



5289 McKinley Parkway  
Hamburg, NY 14075  
716-649-1532  
Email: [stmattucc@verizon.net](mailto:stmattucc@verizon.net)  
Website: [stmattsucc.org](http://stmattsucc.org)



## Of the Father's Love Begotten

You know you're getting a little long in the tooth when you remember when "In case of emergency, break glass" was not a meme, but a pretty commonly appearing sign in public buildings. I certainly remember seeing fire extinguishers mounted behind glass in a cabinet, with the little hammer hanging below on its brass chain. Although if you look on Pinterest you will see everything from Hershey bars to single malt Scotch packaged with the instruction to break glass in case of emergency, it is reassuring to know that you can still buy a non-metaphorical fire extinguisher behind break-away glass.



Sometimes, we preacher-types give the impression that God sent Jesus as sort of an emergency measure. We imply (or worse yet, say outright) that God was conducting a kind of experiment with humanity and it was going so badly that merely giving instructions (like the ten commandments) and sending prophets to set us straight was insufficient and as a last resort God had to send Jesus. While you could certainly make a good case that the human race has a pretty long track record of breaking God's law and ignoring the prophets who rise up to challenge us with God's will, it would be a mistake to imagine that sending Jesus was some sort of emergency measure undertaken to correct a mistake.

From the very beginning of the human story – in the Garden of Eden – we've been in a love story with our Creator who has been reaching out to us in love. When our first human parents rebelled and turned away from God, that didn't create an emergency for God or change God's plan for us. Even while they were still hiding in their newly discovered nakedness, God came seeking their company in the cool of the evening (Genesis 3:8). God's disposition toward us has never changed. From this first image in scripture to the very end, God assures us that, "the dwelling place of God is among mortals." (Revelation 21:3)

As we enter the Advent season and anticipate Christmas, we celebrate God's unchanging will to dwell with us and to draw us into relationship. The Incarnation was not a last-ditch effort to correct a mistake, but the perfect expression of God's love toward us expressed in flesh and blood. We give thanks that Emmanuel (God with us) is not just an historical memory or an emergency measure undertaken once upon a time, but it is God's deepest desire and our living hope. My hope for us all is that we might allow ourselves to be found by the God who sought us out in the Garden, who came to us as a baby in Bethlehem, and who seeks us still through his living Spirit. Let God's love dwell within you and let God's light dispel the cold and dark of winter.

See you in church,  
Pastor Lynn

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24



10:30 AM

*Children's*

*Christmas Program*

7:00 PM

*Christmas Eve*

*Candlelight Service*



**Altar Guild**

Robin Federmann  
Shirley Haberman

**Lay Readers**

12/3 Dave Burger  
12/10 Joyce Corlett  
12/17 Bob Velasquez  
12/24 Christmas Eve: Beth Stormer  
12/31 Jacob Zdrojewski

**Childcare**

12/3 Lauren Zdrojewski  
12/10 Pamela Kaznica  
12/17 Joyce Corlett

**Ushers: Team 3**

David Kaznica—Leader  
Dan Barrett  
Dave Burger  
Steve Jankowski  
Bob Velasquez

**Coffee Hour Hosts**

12/3 Diane Whytas  
12/10 LaDonna Painter  
12/17 Beth & Doug Stormer

No coffee hour or childcare  
12/24 or 12/31.

Family & Friends of Gloria Galuszka  
Sy LaVett  
Jane Duewiger  
Karen Kaitanowski



Those in the Military & Veterans  
St. Matthew's Church

Those Residing in Assisted Living:  
Maxine Helm

***Happy Birthday!***

12/5	Jeff Rich	12/28	Chelsea Kanaley
12/11	Beth Stormer	12/28	Sy LaVett
12/15	Ron Larson	12/28	Casey Nistor
12/23	Joe Capasso	12/30	Luke Snyder

***♥ Anniversary Blessings ♥***

Brian & Kimberly Snyder December 6, 2014)  
Phil & Gail Vara (December 9, 1995)



This year our Sunday School classes will be presenting "The First Christmas...A Children's Christmas Pageant" by Louise Egan. Please join us at the 10:30am worship service on Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>, as we share the Christmas Story with you.



***Hanging of the Greens***

On Saturday, December 2, everyone is welcome to come decorate the church for the Advent season. The time will be announced soon.

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE**

**November**

5 75  
12 93  
19 84  
26



are available on the table in the Narthex. Look for the red gift-wrapped box.

Also, *The Upper Room* books include special Advent readings.



Your Christmas poinsettias can be taken home after the Christmas Eve service.

Ken Haberman will be at the front of the Sanctuary with a special protective wrapping for your plant.



## Cornerstone Manor Giving Tree

It's that time of the year again to share Christmas joy with the residents of Cornerstone Manor.\* Please take a gift tag from the tree in the Narthex, purchase the item, and bring the unwrapped gift and tag to church by Sunday, December 10.

If you have any questions, please contact Joann Ertel (684-6808).

*\*Buffalo City Mission's- Women and Children's Shelter (Cornerstone Manor) – is not simply a place which offers food and shelter to those in need, it is a place that provides a safe haven for which women and mom's with children can have the opportunity to transition safely and successfully through the Mission's Housing Program.*



**Activity Group**

## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

**Thursday, December 21**

12:00 Noon, Fellowship Hall

Catered Luncheon

Cost: \$5

Please give your payment to  
Shirley Haberman no later than  
Friday, December 1.

## Friends of Night People

Please sign up to help on the first  
Wednesday of the month.

**More volunteers are needed on  
December 6.**

*Here is a list of things we currently collect and the ministries we support. Collection baskets are on the table in the classroom closest to the Fellowship Hall.*

- \* **Seasonal clothing, toiletries, children's books** for *Friends of Night People*.
- \* **Empty plastic pill bottles** for *Matthew 25: Ministries*. These bottles will be included in shipments of medical supplies and recycling. Their pill bottle program fulfills the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment. To date, we have collected and donated over 320 bottles!
- \* **Canned/nonperishable food items** for *Blasdell Food Pantry*. Food items can be brought to the church on the first Sunday of the month (to be delivered that week).  
Volunteers are needed to deliver the food to the pantry once a month. Please sign up on the bulletin board for 2018. More information is on the sign-up sheet.
- \* **Can tabs** for the *Shriner's Children's Hospital*—helps with the transportation costs of getting sick children to Shriner's Children's Hospital in Erie, PA for treatments.
- \* **2018 calendars, current magazines or Guideposts** for *shut-ins and senior care facilities*.

## HOLIDAY GIFT

REMINDER



Holiday shopping has started!!! One great gift idea comes to mind — **"F.I.R.ST. Certificates"**. These are wonderful, easy gifts to give and receive. These \$10.00 certificates never expire and are used at many Southtowns restaurants.

See Nancy Jankowski at church or call 826-0012 to ease your holiday shopping experience!



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716-649-1532; [stmattucc@verizon.net](mailto:stmattucc@verizon.net)  
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*Director of Music:*

Norman D. Wahl  
716-440-5176  
[normwahl@gmail.com](mailto:normwahl@gmail.com)

*Administrative Assistant:*

Michelle Kemp  
716-245-1692  
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9am-2pm,  
Thurs. 9-12, & Fri. 12:30-3:30pm

*Custodians:*

Pamela & David Kaznica  
716-913-6927 (David)  
716-913-7504 (Pamela)

## THE CHRISTMAS FUND

For the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund

Your special gift to this UCC offering provides direct financial assistance to individual retired UCC clergy. It helps remind these Veterans of the Cross that they have not been forgotten and the Church is grateful for their service.

This special offering will be taken up on Sunday, December 17.



### CIA\* Annual Christmas Caroling!

Sunday, December 10, starting at the Hamburg Presbyterian Church at 6:30 pm. After a warm-up song or two and a prayer, groups of 10-15 people will go to local group homes for the intellectually disabled to sing and share in fellowship and refreshments with the residents.

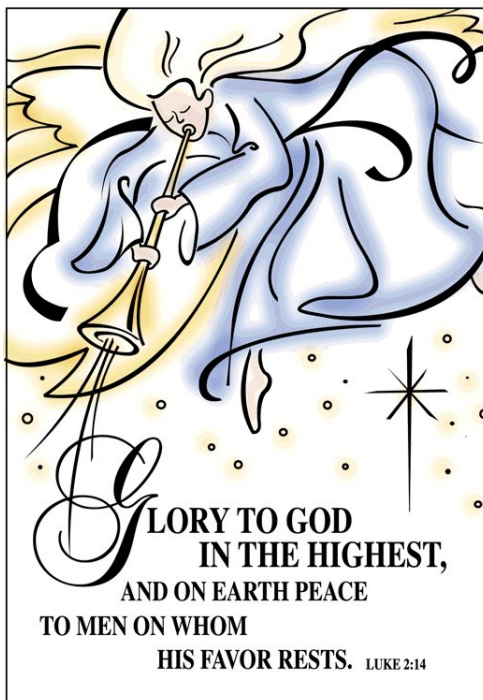
Please call Susan Rich (648-5785/[goat2rich@verizon.net](mailto:goat2rich@verizon.net)) if you would like to carol or if you can make cookies.

**Come share your Christmas joy!**



### Winter Closings & Delays

Check Channels 2 or 7 for the latest news  
of closings or delays.



# December 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	2 <i>Hanging of the Greens</i> 10:00am
3  S. School 9:30am Worship 10:30am	4 Church Council 7:00pm	5 BCE 7:00pm Folk Group 6:30pm	6 AA 10:00am <i>Friends of Night People Outreach</i>	7 OA 7:30pm	8 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	9
10  SS 9:30am Worship 10:30am Annual Mtg 11:30am CIA Caroling 6:30pm	11	12 Folk Group 6:30pm	13 AA 10:00am	14 OA 7:30pm	15 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	16
17  Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am	18	19 Folk Group 6:30pm	20 AA 10:00am	21 <b>Activity Group Christmas Party</b> 12 noon Praise Band 6:15 Choir 7:00pm OA 7:30pm	22	23
24  Worship 10:30am Christmas Program <i>Candlelight Service</i> 7:00pm	25 	26	27 AA 10:00am	28 OA 7:30pm	29	30
31 Worship 10:30am						

St. Matthew's United Church of Christ  
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Our church building is fully accessible.

*No matter where you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here!*