

Dear Friends

I greet you warmly in the name of Jesus Christ, whose coming into the world we celebrate at this time. It is a delight to commend this Advent/ Christmas newsletter to you and trust you will find what it contains meaningful and inspiring.

Advent is a season when we focus on the coming of Jesus Christ into the world as a baby. It is also when we remember that Christ will return in glory as King and Judge. We refer to this as the Second Coming of Christ. Every time we recite the Creeds we affirm:

“He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end” (Nicene Creed). This is what the writer to the Thessalonians says about Christ’s return, “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Advent is a season when we focus on getting ready for the return of Jesus Christ. It is the season of preparation. It is possible during these days to sense the excitement in the air and observe how individuals get caught up in a flurry of preparation. Let us remember, brothers and sisters, the importance of maintaining a right outlook when it comes to all of this “activity”. Amid the hustle and bustle do not forget that it is not just about preparing or decorating for a day or season but more importantly that we adorn our lives for all time “with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious” (1 Peter 3:4).

Advent is a season when we are called to reflect deeply on what it means that Jesus came into the world. A major teaching of this season is that in Jesus God took on human flesh and came to live among human beings. The Advent/ Christmas message is a powerful one of how God did not shun the lowliness and sin of human nature but entered fully into our condition - our mess - becoming like us so that we can be reconciled to God. The Apostle Paul writes, “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19). In other words, God did not turn away from this sinful world but came into the world to bring salvation. Now this is good news. We can rejoice that in Jesus, God came to live with us, to redeem us from sin, so we can live with God forever. This is the wonderful message we have to share for all the ages of mess in which humans have lived.

Jesus brings us eternal hope. Jesus brings us the peace that the world cannot give nor can it take from us. Jesus gives us joy so that our joy can be full. In Jesus we see what God’s love is like. It is sacrificial, unconditional, and eternal.

On behalf of my family, I wish you a joyous Advent/ Christmas and a bright, peaceful and prosperous 2025. God bless you.

Jefferson C. Niles, EdD, MAE, BA

Handwritten signature of Jefferson C. Niles

Pastor

Email: pastor@ciceroumchurch.org



**LANCASTER, PA BUS TRIP
SIGHT AND SOUND THEATER
June 3-6, 2025**

The trip includes transportation and lodging, with three breakfasts, dinners, shows, driver gratuity, and more.

Cicero United Methodist Church Caring Support Group sponsors the trip.
For more information, contact Mary Alice Scheel at 315-699-7181.

The cost is \$875.00, double per person. \$950.00 Single
A \$250.00 deposit
needed ASAP.

Don't miss out on this fantastic trip!

Cicero UMC and the American Red Cross

NEED YOUR HELP.

Join us on Monday, December 2nd from 11:30a - 4:30p.
Come donate blood and you'll receive 2 pairs of FRIENDS socks!

Scan the QR Code to sign up or visit
redcrossblood.org and enter keyword

- Cicero UMC -

Consider a Power Red donation (types A-, B-, O-,
O+) or encourage a friend to come with you!



I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the thoughtful "thinking of you" cards that you sent to Tiffanie. Receiving those cards truly brightened her day and brought her immense joy. Each card reminded her that she is loved and supported, and it put many smiles on her face during this time. Your kindness means so much to both of us. Thank you once again for your generosity and thoughtfulness.



Warm regards,
Faye

CICERO NEWSLETTER

As I write this, we have just finished our stewardship commitment campaign focused on being generous, and we are moving into Thanksgiving and then, on December 1st, we start the Season of Advent. Advent is one of my favorite seasons in the church year, not because of the gifts given or even received, or because of Christmas trees or Christmas carols and hymns (although I certainly enjoy all of that)!. It is my favorite because we are reminded about the amazing gift that God sent us: Jesus! Without Jesus, where would we be? Also, I really enjoy the candles. The flickering of flames, as they grow brighter and brighter through Advent and then, on Christmas Eve, all the lights on the Advent wreath are lit, the Christ candle is lit, and in the congregation, we hold small candles with that same flame and we pass it back and forth to each other. I was just listening to a Southern gospel song by the Hoppers called "Jerusalem" that had a verse that said this:

John saw the lion, lay down by the lamb
wanna know everything about that land
John saw the day but he did not see night
The lamb of God, well, he must be the light
I love that last line: the lamb of God, he must be the light.



Maybe that is why I LOVE Advent, and why the lights mean something. I hope, during the upcoming Season of Advent, that you focus on that light and WHO that light is.

Blessings, Pastor Susan

Volunteer



Opportunities to use your gifts and talents:

Meal Shepherd: Prepare or purchase a meal and deliver to a church member who has returned from the hospital or is ill. (Reimbursement for the purchase of a meal is available.)

Transportation Shepherd: Provide a ride for a church member to a doctor appointment, pharmacy, or church.

Card Shepherd: Send cards to those members who are ill, in the hospital, going through bereavement, or just needing encouragement. (Reimbursement for postage/cards is available.)

This is a wonderful time to pray and seek God's guidance for serving in one or all these areas of much needed ministry of the church. The opportunity to oversee and manage an area would be very much welcomed.

For further information about these ministries, (don't be shy!), contact Ellie Stivers: 315-751-1156 or Elaine Ruckdeschel: 315-288-4757.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

To help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve services.

Number

____ RED \$8.00

____ PINK \$8.00

____ WHITE \$8.00



___ I will pick up my poinsettia after Christmas Eve

___ Please donate my poinsettia to someone who would enjoy it

Name _____

DEDICATION:

In memory of _____

In celebration of _____

In honor of _____

A Worship Team member will take your order. PLEASE, no orders after Sunday, December 10th. You may take your flower home after the 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service.

Please make checks payable to Cicero United Methodist Church, notate "Poinsettias"



PRAYER FOR TODAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your goodness and faithfulness in my life. Thank You for refreshing and renewing my heart. Fill me with You peace; fill me with Your strength. Help me to do good and stand firm until I see my harvest of blessing in Jesus' name. Amen

Finance Corner: December 2024

As we look forward to spending time with family and friends on Thanksgiving, it is important for us to take time to reflect on this past year and be thankful for all the blessings bestowed upon us.

As a church community, we are blessed in so many ways. We have a ministry that is vibrant, caring and supportive of both its members and numerous community and worldwide needs.

November is a busy time for the Finance Committee. Our annual Stewardship Campaign, titled "Be Generous" is wrapping up and now we begin our work on the annual budget for 2025.

The good news –

Our Rummage Sale was a huge success, netting over \$11,000! I was also very impressed by the number of people that volunteered their time to make this happen. We couldn't have done it without you! Another thing to be thankful for – our awesome volunteers, always willing to lend a hand. God Bless you all.

At the Annual Charge Conference, CUMC was given a certificate of appreciation for paying 100% of our 2023 Ministry Share Allocation. This is worth celebrating.

The not so good news –

We are currently in a deficit position at the end of October. Looking towards 2025, we are hoping to receive more pledges over the next few weeks. As I mentioned last Sunday, it is difficult to create a solid budget if we do not know our expected income! In addition, our Ministry Share obligation has increased by approximately \$11,000 for 2025. We will be providing additional information on the Ministry Shares program in a future newsletter.

Things to Consider/Ways you can help –

Pledge - If you have returned your pledge form, we sincerely thank you. If you haven't, we ask that you please prayerfully consider doing so as soon as possible. Pledge forms are printed out and available at church, or you can contact the church office to have one emailed to you.

Easy Tithe -online giving - If you participate in giving via Easy Tithe, please note that we still need you to submit a pledge form. The pledge form is your annual commitment to the ministry of CUMC. We are unable to confirm your annual pledge amount from Easy Tithe.

If you use Easy Tithe, please also consider checking the box to pay the 2.5% processing fee. This way, CUMC is not absorbing this cost. And remember to set up your updated pledge amount for 2025!

Special Offerings - Envelopes for both Thanksgiving and Christmas will be placed in the pews over the next few weeks. We ask you to reflect on the faith community here at CUMC, what it means to you and how your support can help us continue to provide the services and missions we are committed to. Please consider a special offering in addition to your pledged amount to help us continue our missions and services.

Thank you for your generous support of our church and may you have a blessed holiday season,

Barbara Forleo, Finance Chairperson

Fuel Sunday is back for winter! On the 2nd Sunday of January,

February, and March, we will observe Fuel Sunday. You will find envelopes labeled “Fuel Sunday” in the pews. We would greatly appreciate any contributions you can make to help offset our utility costs this winter. You can mark your check as “Fuel Sunday” and place it in the collection plate. If you use online banking, you can select “Fuel Sunday” to make your contribution. Thank you for your support! The Finance Team



Christmas Campership Gifts

Are you searching for that perfect Christmas gift for a special child in your life? Consider giving the gift of adventure and learning with a week at one of our four Methodist summer camps! This unique opportunity allows children to engage in outdoor activities, build lasting friendships, and grow in their faith in a fun and supportive environment.



Thanks to the tremendous generosity of many members of CUMC, we are excited to announce that in 2025, campership funds will be available to cover 50% of the cost for families looking to send their children to a Methodist summer camp. This makes it more affordable for families to provide their children with an enriching summer experience.

To explore the various summer camp programs offered, please visit www.cnyumc.org/about/crm, where you can find detailed information about each camp, including activities, dates, and registration guidelines.

If you have any questions or would like personalized assistance, our dedicated Christian Education team is available to help. Feel free to reach out to Mike Janisch at 315-663-6126 for more information and support as you consider this wonderful gift for a child this holiday season.

Winter Needs

It's that time again! The Outreach Committee is collecting new coats for local school children. We want to share this information in time for the Black Friday sales. If you can help, please contact Diane Ilacqua. We are also in need of hats, gloves, and mittens. We appreciate your support! Additionally, if you or someone you know needs a coat, please let us know.

Pledge Forms

There is still time to complete and return your pledge form for 2025. If you have not accessed the form sent with the electronic newsletter, hard copies are available in the Narthex, Welcome Center, and the Office Information Area. If you need assistance, please let us know, and we can help you complete the form either in person or online. We are also happy to email you a new form if needed.

God's Country Jamboree

Sunday December 8, 2024
6:00 PM

*Featuring
God's Country Ramblers*



Cicero United Methodist Church
8416 Brewerton Rd, Cicero, NY

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS - 2024

Dear God

Help me spend today with a **Smile** on my face, **Love** in my heart, and **Joy** in his grace.

Amen



PIC•COLLAGE



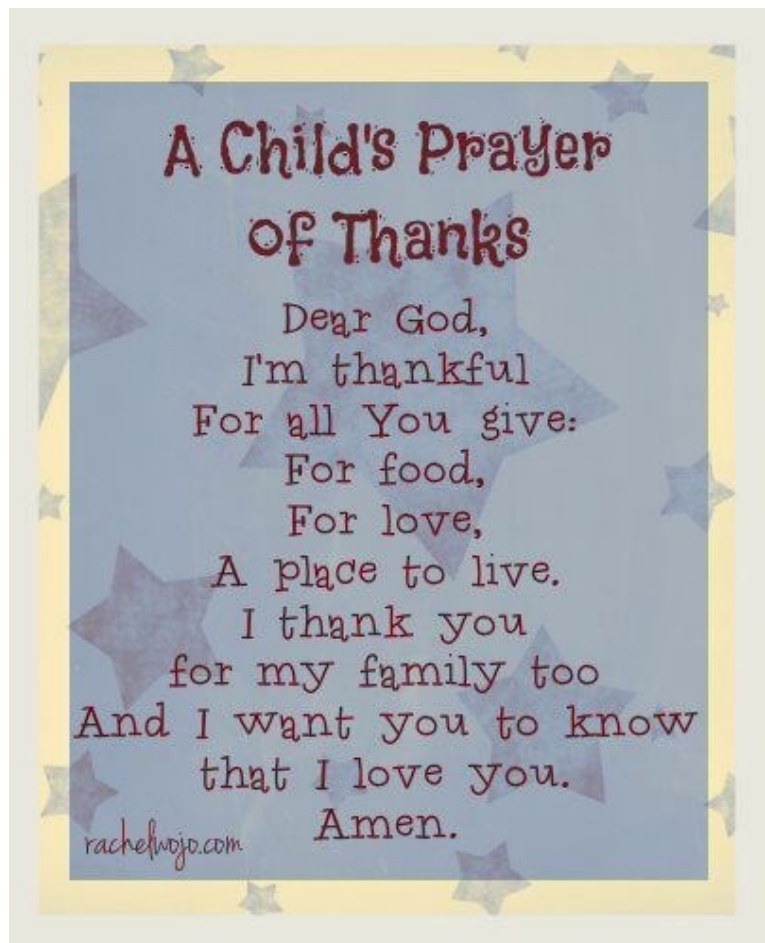
CUMC Christmas Pageant

The Angels Are Watching

Date: December 8, 2024

Time: 4:00 PM

Join us to see our amazing and talented Sunday School kids showcase their abilities! A dress rehearsal and Sunday School workshop will take place on December 7, 2024, from 9:00 AM to noon.





NEW YEARS EVE CELEBRATION

Join us on December 31, 2024, for the Forever Young New Year's Eve Celebration! This year, we are traveling to Spain to celebrate. Gather at 4:30 PM, eat at 5:00 PM. Please bring a dish to share- everyone is welcome!

LIVE MUSIC



December 20, 2024

**DOORS OPEN AT
6:30PM
SHOW STARTS AT
7:30**

Local Artists, including,

very own Japheth Niles

Test Kitchen Presents

Polar Express

\$10.00 a ticket

Presale starts 12/1/2024

Brewerton United Methodist Church

5395 Orangeport Rd, Brewerton NY 13029

Please Call 315-668-3999 to reserve tickets



CUMC Christmas Eve Worship

December 24th Family Worship 6 PM
December 24th Candlelight Worship 10 PM

Cicero United Methodist Church
8416 Brewerton Road Cicero, NY 13039
315-699-2731
Admin_Asst@ciceroumchurch.org

2024 December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 11:30 AM Blood Drive	3 Bible Study	4 10 Forever Young	5 2 Bereavement 6:30 Education Committee 6 Community Outreach	6 Cookie Drop off for Preparations	7 Cookie Tray Pick Up
8 Pageant 4 God's Country 6	9 7 Troop 117	10 Bible Study 10:30 AM Cicero Christian Sisters Mahjong Christmas Party Noon	11 10 Quilt Guild Christmas Party 5:45 Music Team 6 Finance Team	12 Long Range Plan- ning 6 (Meal) Sanctuary Cleaning	13	14
15 Youth Sunday Worship	16 7 Troop 117	17 11 Bridge 12 Mahjong 6:30 117 Cub Pack	18 5:45 Music Team	19 Trustees 6:30 PM Sanctuary Cleaning	20	21
22	23 6:30 SPRC Spear Rm 7 Troop 117	24 Christmas Eve Worship 6 PM -10 PM Newsletter will Go Out Early	25 Merry Christmas Christmas Office Closed	26 Sanctuary Cleaning	27	28 Private Birthday 2 PM Fellowship Hall
29	30 7 Troop 117	31 New Years Eve Forever Young Party 4:30 Gather 5:30 Eat	1 JAN Office Closed			



*Loving
Father,*

help us remember
the **birth of Jesus**
that we may share in

the *song of the angels,*
the gladness of the shepherds,
and the **worship of the wise men.**

Close the door of hate and

open the door of love all over the

world. Let kindness come with every gift and
good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from
evil by the *blessing which Christ brings,* and teach us
to **be merry with clear hearts.** May the Christmas morning
make us happy to be *Thy children,* and the Christmas
evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,

forgiving and forgiven,

for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

Cicero United Methodist Church
8416 Brewerton Road
Cicero, NY 13039
Phone: 315-699-2731
Website:
www.ciceroumchurch.org
E-mail:
Admin_Asst@ciceroumchurch.org

Church Office Hours
Monday-Friday
8:00 am to 2 pm

Sunday Services:
9:30 AM



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