

# OLIVE BRANCH

PEACE  CHURCH

## December 2023

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GIVE LOCALLY

SPOTLIGHT NEWS

PATHWAYS INFO.

FINANCIAL UPDATE & BIRTHDAYS

I want to take a moment to **THANK EVERYONE** for your continued support and care! Whether it is participation in worship, PATHWAYS, one of our amazing Ministry Teams, or one of our special programs your participation and joy is valued! **Thank you!**

I want to lift up the incredible Thanksgiving Dinner we hosted this year. After a 4 year hiatus we were able to go full throttle and provide a dinner for over 200 people! It felt so good to work together again for such an important project (to feed the community). We all worked joyfully side-by-side to plan, cook, serve, carry, and clean! You provided for so many ...not only a meal, but a family and love. THANKS to all who volunteered. You are amazing.



We are now moving into a time of year, the bleak midwinter time, when we will begin anticipating what will be coming next. We are entering a church season called Advent. Advent means a time of waiting and anticipation. Advent is the season where we intentionally focus on the coming of Jesus' birth at Christmas. During this Advent season we pause each week to reflect, renew, and prepare ourselves for the true celebration of Christmas Day!

This year, for our Advent theme, we will be centering on ***"Why Wait?!"*** Why do we take this intentional time to WAIT to celebrate Christ's birth? Each Sunday our PATHWAYS program and WORSHIP will center around common scriptures and themes – all pointing us to take time to reflect on what we are waiting for, and prepare to more fully appreciate and celebrate Christ's birth. Our themes each week for our WHY WAIT?! Series are:

**Sunday, December 3**

**Come Now**

**Mark 13:24-37**

Rev. Kelly Gallagher, Associate Conference Minister, will be preaching

**Sunday, December 10**

**Comfort Now**

**Mark 1:1-8**

**Sunday, December 17**

**Lament Now**

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

**The Story of Christmas:** A fun and interactive retelling of the story of Jesus' birth, complete with your favorite Christmas tunes and lots of laughs.

**Sunday, December 24**

**Peace Now**

**Luke 1:26-38**

We also want to provide dynamic opportunities for you to experience the power of the season as we provide two services to celebrate Christ's birth.

**Wednesday, December 20**

5:15p Community Meal

6:00p Blue Christmas Meditative Service

- Candlelight/Communion

**Sunday, December 24**

10:30a Advent 4 Service

4:00p Traditional Christmas Eve Service

- Candlelight/Communion

On behalf of your Peace United Church of Christ staff, we all wish you a blessed Advent Season and JOYOUS CHRISTMAS!

Peace,

  
Pastor Paul

# CALENDAR

## December Events

**SATURDAY 2:** Women's Shelter Workday– Christmas Decorating 9a, Women's Shelter

**SUNDAY 3: Communion Sunday:** Pathways Gathering 9:15a, F-Hall; Pathways all ages 9:30, All Classrooms; Worship Service with Communion & Baptisms (Archer Atlas Meer and Charlotte Collins Palmquist) 10:30a; Rainbow Choir 1p, Choir Rm; Christmas Choir Rehearsal 3:30p, Choir Rm

**MONDAY 4:** Social Action 6p, Peace Room

**TUESDAY 5:** Men's Fellowship, 7a, F-Hall; Knitters Group 10a, Peace Room; Beverage and Bible 5p, Tavern 22

**WEDNESDAY 6:** Community Meal Night 5:15p, F-Hall; Vision Team Meeting 6p, Narthex

**THURSDAY 7:** Women's Fellowship, 8:30a, Peace Room

**SUNDAY 10:** Pathways Gathering 9:15a, F-Hall; Pathways all ages 9:30, All Classrooms; Worship Service, 10:30a; Rainbow Choir 1p, Choir Rm; Christmas Choir Rehearsals 3:30p, Choir Room

**TUESDAY 12:** Men's Fellowship, 7a, F-Hall; Knitters Group 10a, Peace Room; Beverage and Bible 5p, Tavern 22; Race Forward 6:30p, Zoom

**WEDNESDAY 13:** Community Meal Night 5:15p, F-Hall; Church Council 7p, Peace Room

**THURSDAY 14:** Women's Fellowship, 8:30a, Peace Rm; Teens Friendsgiving 5p, F-Hall

**SUNDAY 17: UCC Christmas Fund Offering**  
**STORY OF CHRISTMAS** Worship Service, 10:30a; Rainbow Choir 1p, Choir Rm; Christmas Choir Rehearsals 3:30p, Choir Room; Rochester Area Handbell Choir Concert 7p, Sanctuary

**TUESDAY 19:** Men's Fellowship, 7a, F-Hall; Knitters Group 10a, Peace Room; Beverage and Bible 5p, Tavern 22

**WEDNESDAY 20:** Community Meal Night 5:15p, F-Hall; **BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE** 6p, Sanctuary; Church Council Meeting 7p, F-Hall

**THURSDAY 21:** Women's Fellowship, 8:30a, Peace Rm; Card Sharks 6:30p, Narthex

**SUNDAY 24:** Pathways Gathering 9:15a, F-Hall; Pathways all ages 9:30, All Classrooms; **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT** Worship Service 10:30a; **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE** 4p, Sanctuary

**MONDAY 25:** Christmas Day (PUCC Office Closed)

**TUESDAY 26:** PUCC Office Closed: Men's Fellowship, 7a, F-Hall; Knitters Group 10a, Peace Room

**WEDNESDAY 27:** PUCC Office Closed: Community Meal Night 5:15p, F-Hall;

**THURSDAY 28:** PUCC Office Closed: Women's Fellowship, 8a, Peace Rm

**SUNDAY 31:** Pathways Gathering 9:15a, F-Hall; Pathways all ages 9:30, All Classrooms; Rainbow Choir 1p, Choir Rm

## Rochester Area Handbell Choir

SUNDAY, December 17 at 7p:

We are very excited host the Rochester Area Handbell Choir for their holiday show, "Christmas Around The World"  
This is a free concert with a free-will offering

Check out their other performances here:

<https://rochesterareahandbells.org/upcoming-concerts>



# FEATURED EVENTS



## Christmas at PEACE UNITED

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 10:30a

**THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS:** A fun and interactive retelling of the story of Jesus' birth, complete with your favorite Christmas tunes and lots of laughs.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 6p

**BLUE CHRISTMAS:** Engage with a more contemplative Christmas Eve service through readings and music. We'll end with unique candlelight Communion.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 10:30a

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT:** Celebrate the final Sunday of Advent as we prepare for Christ's birth

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 4p

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:** This service will be more upbeat with our Christmas Choir singing, re-telling the story of Jesus coming into our world and ending with a celebration of a unique candlelight communion.

### Channel One Volunteer Team

Dec 1: 9-11a: The Peace Church Channel One team is back in action! Join the team on the first Friday of December to volunteer at Channel One Food Bank.

Each volunteer will need to sign up online and complete the necessary requirements (short video and waiver) before they can volunteer.

To sign up please contact [Linda Bradley](#) or [Jody Morbeck](#)

### Christmas Decorating at The Women's Shelter

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1-3p—The Social Action and Outreach Team is asking other to join them to help decorate the Women's Shelter for Christmas. All volunteers must pass a background check first. Anyone interested needs to reach out to Joan Leof giving their full name and birth date.

Sign up: <https://bit.ly/3QiZ6Og>

Questions? [Contact Joan Leof](#) jleof@charter.net.

### Grace Upon Grace—The UCC Christmas Fund

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17: The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

### Enormous Africa

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY BEGINNING THURS. DECEMBER 21, 7p: This and all the sessions will be held every other Thursday, from 6-7pm on zoom. I am fully aware that our first session will just be around the Christmas season, but we can make it happen. For our first session, nothing specific to read or watch. Kindly come with your amazing curiosities, questions, comments and insights about Africa to share.

Please email [Jerry Locula](#) for the Zoom link.



# THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL



*Right here, in our community*



THROUGH DECEMBER 17—Together we will gather gifts to support local organizations that are committed to raising awareness and providing stability to Rochester's homeless youth and adults. This year we are supporting The Women's Shelter, Family Promise, The Landing, and Project Legacy. Take an ornament from the tree, bring the unwrapped items back to church with the ornament label attached. Drop any gift cards at the Welcome Desk.

The Wish Lists of each organization can be found [here](#)  
Donations accepted until Sunday, December 17.

## Little Free Pantry

YOU CAN HELP—Provide basic food items to neighbors experiencing hunger this winter. Please refer to the suggested list of cold weather needs. Monetary donations are also appreciated.

General guidelines: Ready to eat soups with pop-tops (no can opener needed). No glass containers. Single-serve sized items (not bulk or family sized). No expired items. No used or open items. No canned veggies (they do not get taken). Give dignity by choosing items you would eat yourself or serve to guest.

Scarves, hats, gloves  
Handwarmers  
Socks (all sizes, kid & adult)  
Plain t-shirts (all sizes)  
Diapers, wipes  
Toilet paper, Kleenex  
Tampons, pads  
Chapstick

Deodorant  
Lotion, soap  
Toothpaste, brushes  
Peanut butter  
Pasta sauce, pasta  
Rice, pasta, ramen  
EZ mac



Chunky soups, canned ravioli/  
SpaghettiOs  
Cereal (hot and cold)  
Snack crackers  
Dried fruit, nuts, jerky  
Granola bars  
Tuna packs  
Rice/potato mixes  
Canned meat



Photo Credit:  
Jody Morbeck  
Nov. 19 2023  
Thanksgiving



# Spotlight News

## REP THEATER PRESENTS: WINTER WONDERETTES

By Roger Bean

Directed by Rebecca Sands

It's Christmas 1968. When Santa is a no-show at a holiday party, a fabulous and funny quartet of women use their talent and creative ingenuity to save the evening. Featuring sparkling 1960's versions of holiday classics, this energetic and glittering holiday musical is guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages. See if you can spy our very own **Melissa Kloempken!**

**Performing Nov 24 -25, Nov 30 – Dec 3 and Dec 7-10, 2023**



## MAYO CIVIC THEATER PRESENTS: A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Alan Menken & Lynn Ahrens

This is a spectacular musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' most well-known story. Follow the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge as he is visited by three spirits on Christmas Eve. Join us for this magical holiday tradition, perfect to share with the whole family.

Directed by **Dylan Starr**, Music Directed by Catherine Davis

**Performances December 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23**

\*Our ASL interpreted performance will be held on December 14.

Tickets: <https://bit.ly/3sdYNMM>

## ONCE & FUTURE CLASSICS PRESENTS: Shakespeare's Bloody Awful Christmas at Peace UCC

The Queen has commanded that Shakespeare write a romantic comedy to be performed on Christmas day, but he has just gotten the inspiration to write his greatest tragedy: Hamlet! His acting company wants to do a musical loaded with Christmas songs, and his new girlfriend is expecting to play the lead role. Won't it be fun when his long-lost wife and children show up for the holidays?

Well, it probably won't help his bad case of writer's block, but hey, he's still got two weeks left until opening night! Yes, it's a romantic-comical-musical-Christmas-farce based on a very silly version of Hamlet.

**Performances : 7p:Dec 1, 2, 8, 9 15, & 16 / 2p: Dec 9**

Tickets: <https://bit.ly/3uCl9Za>



## ROCHESTER RAINBOW CHOIR CONCERT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17 AT 12p: The Rochester Rainbow Choir at Peace United is thrilled to announce its first concert, January 13 at 6 p.m. at Peace United! The group is sharing some favorite popular music, including "Party in the USA," "Edge of Seventeen," and "Unstoppable." The Rainbow Choir is a welcoming space for members of the LGBTQIA+ community and its allies. The concert is free to attend; donations will be accepted.





# PATHWAYS

SUNDAYS, 9:15a



Lessons on being a good human

Pathways is a weekly PreK-Adult program designed to promote kindness, compassion and peace within the community.

## Pathways

Pathways is an engaging and interactive series of activities and workshops to help you learn more about yourself, your community, and your spirituality.

- Register your child for Pathways here: <https://forms.gle/dJ85qPm2R6UuDQrW6>

- Link to the Pathways Plan: [www.peacechurchucc.org/pathways](http://www.peacechurchucc.org/pathways)

### OPPORTUNITY FOR ADULTS

Peace is seeking adults to help teach lessons each Sunday, 9:30-10:15a. No teaching experience required. Lessons and materials will be provided by Peace staff.

Contact Dylan Starr with questions or if interested in teaching or assisting, 507-282-6117.



Photo Credit: Jody Morbeck & Tracy Walton Nov.19 2023 Thanksgiving Meal

# Why Wait?!

MEETING JESUS RIGHT NOW

December 3-24

**Sunday, December 3**

**Come Now**

**Mark 13:24-37**

Rev. Kelly Gallagher, Associate Conference Minister will be preaching

**Sunday, December 10**

**Comfort Now**

**Mark 1:1-8**

**Sunday, December 17**

**Lament Now**

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

The Story of Christmas: A fun and interactive retelling of the story of Jesus' birth, complete with your favorite Christmas tunes and lots of laughs.

**Sunday, December 24**

**Peace Now**

**Luke 1:26-38**

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Celebrate the final Sunday of Advent as we prepare for Christ's birth

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

	OCT 2023	YEAR-TO-DATE	OCT 2022
Pledges budgeted	\$ 32,500	\$ 325,000	\$35,167
Pledges received	\$ 28,367	\$ 279,479	\$28,305
Difference	-\$ 4,133	-\$ 45,521	-\$11,333

Pledges for the month improved over last month, but still remain behind budget by **-\$4,133** and behind last October by **-\$62**. YTD we are behind budget by **-\$45,521** and behind last year by **-\$32,516**.

As for other income, we are ahead of budget by \$3,476 and YTD ahead by \$18,653. Compared to last year, we are ahead for the month by \$319 and YTD by \$30,477.

Our total income for the month was below budget by only \$814. We continue to remain behind total income YTD by **-\$17,310**, which isn't so bad compared to being behind pledge dollars of **-\$45,000+**. Compared to last year October, we are ahead by \$2,885, but behind YTD by **-\$1,621**.

The October expenses were above budget by **\$4,086** which is primarily from our utility costs and an extra payment toward insurance costs. YTD we are ahead of budget by **\$20,031**. Compared to last year, our monthly expenses are above budget by **\$4,736** and YTD **\$2,476**. Bottom line for the month was above budget by **\$4,900** and YTD by **\$7,279**. Compared to last year, we were above last October by **\$1,853** and last YTD by **\$4,101**.

Please contact Tom DeYoung (LTDEYOUNG@msn.com) if you have any questions.

## December Birthdays

We celebrate with those in our church family who have birthdays in:

### December

- 03** Irene Solomon, Emelia Tande
- 05** Norma Vale
- 07** Lisa Jerabek
- 09** Cindy Andrist, Linda Floden, Aaron Tande
- 10** Dawn Stevens
- 11** Steve Franks
- 13** Zora McLaurin
- 15** Jonah Siewert
- 16** Mary Leppala
- 18** Clinton Wilson
- 19** Bradd Walton, Lexie Walton, Sharon Wilder
- 20** Gayle Rock
- 21** Holly Christie
- 23** Peggy Lehman, Lori Paul, Jeff Sadler, Carole Winters
- 24** Nancy Tointon, Sheila Welke
- 26** Martin Wieland
- 27** Richard Lehman
- 28** Laurie DeYoung
- 29** Nicole Hollar, Nancy Wieben
- 31** Anna Froehling

## LOOKING AHEAD

### JANUARY

- 5: Channel One Volunteering
- 17: Rainbow Choir Performance
- 25-28: John Pavlovitz Weekend

