



Sunday, December 7, 2025
Building Fund Sunday
St. Mark's United Church of Christ
St. James United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Randy Sohn, Organist
Scott Siekman, Reader

Our Mission is to help others deepen their relationship with God, become faithful followers of Christ, and to share the message of Christ's love with others.

Meditative Music
Bells Ring
Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Fling Wide The Door

Hymn Sing

Call To Worship:

See! The ruler of earth shall come,
the Lord who will take from us the heavy burden of our exile

Praise be to God!

**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
who has visited and redeemed the people.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blessed be the name of the Lord.

We wait for the word of the Lord as we wait for the rains
and our God shall come down upon us like gentle dew.

The hills and the mountains will be singing praise to God.
**Every tree in the forest will be clapping its hands.
The Lord will come and rule for ever. *Alleluia.***

Opening Prayer:

Eternal God,

**by the birth of Jesus Christ, you gave yourself to the world. Grant that being born
in our hearts, He may save us from all our sins, and restore within us the image
and likeness of our Creator. O Holy One, we wait your return with longing in our
eyes and eagerness in our hearts. Come Emmanuel, O come. *Amen.***

♪ Hymn

St. Mark's: (#192)

St. James: (#113)

*Mary, Did you Know?
Behold a Branch is Growing*

Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus
Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:**

**Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under
Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried:**

**He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended
into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence
he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: the
communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And
the life everlasting. *Amen.***

Lighting of the First and Second Advent Candles:

Advent reminds us that we are people who share a story, the story of Jesus, who brings peace for the poor and the meek of the earth. We long for the day when “the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).

Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God’s creation.

We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to bring Light to the darkness of the world. Then all will live together in harmony, abundance and blessed peace.

Light the Candle of Hope and Peace



Young at Heart:

First Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 11:1-10 ESV

*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*

*And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*

And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

*He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.*

*Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.*

*The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.*

*The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

*The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.*

*They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.*

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

♪ Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

St. Mark's: (#154)

St. James: (#88)

Second Scripture Reading:

Romans 15:4-13 ESV

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

*"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name."*

And again it says,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

And again,

*"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him."*

And again Isaiah says,

*"The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope."*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Message:

Peace Does Not Follow Violent Strength

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

People's Prayer:

Come to us, O God, as we gather together and pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Offertory Music:

Shepherd's Song

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Doxology:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving: (Matthew 3:1-12)

God of Peace, of new ways and unexplored paths, we have been called to prepare the way—not with cute phrases, but with changed hearts and lives. In this season of waiting and eager anticipation, we offer these gifts as signs that we long to live by your story.

Use them and use us to bear the fruit of justice, compassion, hospitality, and peace. Let our generosity reflect the nearness of your kingdom and the urgency of your call. May this offering clear a path for hope to be and peace to be offered and shared. In the name of the one who is coming and is already among us—Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

♪ Hymn

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

St. Mark's: (#191)

St. James: (#107)

Benediction:

Advent people, go now in the blessing and inspiration of God to live God's story wherever you go, that your lives may be an invitation to others to join in the journey to the day that all the earth awaits.

Go forth to love and serve the Lord

in all that you are,

and all that you do,

and all you will be. *Amen.*

Postlude:

My Heart Ever Faithful



Our Church Celebrations!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO:

December 7th – Benjamin Grunwald

10th – Brianne Vandoske

11th – Jacob Grunwald

13th – Andrew Roelse

NO ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK

CONFIRMATION CLASS, Wed., Dec., 10th - Road trip to Immanuel Food Pantry

ST. JAMES CHOIR PRACTICE – Wednesday, Dec. 10th, 6:30pm.

ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING – Thursday, December 11th, 6:00pm

NEXT WEEK SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, IS CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING SUNDAY.



The Giving Tree is up at St. Mark's and the labeled ornaments are ready to be picked up at St. James. All wrapped and labeled gifts are due on Sunday, December 14th

St. Mark's members may also sign up Online at:

<https://bit.ly/stmfamily2025>

ST. MARKS: The Sign Up Sheet for 2026 Greeters is on the table in the church entryway. It is available Online at: <https://bit.ly/greeter2026>

THE FINANCIAL BOOKS FOR 2025 FOR BOTH CHURCHES CLOSES ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 29TH. Contact Sheila Hemb and St. James or Judy Steinbeck at St. Mark's for more information.

Christmas Bingo

Fun for All Ages!

St. Mark's UCC

W1307 Orchard Rd., Cleveland

Sunday, December 14

11:30-2:00 (The Packers play at 3:25.)

Lunch will be provided.

A basket will be out for cash donations.

*Admission: Each person should bring a wrapped gift,
cost not to exceed \$5.*

*To sign up, call/text Lori at 920-946-3540
to give us an idea of how much food is needed.*

Drop-ins are still welcome.

Baked goods will be available for sale.

Invite your friends, family, and neighbors.

The more the merrier!

COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS!

St. James UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School at St. James 9-10am every Sunday.

St. Mark's UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

Visit our Church Website: <https://www.stmarksstjamesucc.org>
Worship Services are recorded weekly and uploaded to our church
YouTube channel: St. Mark's & St. James UCC
Visit & follow:
Facebook: St. Marks & St. James UCC
Instagram: stmarksandstjamesucc



Come and Behold Him

During Advent, we remember the good news of Jesus and why his coming and his return can help us not to fear, no matter what season we are in.

This is a season that is truly for all people—whether you're brand new to faith or have been coming to church for years. This is a time to slow down, read scripture, worship together, and celebrate the great joy of Christmas as a church family.

Come and be a part of celebrating Advent with us!



Our Services

Blue Christmas Service: Thursday, Dec. 18th, 7pm at St. James UCC

Sunday School Christmas Program: Sunday, December 21st, during the 10:30am worship service at St James UCC

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship with Communion:
Wednesday, December 24th - 4pm and 7pm
Both services are held at St. Mark's UCC

Christmas Day Worship with Communion:
Thursday, December 25th , 10:00am at St. James UCC