

Hiram Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
6868 Wakefield Rd, PO Box 937
Hiram, OH 44234
330-569-7697

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT No. 7
Hiram, OH 44234



Hiram Christian Church

P.O. Box 937, 6868 Wakefield Rd., Hiram, Ohio 44234
330-569-7697 HiramChristianChurch.org

Ministers: All Who Serve Here Reverend Chris McCreight
secretary@hiramchristianchurch.org chris@hiramchristianchurch.org

Hiram Christian Church is a spiritual and social center for the Hiram community.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

February 2024

From the Moderator

I hope that Advent and the holiday season was one of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love for you, and that HCC played a part in helping you experience that.

Thank you to everyone who “hung the greens” to start the season, and special thanks to Gilda Matteo for leading the installation and donating decorations. Thanks to Pastor Chris and Drew for leading weekly contemplative services and a wonderful indoor caroling Christmas party. Thanks to Nancy Schauer, all the Sunday School kids, Drew, and the adult participants for giving us a delightful and very Hiram Christmas Pageant. Thanks to David Dade for making sure our beautiful star has been lit for each service. And thanks to the Ricks and Factors for taking down—and putting away—the Christmas decorations, and especially to Cathy for installing lovely fresh wintry decorations.

The Church Board met on January 21, and it is clear there will be many exciting opportunities to continue bringing Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to our community throughout this year. We will find ways to bring action to our Vision to follow Christ in the ways of love, cultivating a community of belonging, and doing our part for justice in the world.

Most of these opportunities come through our Teams. It’s not too late to make a new year’s resolution, and one that I know will bring you a blessing is to find a Team where you can express your interests and use your gifts and talents. It’s easy to join a Team—just ask the Leader what you can do! You can work on one project or several.

Your help is also needed as the Board engages in Strategic Planning. We are currently working to identify HCC’s Values. What words would best describe HCC? What concepts are important to us? What would we want our larger community to think of and say about us? Fill in the blank: Hiram Christian Church is _____; Or _____ is important to Hiram Christian Church.

Please spend some time in prayerful, playful, and imaginative brainstorming and either email me your ideas or we can find a time to chat and I’ll take notes as you share your thoughts. Together we’ll work toward a plan that will help us make decisions and take actions to keep HCC a vibrant, Christ-led place that brings wholeness to each one of us and to our community and world.

With love, Kristen

iALERT...If the weather is bad on Sunday mornings, please remember to check for church cancellations through the iALERT system. Find cancellations on Channel 3, at www.wky.com and on news radio WTAM 1100.

Worship Schedule: Sundays @ 11:00am – hybrid service

Bulletins and the newsletter are available on our website.
See the site’s calendar page for up-to-date events and zoom links to events.

The Minister has a work schedule from Sunday through Thursday:

Rev. Chris is available for appointments Please email secretary@hiramchristianchurch.org or call 330-569-7697 to schedule an appointment.

Upcoming Meetings: Feb. 18-Team Leaders; Mar. 17-Board Meeting; Apr. 14-Team Leaders

**Please note: Anyone wishing a hard copy of any of the board minutes should contact the church office at 330-569-7697 or secretary@hiramchristianchurch.org.

Stewardship: If you would like to financially support the ministries of Hiram Christian Church, please know that you can donate online from our website (HiramChristianChurch.org) or you can set regular contributions using BillPay from your bank. Thank you for being a part of Hiram Christian Church.



Help Wanted

Job Title: Stewards Team Leader

Summary of Position: Leads a Team to coordinate planning, oversight, and care of the property and grounds, equipment purchases, and insurance, in order to maintain facilities that meet the needs of the congregation and community.

Job Requirements: Good observation skills to recognize problems and needs; Good communication skills to coordinate with the Office Administrator Lisa, other team members, and contractors to get jobs done; Able to invite and include others to help with projects; Being on call for questions.

Required Education, Experience, and Skills: We will provide all necessary training; Must be able to make phone calls; Ability to use email and do some internet searching a plus; Ability to find someone else to do heavy lifting/physical labor when it comes up; Being “handy” not a requirement.

Working Conditions: Flexible hours; Lots of support from Office Admin., Pastor, and Moderator; No office time (unless you want to touch base with Ziva the canine office assistant).

Compensation: So much gratitude from the church Board and congregation; The Satisfaction of knowing you’re helping make the church a safe and welcoming space for now and in the future; God’s blessing on your gift of time and energy.

To apply or for more information, please contact Moderator Kristen Pool at 330.842.1043 or moderator@hiramchristianchurch.org.

Stewardship:

Finance Report:

We ended 2023 meeting our operational expenditures through the use of savings fund accounts to supplement our general offering. In addition, special projects (replacing the West Doors to the fellowship hall, kitchen door, bathroom upgrades and pew Bibles) were financed through a grant and designated gifts. Investments had a positive year. Not only were we able to care for ourselves, our outreach offerings this year were close to a tithe of our income, totaling \$12,708. We celebrate that.

The final budget for 2024 was approved at the Board meeting 1-21-2024. Although we are frugal stewards of all income to the church, anticipated expenses for 2024 have increased resulting in a budget of \$146,112.83. Copies of the budget are available in the office upon request.

Thank you to all who support the ministry of our beloved church for your ongoing support and prayerful response to increased need.

Hospitality (cont.):

Prayers for Students, Nations, and Churches:

Prayers for those living in Gaza and Israel, and for those ministering to them- for aid and for peace and hostage release. * Prayers for our Jewish and Muslim friends. * Prayers for all those experiencing violence in our World. May we discern and find ways to work for peace. * Chris urges us to continue to advance relationships with neighbors and community. Prayers that we can learn to bring people together rather than tear apart. * Traveling mercies for Janet and Mike O'Bryant as they leave for six weeks, vacationing in Galveston. * Blessings and safe travel for Betsy Siman who will be spending several weeks and New Zealand. * Prayers and safe travels for Joyce Hunter who has traveled to Florida to spend a few months with family. * Prayers for Jeff and Audrey Jackson as Jeff begins an interim service with Pilgrim UCC.

Blessings and Celebrations:

Thanks to Rev. Beth O'Malley for her wonderful message. * Thanks for the mentors in our lives and for the mentors in our congregation. May we discern how we can be mentors to others. * Christopher Faye, brother of Kathy Muscari, thanks us for our prayers for him because he had experienced debilitating health issues and is now well. * Prayers and blessings for Stephanie Cuper and Joel Huff as they are expecting a baby- due in June. Congratulations! * Jon informs us that Jen McCreight was awarded into Garfield Society (a prestigious accomplishment) with Hiram College. Congratulations, Jen. * Jo expresses thankfulness, joy and gratitude for people in the church and her space. Jo gives thanks for the sacred. space we have developed; for Hiram kids renewing relationships founded here with other Hiram kids. Celebration of those relationships. * Congratulations to Brandon Gilven as he begins a ministry at a church in Lexington, KY. * Prayer of gratitude for Cody Johnson who led us in an old-fashioned hymn sing. * Blessings for Roger and Gail McKinney as they move into a new, larger home and live together with their daughter, Erin, and her family. Prayers for a smooth transition as they begin this new chapter in their lives. * Congratulations to the Fox family on the birth of a new grandson. *Cathy gives thanks for our congregation of storytellers. We had a fun gathering * Margaret expresses joy for the arrival of Ivan Lloyd, her great nephew. Bless this child and his parents and family.

Blessings for birthdays- Liam and Tyson Vines celebrated on Jan. 7. Donna Stiles had a birthday on January 9. Dawn Liotta January 10, Missy Bookbinder celebrates on January 11. Steve Pancost- January 16. Lucy Etling January 18, Peg Ehrlinger, January 19. Janet O'Bryant January 22. Owen Scwonek January 24. Damaris turned 91 on January 26. Houston Bowers- Feb. 20, Don Swift- Feb 21, Joyce Jacons- Feb 21, Maya Hankinson- Feb 24, Sammy Harnar- Feb. 27.

Cards and Caring Team has published a list of names and addresses for our friends who are unable to attend regularly or who “head south” for the winter. Please remember to send cards or call our friends and keep them in your prayers.

We Will Pray for You and Yours: Our prayer chain goes out to 40+ people over email. If you have a request, please contact Nancy Schauer (dnsofhiram@gmail.com or 330-569-7416). If you'd like to receive emails, we'd be happy to add you to the group (also, if you want to discontinue receiving, let us know).

Prayers of comfort (cont.):

* Prayers for the Kilroy family at the loss of Dave. Special prayers for wife, Carol. * Prayers for family and friends of Frank who passed away recently. He was a friend of Robin. * Prayers for the family and friends of Ed Broderick, who passed. Ed was a friend and coworker of Lorena. * Prayers for family and friends of Lois Andress. Her daughter, Barb, wanted the church to know that Lois passed on after a brief illness. * Prayers for the family of Sheryl Stecker, youngest niece of Ann Patella. She passed away at the age of 44. * Prayers for MCCC and the family of Len Mallotte, who passed away. * Prayers for Kristen Pool's family at the passing of her father. * Prayers for Eldon Miller (friend of Cody Johnson). Eldon's wife of 74 years passed.

Prayers for Healing and Strength:

Prayers for Dennis and Marcia Grenig. Dennis was in rehab after a hospital stay. He has returned home with hospice. Prayers for comfort and peace. * Continued prayers for Roger Osgood as he receives treatment and pending surgery for bile duct cancer. Prayers for Debbie' mom, Barbara Tolley, recovering from falls; and for Debbie, their caregiver. * Prayers for Kristen Edmonson's Aunt Mary. She has been in the hospital a lot recently and is struggling with many health issues. * Prayers for Alexis who has been diagnosed with cancer and will start chemo. * Dave Peters asks for prayers for his daughter, Ann. * Kathy Muscari asks for prayers for husband Tony. May he have comfort-relief from pain. * Joyce Hunter's cousin Fran has extreme breathing issues. She lives in Florida. Doctors continue to search for a cause, and she will be undergoing more tests. Very worrisome. Prayers for Fran, her family, and the doctors. * Please pray for Glenn. He is brother of one of Joyce Hunter's dear friends, Karen. Glenn had a heart attack. The damage is so severe that surgery is not an option. Prayers for Glen, Karen, and their families. * Prayers for Stephanie Cuper's mother, Denise Cuper, as she receives treatment for cancer. * Prayers for Joel Huff's grandmother who has been hospitalized. * Louann asks for prayers of healing and strength for Richard Brooks. He is recovering from pneumonia. * Jen thanks us for prayers for girlfriend, Susie, who went home from rehab. * Lucy asks for prayers for her cousin and cousin's son, Bob, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer recently. * Damaris asks for prayers for Ken. He is still in assisted living in Tampa. May he gain strength. * Prayers for John Boyle's sister, Marianne, as she is in rehab following a stroke. * Prayers for Marcia Muster as she continues with medical procedures. Prayers for comfort and healing. * Prayers for Margaret's sister-in-law, Margaret, who was hospitalized and is now in rehab in order to gain strength. * Prayers for Katy Schauer and family. Katy continues treatment for breast cancer. Surgery is planned. * Prayers for John and Joan Boyle as they struggle with medical issues. * Prayers for Ruby Fulton as she struggles with many health issues. * Continued prayers for Jen McCreight's Aunt Susie who is recovering from back surgery and knee surgery. * Robin gives thanks for prayers for her friend, Lynn, who is recovering from surgery. * Prayers for Ruth Wagner as she struggles with medical issues. * Prayers for Sandy Stefanik. * Beau asks for prayers for his brother-in-law, Clay. His bladder cancer has returned and he will begin treatment. He is also recovering from an injury to his collarbone. * Dawne asks for prayers for her friend Patty White who is being treated for Breast Cancer. * Prayers for Joyce Hunter's son-in-law, Phil, as he deals with numerous medical issues.

Lenten Worship Services at Hiram:

During Lent, we will host a pair of contemplative services on Wednesdays: the first will take place at noon and the second at 5:30pm. These contemplative services will span approximately 20 minutes, with a welcome, hymn, and then a time of stillness (about 10 minutes), followed by the benediction. It is a service that seeks to prepare oneself for contemplation or prayer, and to set aside the time to offer oneself to it.

Also, during Lent, we will be experimenting with a new order of service in our Sunday worship experience. Conversations are ongoing with the staff, board, deacons, and elders to consider other possibilities that worship may serve the spirit of the congregation. The new order of service will be shared in advance through the church correspondence (email) for knowledge and familiarity. If you'd like to see the proposed order or have questions about these changes, please contact Rev. Chris.

Shared Lenten Worship Schedule:

It is a gift to worship together with our siblings at Hilltop and Mantua Center Christian Church. We are sharing worship services again in the upcoming season of Lent.

- Ash Wednesday: (Two Services)
We will be hosting a service for the community and college in the sanctuary @ noon. Mantua Center Christian Church will be hosting a community service @ 7pm.
- Maundy Thursday: Hilltop will host.
- Good Friday: Hiram will host.
- Easter Sunday: Sunrise service will be at Derthick's Farm

Spiritual Formation:

Thanks to our genius authors and actors, our "Journey to Bethlehem" pageant was quite fun! The kids wrote and edited the pageant after simply being prompted with "Mary and Joseph left Nazareth, and then..." Pastor Chris encouraged the possibilities. Aaron Harnar, David Kinkaid, and the kids made and managed creative scenery. Tyson Vines loaned and set up a sound system. Several adults willingly stepped in to complete the cast and help with the script. Thank you! Thank you!

The talented musicians also have enjoyed playing the chimes.

2024 begins with a study of the teachings of Jesus. Our three teachers, Cody Johnson, Sadie Qualls, and Katelynn Everett each bring a different style and make the experience one of community and fun as well as educational. Each week, two of the three, are present in the classroom.

Partners in Ministry:

4Cs' Needs: For February – canned potatoes, granola bars, coffee (any kind). Please be sure to check the expiration dates on items before donating! Monetary donations can be sent to: The 4C's, P.O. Box 227, Mantua, OH 44255

Church in the World:

p. 4

Growing Hope/Maple Syrup:

Currently we have just a dozen or so bottles of syrup left for sale! Most are at the back of the sanctuary; some available in the church office. We have decided to rest our maple syrup project this year, due to our aging process and to a staffing change at the Hiram College field station. This has been a nice program and we have made a significant contribution to Growing Hope Globally over a ten-year period. Just this month the regional coordinator for Growing Hope was here to introduce us to a new contact person for growing projects in our part of the country; they always have such nice things to say about our contribution. We do have some syrup jugs left from last year, enough to hold about 20 gallons, just under half of our normal output. We are hoping that we will have a chance to purchase syrup in bulk to fill those jugs and have some syrup to sell come spring. This will depend on the sap run and the resulting available syrup. Stay tuned.

We were happy with the results of the Growing Hope Latin American dinner. From the syrup and the dinner, we sent \$4,050 to Growing Hope this year.

From the Team Leader:

The Church in the world Team invites you to join with us in brainstorming activities for the coming year. If you have ideas on addressing social justice issues in the community, reaching out to community members to build connections or an interest in combating climate change individually and as a community, please let me know your interest.

Margaret Green-Masters: 330-592-5433 texting welcome.

Do you know about CHaRM?

The Portage County Solid Waste Management District has begun a new program at the District Recycling Center on Mogadore Road in Brimfield/Kent. Called CHaRM, it is a Center for Hard to Recycle Materials. It is a place for Portage County residents to drop off materials such as appliances, electronic equipment, household batteries, plastic bags, paper shreds and even cooking oil! There is no charge for leaving off items—except TV's, CRT monitors, printers, and tires.

CHaRM has a special entrance and is open Mondays and Thursdays 10 am-2 pm, and first Fridays of each month 10 am-6 pm (except federal holidays). Drop off is as simple as driving into a building, being greeted by friendly people, identifying yourself, and letting the CHaRM people remove the materials from your car.

We currently collect "Bags of Bags" in our Fellowship Hall—plastics such as grocery bags, cereal box liners, and bubble wrap. These are taken to the CHaRM facility.

For details on which plastics are and are not acceptable for our bag collection, as well as details about the CHaRM program and materials accept, please pick up one of the brochures found near our "Bag of Bags" in the Fellowship Hall, just outside the Sunday School room. The CHaRM flyer even lists which materials can be left in outside bins during off hours.

Church Directory

p. 5

Copies of the Hiram Christian Church Directory are available in the narthex of the church or on request at the church office. Directory information includes names, street addresses, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers. We make every effort to keep the directory as up to date as possible, but we realize that information changes often. If you know of any additions or corrections needed, please contact the church office.

Hello from the Bulletin Club

The Hiram Christian Church Bulletin Club is a group of people who do not attend worship services regularly in our sanctuary, but who are interested in what goes on during our worship. Each week we receive (mostly by mail) a copy of the worship bulletin, along with brief notes about the sermon and other items of interest. Some of us also receive a full transcript of the service, graciously provided each week by Rev. McCreight.

We are completely self-funded and would happily welcome any whose names and addresses are passed along to Ann Patella. (330-569-8252, P O Box 315, Hiram OH 44234, or Ann.Patella@gmail.com)

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY:

"Yes, Chef!" A chili cook-off to benefit Hiram's HAPPI Place:

On Sunday, February 25 at 5pm, the church will host an event in Fellowship Hall that will welcome our neighbors, enjoy good food and company, and serve the vulnerable within our community. We are putting together a chili cook-off that will raise money for the HAPPI Place, which is a student-led service to provide Hiram College students with necessary items such as hygiene products, food, and other resources.

Chefs, consider what recipe you're going to go with. Also, let Rev. Chris know if you'd be interested in hosting/serving for this event.

Community Breakfasts (aka Men Graciously Serving Breakfast):

Those chefs du jour, Dave, Emliss and others, continue to serve up delicious breakfasts on the fourth Tuesday of each month through May, 6:30 - 9am. The coffee will be hot, the eggs are fresh, and the community is exquisite! Start your morning at the church and invite a friend or neighbor too. Donations are welcome, but the breakfast is free. See you there!

Hospitality:

In the Life of the Congregation:

Prayers of comfort:

Prayers for the Lacan and Goodell families and for our church family as we grieve the loss of our beloved, Dale. Special prayers for Nancy, Becca, and Josh and their families. What wonderful memories we have! Nancy gives thanks for the many cards, phone calls, food deliveries and well wishes as we continue to grieve for the loss of Dale. * Prayers continue for Emliss and Cathy Ricks and family as they memorialized the life of Emliss's brother, Kevin. * Prayers for the Vines family as they grieve the loss of Tyson's grandfather, Don. He passed away at the age of 90 leaving many memories.