willing to volunteer their time and talents this summer. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Stocking Stuffers for The Well

There is a donation box available in the narthex for you to start placing stocking stuffer donations for the youth of The Well to receive at their Christmas party. **Please have items to the church by Friday, December 19th.**



Weekly Scriptures for Prayer and Devotion

Scripture for the Week: Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. Mark 13:26

Sunday:

Jesus told Thomas, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29

Dear God, help us to discern your will in our lives so we can stop expecting and start doing. Amen.

Monday:

Admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 1 Thessalonians 5:14

On this day, we can see the bounty and beauty you bring to the world. Our thanks and praise for your goodness must be matched with a willingness to demonstrate that goodness to others. Show us the way, we pray. Amen.

Tuesday:

The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29

Heavenly God, you have blessed us beyond what we can comprehend. Please continue to bless us and make us worthy of your sacrifice. Amen.

Wednesday:

The surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downwards, and bear fruit upward. 2 Kings 19:30

Loving Lord, Parent of us all, we are thankful to be part of your family. May the tree of your people grow stronger, with deeper roots and expanding branches that stretch ever skyward. Amen.

Continue

Weekly Scriptures for Prayer and Devotion

Thursday:

Who has directed the spirit of the Lord, or as his counselor has instructed him? Isaiah 40:13

Dear God, as we await the birth of your Son, Jesus, through this season of Advent, be with us. Help us to be ready to accept you fully into our lives and our hearts. Amen.

Friday:

He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when he hears it, he will answer you. Isaiah 30:19

Hear our prayers, O Lord, as we cry out to you. Give us open hearts and ears to hear your answers. Amen.

Saturday:

Paul wrote: So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us. 1 Thessalonians 2:8

Good news is ours to tell! Give us courage and faith to share what you have done in our lives so we may share our very selves with those around us. Amen.

Source: Moravian Daily Texts