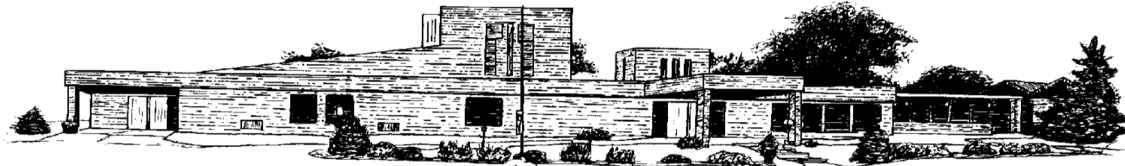


# THE PARISH PAPER



*December 2023*

*Churubusco United Methodist Church*

## *"Deep Roots, Wide Branches"*

The holiday season is upon us! We make plans, to do lists, and fill our calendars during these days. While we make grand plans for the perfect Christmas for our friends and family, sometimes an unlikely curve ball comes out of nowhere and changes everything. When the Christmas curveballs come, we are in great company. Nothing about the first Christmas was likely. Nothing went to plan exactly as the scholars and religious leaders expected.

What if our answered prayer for this Christmas season is an unlikely Advent? One that is filled with just the right curveball to shake us loose from our complacency and help us to see Christ anew? To turn our eyes off of ourselves and onto the Kingdom of God. The story of Advent is one of radical trust that we call faith. Mary and Joseph radically trusted God and each other. The shepherds radically trusted the angels to travel out of the fields to Bethlehem. The Magi radically trusted God's prophets to journey to the Christ child. Later, Mary and Joseph radically trusted God's instruction to take Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath.

When the Christmas curveballs come, and they will come, we are called to, just like those folks we see in our nativities, radically trust God and keep our eyes on Jesus. When the plans change maybe things are not falling apart, but falling into place. Remember, just like the first Christmas, God is with us.

This Advent we are going to journey through the stories of those persons in the Christmas story. We will be looking at these unlikely characters, how God invited them into his redemptive work and we are called to radically trust God in our own stories.

May this be an unlikely advent that leaves you changed for the better? As you see God at work in the unlikeliest Christmas story, may you see God at work in your own. May you radically trust God this holiday season as you love God and neighbor.

Grace and Peace,  
PJ

## DECEMBER Worship Schedule

8:15 (Hymnal/Organ) and 10:30 a.m. (Praise Band)

8:15 a.m.—Traditional Worship

\*10:30 a.m.—Contemporary Worship

Children's Church & Nursery Available

@ 10:30 a.m. Service

\*Livestreamed on Facebook



Follow us on  
**Instagram**  
@buscoumc

# NewsLetter DEADLine

**JANUARY 2024** Newsletter Articles need  
submitted by the **THIRD Sunday in DECEMBER:**  
**Sunday, December 17, 2023**

Give articles for newsletter to the church office or  
email: cumc99@aol.com.

## Support Our Food Pantry

The **Last Sunday** of this  
month you have a chance to...

Be a blessing by donating

**CEREAL & PEANUT BUTTER**

on Sunday, December 31, 2023

Find us on social media:



buscoumc



Churubusco United  
Methodist Church

**Ambassadors of the Gospel:**  
**The Congregation**

### Staff

**Pastor:** Rev. John Huff

**8:15 Music Director:** Mindy Cox

**10:30 Music Director:** Aaron Childress

**Accompanists:** Carmen Fitzpatrick,  
Rosalie Geller, & Rolin Mains

**Office Manager:** Jennifer Meyer

**Secretary:** Rita Ransom

**Building Superintendent:** Keith Shultz

**Children's Director:** Bev Huntsman

**Nursery School Co-Directors:**

Debbie Leitch & Cheryl Fleetwood

**Nursery School Teachers:**

Danielle Bischoff  
Shuree Claymiller  
Shelly Davis  
Koreen Knapp

Ashley Macy  
Jennifer Ruble  
Makenzi Tonkel  
Zoie Tonkel

**Volunteers** that process the newsletters for  
mailing each month include:

Shirley Fleming  
Rita Ransom

Gloria Parish

**Please let us know if you would like  
to start receiving your monthly  
newsletter through email instead  
of the U.S. Postal Mail.**

*Also available on the church's website:  
[www.churubuscoumc.org](http://www.churubuscoumc.org)*





**Monday, December 25,  
& Monday, January 1**



As the 2023 Financial Year comes to an end, remember to give your tithes and offering to the church by

**2:00 p.m. on  
Thursday, DEC. 28th  
if dropping off your donation.**

**If mailing make sure that  
your donation is postmarked by  
December 31st  
in order to receive a tax credit  
for 2023.**

**Online Giving is also  
available for those last  
minute donations at  
[www.churubuscoumc.org](http://www.churubuscoumc.org)**



## Staff Christmas Gift

Each year during Advent, we celebrate the time, talents and service of our dedicated staff (some volunteers). We ask you, our church family members, to please consider providing a monetary gift for our staff members in appreciation of their commitment to advance God's Kingdom. If you would like to donate this year, envelopes will be in the pews through **Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>** or those gifts can be mailed in, dropped off (make sure to designate "Staff Christmas Gift" on the envelope/check) or made online through **Sunday, Dec. 10**. If making your donation online, please be sure to select the "Other Designated" box and type "Staff Christmas Gift" in the text box.

## ANNOUNCING.....

**A Combined Worship Service  
on Sunday, December 24  
At 9:30 a.m.**

## GIVING ENVELOPES

The 2024 Giving Envelopes will be available Sunday, December 17 on a table in the hallway.

To be good stewards the envelopes are being recycled from a previous year. If no envelopes have been prepared for you, please contact the church office at 693-2154.



# Open Hands Ministry

*This is a group for adults of all ages. We will focus on adult community, spiritual growth, and hands that seek to serve our church, our community and our world.*

**2024 Mission Trip:** The initial plans are established for the 2024 Mission Trip. This is for youth (grades 6-12) and adults. We will be traveling to Dayspring Native American UMC where we will be working on their worship facility. Dayspring is located on a 42 wooded acre lot in the middle of a city. They have approximately 30 regular congregants. They worship Creator (Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit) using Native American music, drums, and ceremony as a way of connecting, praying and praising. Plan to attend the next mission Trip meeting to get more details. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the hall way. See Wendy Herendeen for more details.

Some of the work needed at Dayspring: Work plans have been adjusted. We will be completing some detail work on bathroom, kitchenette and dining room.

**Thursday, December 14: Mission Trip Meeting @ 5:30 – 6:30 pm in Seekers Classroom:** This is open to anyone (youth and adults) interested in learning more about the Mission Trip for 2024. Come to hear how you can be a part of this team!

**Sunday, December 17, 2023: Bake Sale** to Benefit the 2024 Mission Trip (donations accepted). See Doris Horne, Michele Sade or Wendy Herendeen

**Sunday, December 17, 2023: Christmas Caroling** from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Join us as we meet at CUMC at 2:00 pm where we will caravan to share the joys of Christmas. Dress for the weather.

**Friday, December 22, 2023: Blessed Portions (Serving the homeless in Fort Wayne):** We will be providing a meal for approximately 70 – 80 people. We are requesting Donations. Please drop these items off in the Box marked "Blessed Portions" near the Mission's Board in the hallway. Reusable "cloth" Grocery Bag filled with: (gallon size Ziploc bag with: wash cloth, soap, hand sanitizer, hand warmers, hand wipes, \$5 gift card (fast food), any other goods you may want to include. We would like to take 80 bags.

**Other items that can be donated:** sleeping bags, 2 person tents: Men's (L and XL) sweatshirts, coats, jeans, gloves, hats, socks. Women's gloves, socks & hats. (these items don't need to be new – gently used is acceptable and appreciated). We would also like to take Homemade cookies (2 per baggie). If you have interest in baking cookies, please let Wendy Herendeen know prior to Dec 22.

**New Bible Study:** to start January 11, 2024 (Thursdays). Followed by Jan 25, Feb 8, Feb 22, March 7, March 21. (see sign up sheet on bulletin or just show up)

**Five things God Uses to Grow Your Faith:** Andy Stanley (6 lessons). (~\$8 on Thrift Books; \$13 on Amazon)

Imagine how different your outlook on life would be if you had absolute confidence that God was with you. Imagine how differently you would respond to difficulties, temptations, and even good things if you believed with certainty that God was in all of it and was planning to leverage every circumstance for good.

# Children And Family Ministries 2023

## Scrip is Fundraising While You Shop!™



## THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING UP!

If you are considering CASH CARDS for gifts this year, check out the updated lists on the bulletin board in the hallway. Be aware this list does not include all cards that are available. You can visit the website [www.ShopWithScrip.com](http://www.ShopWithScrip.com) to see what is available or call Bev to check it out. You can also sign up for your own account, order e-cards and pay directly at this website with the proceeds going to our church. See or call Bev at 260-413-2344 for the enrollment code. New and popular cash cards available are McDonalds, Gas cards - Circle K, Casey's, Speedway, Marathon, Mobil, Shell, Visa (no activation fee) \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500. Local \$10 Magic Wand cards will be available in the office. Percentages for each card listed indicate the amount that goes to the Children and Youth when you order. Order early to be assured cards will be available and will arrive in time. Orders can be dropped off at the church office or give it to Bev Huntsman. It is a great way to give to the church with no extra charge to you!



## Nursery School Notes December 2023

*Christmas Activities: "God's Wonderful Gift" will be the theme for December. The Children will be learning about the birth of "Baby Jesus", making parent gifts, cards and tree decorations.*

As part of the caring and sharing, each child will be asked to bring in any extra pennies. We will be counting them and donating them to the food pantry.

### \*DATES TO REMEMBER\*

- \* **Christmas Story** on Monday, December 18.  
AM Classes at 11:00 a.m.  
PM Classes at 2:30 p.m.
- \* **Jesus Birthday party** on Wednesday, December 20 (book exchange) Please send your child's wrapped book by Monday, December 18th.
- \* **Christmas Vacation** will start on Friday, Dec. 22nd and classes resume Monday, Jan. 8, 2024

*Check out our Facebook page:  
Churubusco United Methodist Nursery School*

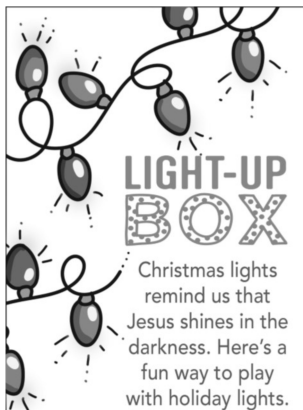
*"We wish you and your families a Very Merry Christmas"  
~ Nursery School Staff*



## The Bishop's Christmas offering for children

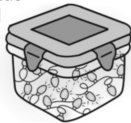
will be collected on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2023 at the 9:30 a.m., 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. worship services. Your generosity will go towards ministries that focus on the health, development, and well being of all children across the world. Thank you for the countless children whose lives will be changed as a result of this offer-

# Kid's Activity Page



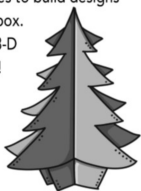
## What you need:

- A strand of Christmas lights
- A large clear plastic container and lid
- Green tissue paper
- Colorful beads



## What you do:

1. Plug in the lights and place them in the container.
  2. Put on the lid. (If the lid isn't transparent, flip the box over.)
  3. Play with your light box, using these ideas as starters:
    - Cut tissue paper into triangles and arrange them in a tree shape. Decorate the tree with colorful beads.
    - Use the light box for tracing. Place a picture on it, with a clean sheet of paper on top. Then trace the drawing.
    - Use magnet tiles to build designs atop the light box.
- Try building a 3-D Christmas tree!



## A CHRIST-CENTERED Christmas ADVENT READING PLAN

Explore the true meaning of Christmas as you travel through God's Word. Discover God's promises he fulfilled through the birth of His only Son, the **KING OF KINGS**.

1 Isaiah 7:14	2 Isaiah 9:6-7	3 Malachi 3:1	4 Micah 5:2-4	5 Luke 1:5-7	6 Luke 1:10-15	7 Luke 1:18-22
14 Luke 2:15-20	13 Luke 2:8-14	12 Luke 2:6-7	11 Luke 2:1-5	10 Luke 1:30-33	9 Luke 1:26-29	8 Luke 1:24-25
15 Matthew 1:18-21	16 Matthew 1:22-25	17 Matthew 2:1-3	18 Matthew 2:4-6	19 Matthew 2:7-9	20 Matthew 2:10-12	21 Romans 15:13
23 Philippians 2:8-11				22 Galatians 4:4-5		
24 James 1:16-18				25 John 3:16		

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## United Women in Faith

KEEP IN MIND THAT ALL LADIES OF THE CHURCH—YOUNG, SENIORS AND THOSE IN BETWEEN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT MEETINGS—FRIENDS TOO.



Wednesday, December 13  
at 9:30 a.m.

Denise Geller will be hosting a Christmas Brunch at her home.

Guests are welcome.  
Need more information,  
call Denise Geller at 705-1181 or  
Marna Morris at 693-3104.

### Prayer Calendar

I grew up in Sao Paulo, one of the biggest cities in Latin America. I learned as a child to look at what was happening around me. That's why I always asked my mother at church, why God, being so good, lets children live on the streets. Why were there poor people? I experienced his love and grace when I decided to serve God as a pastor. God took me to an ecumenical group that worked with prostitutes in downtown Sao Paulo. There was my second conversion. I was able to understand and answer many of the questions I asked God.

Thank God, there is the work of the Methodist Church and the Waldensian Church, which welcome you with a delicious and loving breakfast, and teach Italian in the church hall—one can see that there is Christian love, another view of the homeless. The church is present in many places with outstretched hands, a sign of God's love. I continue in the presence of God, I put my faith and hope in Jesus Christ.

*Eliad Dias Dos Santos, Global Missionary from Brazil  
serving in Italy, Minister for Disadvantaged People in Rome,  
The Methodist Church in Italy*



United Women in Faith will **not** be meeting in January 2024. We hope you will take this opportunity to read some of the good books Dee Krause has been purchasing. The children's books have some beautiful illustrations.

At our November gathering, World Thank Offering was received from the ladies which goes to help women, children, and youth all over the world. Denise reported from Response that in 2022, \$700,000 was collected and went to: Methodist Women's Federation in Libya, Rise Up! Philippines and Cornerstone in Tampa, FL.

Five college snack bags were prepared for our students to pick up and have for finals study time. We all signed 21 Thanksgiving cards that were sent to shut-ins and others recovering from illnesses or other situations.

### NOTICE!!!

We decided to move our fundraiser from June to Saturday, September 28, 2024. It will be called Market Day and held on our church grounds with rental spaces as we have been doing the past several years with hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This date is the same weekend as the Town wide sales. Mark your calendars now!

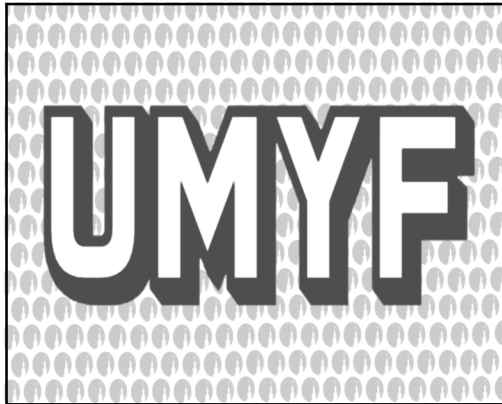
On November 11, four women from our unit traveled to New Haven UMC for UWF Mini School/Officer Training. Rev. Jen Huff was our speaker whose topic was "Living the Kin-Dom" that she taught at Mission "U" this past summer. She emphasized the Lord's Prayer which we repeated in unison. It was written nearly 2,000 years ago and offers mercy and forgiveness. She posted a new version from The Voice on the screen that was interesting. The Lord's Prayer has a reciprocating effect on the person who prays it. Our Father is all of us! She closed with: you will never look in to the eyes of someone God does not love. Thank you, Jen for your teaching and insights on our precious Lord's Prayer!



## Food Ministry Has Need for Coat Donations

The Food Ministry Team will again offer free “used, warm coats” to our pantry clients for this winter. If you have any coats that can be used—please put on the Coat Rack at the top of the stairway near the Fellowship Hall. We can use all sizes—children also—We will be asking our patrons to limit 2 coats/family so there will be enough for everyone.

Thanks for your help!



## **CALLING ALL YOUTH!**

**Youth Fellowship (UMYF)**

**6th-12th graders**

**meets on Sundays at 9:30 a.m.  
in the Youth Room. Join us!!**



**Please come and join us for:**

**“OPEN DOORS” FELLOWSHIP MEAL**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2023 @ 5:30–6:30 P.M.**

**Children’s activities will be 6:00-6:30 p.m.**

**Everyone is welcome, so invite family, friends,  
and neighbors to join you for food & fellowship.**

**Upcoming Dates: January 17, February 21, March 20**



Check out our  
homepage at  
[www.churubuscoumc.org](http://www.churubuscoumc.org)

WITH DEEPEST  
*sympathy*

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to you and your family

**JERRY RANSOM**  
**MARTI MURRAY FRIDH**  
**JOSH JANKS**  
**BONNIE NICODEMUS**  
**GREG MURRY**

*The above names were listed in the  
prayer book for NOVEMBER.*



Get all the latest news and pictures of  
all the great ministry happenings.

*Search for "Churubusco UMC"  
and like us today!*

Better yet, share what we are posting so  
that others may be included into our  
awesome community!



Greggory Tomlinson	12/02
Rita Ransom	12/03
Judy Yant	12/03
Gary Ford	12/07
Robin McGuire	12/08
Jane Bunn	12/09
Elizabeth Beining	12/10
Ruth Resler	12/10
Bill Green	12/16
Josiah Johnson	12/17
Dawn Creech	12/20
Jason Eakins	12/20
Jen Huff	12/20
Stephanie Schnurr	12/20
Dave Cooper	12/21
Marilyn (Don) Gross	12/21
Patty Schmidt	12/21
Margaret Borg	12/23
Stan Horne	12/23
Jarid Lotter	12/24
Pat Eakins	12/26
Don Greve	12/27

Please take time to wish  
those with DECEMBER birthdays  
a "Happy Birthday!"



## ADVENT MISSIONS OFFERING To B.A.B.E. of Whitley County

Please bring DIAPERS and FORMULA  
anytime during December to donate to B.A.B.E.



★ Thanks to all who took the time to donate blood at our recent American Red Cross blood drive. We were able to collect 37 pints of blood - each blood donation can help more than one patient. Your donation is truly appreciated by the blood recipients and their loved ones.

We hope that our regular donors will give again at the next blood drive on Thursday, February 1, 2024 at Faith Lutheran Church. If you've never given or it's been a while we encourage you to take the time to help others in this way.

You can sign up to donate online at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-REDCROSS. Roger and Carol Allman help coordinate the blood drives at CUMC and can help you get signed up to give the next time CUMC hosts the drive on Thursday, March 28, 2024.

★ THANK YOU ~ In 2022 the Endowment Committee awarded the Trustees \$1,000 to replace mulch with stones around part of the church building. Thanks to the Committee for this grant, Cheryl Maxton for ordering the stones, Patrick Carpenter, Aubra Denison, Brad Knapp & Roger Allman for arranging the stones where our Bobcat operator, Terry LeFever, dumped them. It took almost a year to complete the job and it looks great! We had extra stones that we placed around the church sign and two other areas. Next year we'll use what was left over to complete a project behind the parsonage.

★ I want to thank everyone for your prayers and uplifting cards during my recovery. They mean so much to me and my family. Thanks again for your support. Jane Bunn

★ Your expressions of sympathy have warmed our hearts whether it was notes of remembrance, a listening ear, hugs, comforting words, gifts, and memorials.

A special thank you for the delicious meal served by Shelly and her team and all the loving touches that made it so welcoming.

Thank you to Pastor John for his comforting words and to all who helped us have a time to gather as a family to honor Jerry. My family joins me in saying thank you, Rita Ransom



- February 14 ~ Ash Wednesday
- March 24 - March 30 ~ Holy Week
- March 30 ~ Easter Egg Hunt
- March 31 ~ Easter Sunday



On Thursday, December 21, we will experience the longest night of the year. We are in the middle of a season of great joy and light. For some, Christmas can feel more like a season of great darkness and shadows. We may be experiencing loneliness, grief, loss, separation, pain, and/or sickness. This year has been hard for many of us. On Thursday, December 21 we will have an opportunity at 6:30 PM to claim those feelings and still feel surrounded by the compassionate love of God. Sometimes this type of service is called a Longest Night or Blue Christmas service. Come as you are and how you're most comfortable. Please share this with others. Let us come together to share and experience hope and strength as a community.





**American  
Red Cross**

*Thank you!*



## Churubusco United Methodist Church

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Sponsor Group

November 9, 2023

---

Date of Drive

35

Total Number of Donors

0

First Time Donors

37

Units Collected

105

Potential Number of Lives Saved

**When you made the decision to host a blood drive, you helped change lives.**



Churubusco United Methodist Church  
750 N. Main St.  
Churubusco, IN 46723  
Phone: (260) 693-2154  
Email: cumc99@aol.com

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*Christmas Blessings to:*

**Worship Opportunities**

8:15 a.m. Sunday Worship (Hymnal/Organ)  
9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages  
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship (Praise Band)



**DECEMBER 2023**



# Festival of the Hanging of the Greens

Offers you a joyous holiday gift for the season.  
A time of reflection and music.

**Sunday, December 3rd**

**At 4:00 p.m.**

Childcare provided

*Please Join Us!*

