



OHIO UNITED

Presbyterian Church

December 22 Through December 28, 2024

Beloved,

I have been asking Santa for a dog for a while now. And, finally, we have one! The note that came with it said that she would be my Christmas present for a few years, and you know what? I am okay with that. Her name is Gemma, and she is almost six months old. She's full of energy, but she's a good buddy in the office as she naps most of the day away waiting to play with Miguel and Emilio when we all return home. She's the perfect dog, but not yet perfect - she has a lot to learn, and will grow and adjust to living with us as time goes on.

This is how life is with faith - we find faith in Christ, whether as children brought up in the church or later in life in one way or another - and our faith is far from perfect. It is young, it is fresh, it is new. We are learning how to be faithful followers of Christ's invitation to love God and to love our neighbor. We mess up - our leash gets tangled around that playset in the backyard for the tenth time as we walk the perimeter to ensure things are just right. As Gemma grows and learns, she will continue to place her trust in her owners (me and my family) because we show her time and time again that we love her, that she can find refuge with us, even when she's rolled in something less than pleasant smelling.

There are many rules, boundaries if you will, that we are given in Scripture. These are to help guide us along the way, trying to ensure that we are the best followers of Christ that we can be. With time, we recognize that the leash actually allows us more freedom, space to run and play and explore without fear of endangering ourselves by running from home as we chase a whimsical scent and end up lost, far from home.

I know - the analogy has gone too far. Here's my point: as Christians, we are always learning. Whether we are brand new to the world of faith or we've been with Jesus for 80+ years, we are always learning and growing. Even when we mess up, we follow the wrong path because we were certain it would lead us where we want to go, Christ will be our light, beckoning us back to our home in the arms of God, where we will find love, rest, and grace that helps remind us we're not defined by our failures to love God and neighbor, but we are defined by God's love for us. Merry Christmas dear beloved. Know that you are loved.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Kalyn (and Gemma)



	
Worship	
• We gather for worship Sundays at 10am • 121 on worship on December 15 • Christmas Eve service is at 6pm • Worship on December 29 is a Pajama Optional Service.	
Congregational Care	
• NO STORY TIME ON WEDNESDAY; RETURNS ON JANUARY 8, 2025 AT 9:30 OR 10:30 • Church office will be closed on December 24 and December 25 and January 1 • There will be a Congregational Meeting on January 5, 2025 following the worship service to elect officers.	
Missions	
Operations	
• November YTD Expenses-\$196,479 & YTD Receipts-\$183,846 • Per capita Expenses YTD - \$8,840 & Per Capita Receipts YTD-\$2,550 • Property Meeting is on January 6 @6:30pm	

The Ohio UP Church Christmas Card Mailbox is in the Narthex ready to be filled with your Christmas Greetings. If you wish to send cards to fellow church members who attend worship regularly, please feel free to bring your cards and put them in the slots that are in alphabetical order. While spreading good cheer, you will be saving money on postage stamps. Perhaps you might consider making an extra donation to the church for upcoming projects like repaving the parking lot. Remember to check your slot to see if you have any mail during the month of December.



- Peggy Franzese–Youth Group Attendee Austin has a new little brother, Maverick
- Lynn Smith–Thrilled that college care package made it to Erie in the bad weather. Kendall is grateful.
- Amanda Collins–Great Uncle Rich McConnell passed away on Saturday
- Wendi Rybicki–Eva is 4lbs 2oz. Now and has moved from the NICU to step-down and is in a crib. Her father, Tony, was taken to the hospital. He can't swallow. Has a feeding tube and pneumonia.
- Dick Klein–is having an ablation on Thursday for A-fib.
- Jeff Davis–Thank you for attending the Hopewell Community Big Band concert at the church. Thanks to the Safety Team for their help. A nice amount of money was raised for the Deacons.
- Patti Strominger–Thank you to all who baked, setup, worked and cleaned up for the Cookie Bazaar. We raised \$1,412 for the church

ATTENTION

Church members may purchase gift cards for the McCowin family while baby Eva remains in the hospital for the next several weeks. Gas cards and restaurant cards will be greatly appreciated. They can be given to Bonnie, Rayna, or Alli to be delivered each week.



<u>Anniversaries</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>
Joe & Dana Gavita 12/4	MacKenzie Petrella 12/01	Sherri Murdoch 12/09	Richard Young 12/20
Holly & William Diccio 12/18	Whitney Shaffer 12/03	Dale Fouse 12/13	Kathy Fouse 12/21
Marsha & Mark Douglass 12/21	Shane McLinden 12/05	Joe Glatz 12/13	Kathy Lee Tolfa 12/25
Cherryl & Zbig Lachowicz 12/27	Lynn Smith 12/06	Betty Martin 12/17	Mark Douglass 12/27
Russell & Wendy Dameron 12/28	Chandler Dameron 12/07	Joel Mitchell 12/18	Daniel Palmer 12/29
Jason & Gina Arzberger 12/30	Russell Dameron 12/07	Mark Muslin 12/18	Andrew Arzberger 12/30
	Wendy Dameron 12/07	Kristine Dameron 12/20	
	Nancy Connell 12/09	Kenneth Strominger 12/20	



Highlight of Deacon's 12/10/24 Meeting

Pastor Kalyn opened the meeting with prayer. She also talked about serving Home Communion to 3 Extra Care members. She expressed interest in reaching out to other folks with home visits upon request. We discussed the very successful Youth Group Food Drive and she encouraged us to seek the help of the Youth Group to organize the food at the conclusion of the drive.

- **We approved sending a gift card to a family in our congregation in need of assistance for Christmas Dinner.**
- **We sent 24 greeting cards.**
- **Blessing Bags are being packed and sent to local schools for children in need of food assistance.**
- **We continue to fill the Little Free Pantry daily.**
- **We discussed the Christmas Eve Service and made plans to locate and prepare candles and get ushers.**

Next Meeting – January 14th at 6:30 pm.

Highlights from the December Session Meeting

- **Approved the updated Session manual which contains the By-laws, Committee Responsibilities, Personnel Policies, etc.**
- **Approved the 2025 Communion schedule.**
- **Approved replacing Brother's Brother with Andre's Cafe as a 10% mission fund recipient as recommended by Mission Committee.**
- **Approved the 2025 Budget.**
- **Scheduled a Congregational Meeting for the Election of Officers after worship on January 5th, 2025**
- **Session elected Christine Hurni as Treasurer for 2025.**
- **Session elected Joe Glatz as Clerk of Session for 2025.**
- **Tentatively, the Annual Meeting of Corporation & Congregation is set for January 26th, 2025.**
- **Session recognized the service of the off-going elders with gratitude.**

Joseph R. Glatz, Clerk of Session



JANUARY

birthdays

<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>
Jerri Lech 1/06	Michelle Sebastian 1/18	Rich Kerlin 1/22	Jonathan Lech 1/31
Bob Keller 1/12	Brian Archer 1/19	David Kocher 1/22	Robert Nan 1/31
Eric Nan 1/12	Belinda Nolte 1/20	Jacob Cagnon 1/23	
Sara Allen 1/16	Kevin Smith 1/21	Megan Hunsberger 1/25	
Camden Hoth 1/17	Simon Hunsberger 1/22	Everitt Laird Jr. 1/25	