



# THE SPIRE

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## THE FEDERATED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST    AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

### **Christmas Eve 2020 at Federated**

**December 24, 4:00 and 6:00 pm online at [fedchurch.org/live](https://fedchurch.org/live)**

While we are unable to gather together in the Sanctuary, Federated Church will offer two festive and inspirational online worship services on Christmas eve. We invite you to join us from the comfort of your own home. There will be two services, beginning at 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. We are excited to be able to offer a half hour of pre-service music for those who would like to listen before the service begins. Tune in at our YouTube channel: [YouTube.com/TheFederatedChurch](https://YouTube.com/TheFederatedChurch), or follow the "View Worship" link on our website's homepage: [fedchurch.org](https://fedchurch.org).

The **4:00 pm Family Service** will be led by Rev. Mark Simone and Kristin LeFeber, and feature the and RISE to Shine Band and singers from Children's Choir. Pre-service music will begin at 3:30 pm.

The **6:00 pm Traditional Service** we will feature the Chancel Choir, and Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton will preach. Pre-service music will begin at 5:30 pm.

Once the premieres end, these worship services will remain on our YouTube channel. You can view the Christmas Eve services later in the evening, on Christmas morning, or any time! (*If you watch the playback, it will include the pre-service music, but you can jump ahead to the worship portion if you desire.*) We wish you and your family a Merry Christmas this joyous season.

### **Christmas Eve Outdoor In-person Gathering**

**December 24, 8:00 pm at the Family Life Center**

Because you may want to be with others in your church family in person on Christmas Eve, we will gather at the Family Life Center that evening at 8:00 pm, weather permitting, in a brief outdoor service. We will stand together in a circle and sing together and hear the story of Jesus' birth and, using battery-powered candles, pass the light of Christ to each other.

We would love to have you join us. We will be masked and keep appropriate social distance. At the same time, we will have the deep joy of gathering together to usher in the birth of Christ.

RSVPs are recommended, but not required. Please let Kiersti Critchfield ([kcritchfield@fedchurch.org](mailto:kcritchfield@fedchurch.org), 440.247.6490 x103) know of your plans to attend, so we might plan accordingly.

### **2020 Christmas Eve Offering**

Even a pandemic cannot stop the celebrations for the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ. The pandemic has, however, caused great loss, hardships and financial strains on the world around us. In September the Mission and Service Commission announced that our Christmas Eve Offering will focus on our current mission partners who, like many, are working hard to lift up the needs of a growing number of people adversely affected by COVID-19.

Our four partners, St. Paul's Community Church (our Sister Church on the near west side), Chagrin Falls Park Community Center, Family Promise of Greater Cleveland and JustHope (in Nicaragua) have all submitted an outline of how the Christmas Eve Offering will help them immediately and in the future, realizing that the effects of this COVID-19 crisis will be with us long

*Continued on next page...*

# Christmas Eve Offering, continued

after the virus fades away. Areas of consideration needed to focus on meeting each partner community's food, health, and/or housing needs. They could also include proposals that support people's work needs, such as transportation costs or work supplies. We can ease these difficult situations by giving generously to this year's Christmas Eve offering.

Please join the Mission and Service Commission and prayerfully consider the impact your gift will make for our beloved mission partners. The following is a brief summary of how our partners will use the funds they receive. To say they are grateful for our generous support is an understatement!

## St. Paul's Community Church

shares that since the onset of COVID-19, St. Paul's has been open every Sunday Morning to serve coffee and a light meal to 10-25 people. Folks freshen up and use the restrooms, get a change of clothes from the thrift shop and receive sanitizer and other needed items.

### Impact of our gifts:

1. Thrift Shop (a place where many can go to procure items for themselves and their children) will get an organizational overhaul: new mobile shelving, holding shelves, and new permanent shelving in the shop. These improvements will help St. Paul's sort items more efficiently, having more items on display which will allow them to respond to emergency needs much faster.
2. Kitchen (addressing the community's food insecurities) will receive new appliances to replace unreliable pieces. While the kitchen is not currently in high demand because of COVID-19 restrictions, getting the kitchen ready now for the eventual increased demand is vital, as the reality of hardships will be a reality for some time to come.

## Chagrin Falls Park Community Center

is a trusted institution for the residents, where people (children through seniors) have access to services daily. Since the start of COVID-19 shutdowns the demand on the Center's services has been on the rise and their funding and income streams have been reduced. The Center is closed to the public, and services such as wellness checks, Meals on Wheels deliveries, pantry food and cleaning supplies to seniors are being done remotely.

### Impact of our gifts:

1. Purchase food and cleaning supplies for their pantry to fill a growing need in the community.
2. Maintaining the Center's vans which are now in constant use to handle deliveries.
3. Maintain staff levels to meet the community's demands on the Center.

## Family Promise of Greater Cleveland

provides families facing crisis of homelessness with a safe place designed to engage, inspire, and guide them toward a future where they feel empowered to control the course of their lives. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis the work has not stopped, working to ensure all clients and staff are safe, while providing temporary housing to residents for an average of 12-14 weeks. Clients receive help with basic needs that support their efforts to prepare for, obtain and retain employment.

### Impact of our gifts:

1. Transportation Assistance: RTA Bus Passes to get to and from work and gas cards for families with cars.
2. Help provide proper clothing for jobs, often the needs include uniforms and proper footwear.

## JustHope

is a global partner with Federated Church. JustHope makes meaningful and significant impact in Chacraseca and LaFlor – two communities in Nicaragua - empowering community leaders, funding and constructing potable water systems, supporting and supplying health clinics in both communities, and so much more. The COVID-19 pandemic has put a strain on the operations and supplies of the clinics in both Chacraseca and LaFlor.

### Impact of our gifts:

1. The ability to continue providing medications and dental supplies, as well as providing electricity and PPE for the Chacraseca Clinic.
2. Funding the Medical Support Program in LaFlor, (providing funds for residents to be able to take a bus to the city, fill prescriptions, and seek special medical services as needed).

# Hamilton's Desk

Dear Friends,

No surprise to anyone, we are living in a time of heightened tension and suffering. Not only have over a quarter million people died in this country alone from COVID-19, but countless other diseases and accidents ravage us. And not only are people dying at an alarming rate, but many of us live with anxiety and frustration and loneliness lurking just beneath the surface. Tension and impatience and weariness are signs of the times. Ordinarily, we might be able to distance ourselves from the scope of the suffering, but this year in particular, it comes over us in waves.

This is an Advent and Christmas like no other in our lifetimes. It will likely have a different shape, a different feel, from what we wish it had. Separated, as we are, from so many people we hold dear, forced, by a rampant disease, into habits and practices we wouldn't choose, we may feel as though all we can do is grit our teeth and endure it.

And maybe that is part of what we do. We lean into the headwind, the hurricane, the tornado that is 2020, and we acknowledge that sometimes life just doesn't go anywhere near the way we'd like it to go. It's thrown way off course by circumstances we simply can't control. Various challenges undo us. A pandemic takes a legion of lives. And we gut it out through a time in life that sometimes feels cold and distant and foreign.

And it's precisely into that world that God comes. It's precisely into that pain and emptiness and isolation that Christ is born. Life for Mary and Joseph was a trial. And Jesus came. Life for first-century Jews was filled with oppression and persecution. And Jesus came.

We, too, are blessed with a holy birth. We may sit in our own dingy stables. We may feel as endangered as Mary and Joseph fleeing the wrath of Herod. And it's precisely there that Jesus arrives. Jesus comes to walk with us on our journeys. Jesus comes to soothe us in our pain. Jesus comes to remind us of our own agency in making a difference in the world.

When Jesus is born, an angel comes to terrified shepherds and says, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). Which is why, no matter what cards life deals us, we are able to praise God: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:14). Thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ,  
Hamilton



## UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

### Sunday, December 6—Second Sunday of Advent

Rev. Mark Simone preaches  
Communion celebrated  
10 am Online Worship  
*Special music by Barry Stees, bassoon, & Kiko Weinroth, soprano*  
11 am Virtual Coffee Fellowship  
11 :30 am Online Sunday School

### Sunday, December 13—Third Sunday of Advent

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches  
10 am Online Worship  
11 am Virtual Coffee Fellowship  
11 :30 am Online Sunday School

### Sunday, December 20—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches  
10 am Online Worship  
11 am Virtual Coffee Fellowship  
11 :30 am Online Sunday School

### Thursday, December 24—Christmas Eve (See p.1 for details)

4 pm Online Family Service  
Led by Rev. Mark Simone  
6 pm Online Traditional Service  
Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches  
8 pm Outdoor In-Person Worship  
Led by Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton at the Family Life Center

### Sunday, December 27

UCC National Staff Christmas Pageant  
10 am Online Worship  
11 am Virtual Coffee Fellowship  
11 :30 am Online Sunday School

**Worship:** [fedchurch.org/live](https://fedchurch.org/live)

**Coffee Fellowship:** [tinyurl.com/fedfellowship](https://tinyurl.com/fedfellowship)

**Sunday School:** Contact Kristin for the link at [klefeber@fedchurch.org](mailto:klefeber@fedchurch.org)

**Online Worship:**

**Every Sunday  
10:00 AM**

**on our YouTube Channel:  
TheFederatedChurch**

**[fedchurch.org/live](https://fedchurch.org/live)**

# Federated News & Info

## Donor Advised Funds

Have you been confused by hearing the term “Intention to Give” from church staff or the Stewardship Committee and wondered what that means? As much as we can, we’re trying to use **Intention to Give** rather than **Pledge** nowadays. This is because more and more of our members are supporting Federated Church by recommending grants from their **Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)** at a charitable sponsor.



These charitable sponsors (like Fidelity Charitable or American Endowment Foundation) are an independent public charity that sponsors a DAF program. Donors contribute to their donor-advised fund held by the charitable sponsor and receive an immediate tax benefit - in other words, they make irrevocable charitable contributions to these sponsors - and then have the privilege of recommending grants from their DAF to qualified public charities like Federated Church.

A grant to Federated from these DAFs can be used to fulfill a pledge because pledges to Federated Church represent intentions to give rather than a legally binding obligation. **However**, to prevent our members and their DAF’s charitable sponsor from having to go through extra steps to prove this eligibility, we have started using this new phrase, one that was recommended by those same charitable sponsors.

It’s easier on our members and is the best way to ensure that their grant recommendations are processed, with checks mailed to the church, in a timely manner - and we say AMEN to that!

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## Rejoice & Renew Capital Campaign Project Update

*So many good “next steps” came from a recent Capital Campaign Projects Committee meeting thanks to the hard work of Becky Gruss, Keith Mast, Melissa Owen, Janis Stefanchik, and Laura Taylor. It’s an exciting time for the Rejoice & Renew Capital Campaign as folks are continuing to fulfill their capital campaign pledges. With those funds in hand, our projects are continuing:*

- The Rebranding Sub-committee of the Telling Our Story Commission, led by Diana Weber Gardner, has been working with consulting firm OrgStory to develop and execute a new brand to position Federated for its second century. As the interviews, focus sessions, and survey came to a close in October, they reviewed the findings in a presentation with OrgStory and this month are working on Brand strategy and Identity development.
- Senior Director of People & Operations Melissa Owen continued her work implementing our livestreaming equipment needs by improving lighting for the Chancel area of the Sanctuary. At the same time, she’ll have new window blinds or shades installed for the Sanctuary that will also affect the lighting and will be a blessed relief to those sitting in the pews once we’re holding in-person services again! This is an important campaign project as it was a funded Giving Opportunity – a couple associated their pledge to the campaign with this particular project.
- In addition to the church’s A/V needs, Melissa will be working with the administration staff, the operations staff, and custodial crew to:
  - Replace the bathroom fixtures. Five hands-free faucets are being installed each month and hands-free dryers will come next.
  - Upgrade the church’s computer server before its shelf-life has expired!
  - Begin transitioning the outdoor lights to energy-efficient LED fixtures.
- Melissa will work with a vendor to update the carpeting on the first-floor hallway and a good portion of the main stairwell, complementing our new carpet in the Lobby and Sanctuary.

We are truly blessed! Thanks be to God.

# Federated News & Info

## Fund Development Office Update New Generosity and Giving Webpage

This fall our church staff has been working (from home!) to create a new online resource for our Federated faith family to use when supporting the church. To do that, we've reworked the entire Generosity and Giving webpage on the church's website ([fedchurch.org](http://fedchurch.org)), so folks can make informed decisions about their gifts to Federated.

The first step was to place a "Giving" tab on the church's homepage. Thus, folks can type in [fedchurch.org/giving](http://fedchurch.org/giving) when they want to go directly to this Generosity and Giving webpage.

There are four ways to give an immediate gift to Federated. Those ways are listed up top if folks are viewing this webpage from their mobile phones or on the right side if on a tablet or laptop/desktop.

We then thought about the various giving vehicles that our members and friends use to express their spiritual practice of supporting the church. That variety is reflected in the five sections listed on the webpage:

GENEROSITY / INTENTION TO GIVE  
GIVE NOW  
DONATING ITEMS (for our mission and ministry partners)  
STOCK DONATIONS and  
PLANNED GIVING TO THE LEGACY FUND

Each section currently provides descriptions, links, or forms that members, friends, and visitors may need to follow through with their intentions. And throughout this next year, additional information will be added to these sections - and more sections may be added if that meets your needs. So, give it a whirl! Go to our Generosity and Giving webpage and tell us what else would be helpful.

In Gratitude,  
Laura Piper Taylor  
[rejoiceandrenew@fedchurch.org](mailto:rejoiceandrenew@fedchurch.org)  
440.247.6490 x115

## In Memoriam

Recognition of those who have passed recently. A farewell to friends; May God welcome them with open arms.

### January SPIRE Deadline

Do you have something you'd like to see in the January SPIRE?

Please email your information to  
[communications@fedchurch.org](mailto:communications@fedchurch.org)  
by **Wednesday, December 9**  
and include "SPIRE" in the subject line.  
Thank you!

Barb Eggert—  
10/12/2020



Amanda Morris—  
10/16/2020





# Federated News & Info

## Stewardship Update

This year has certainly been full of many firsts! But one thing that became very apparent to us during these times is that ***social distancing does not mean spiritual distancing to our church! We have seen, time and time again, how engaged our congregation has become in their efforts to make a difference.*** With that in mind, we used this opportunity to transition toward year-round opportunities that lift the spiritual practices and scriptural basis for living generously. In order to begin this process, we worked on the following:

- Overhauled the Generosity and Giving webpage on the church's website for easier access to information needed when giving to the church (see article on page 5)
- Established online processes to state an intention to give or pledge via either the church website or the church's Realm community
- Added Generosity Impact Moments to the Sunday service every week to highlight the impact that we are collectively making. (see article on page 7)
- Mailed generosity and giving materials as well as the November Spire newsletter to 630 Federated members and friends
- Intentionally reworded the language on our generosity and giving materials, as much as possible, to accommodate those who give to the church through a Donor-Advised Fund (see article on page 4)
- Informed the congregation about the various ways that Federated is the Charity of Choice for our members, friends, and those in our community.

All of this was done because generosity is a privilege that EVERYONE deserves at any time. During this time, when we are working together to make a difference, can you imagine exceeding last year's percentage and dream of Federated achieving 70% participation in our Invitation to Generosity? or 75%?

We are pleased to say that BECAUSE OF YOU, we have started off strong. After only a week following Commitment Sunday, already 50 church members and friends have embraced this invitation of gratitude and generosity. We are extremely blessed by the number of new commitments and by those who increased their intention to give. On our way to making an impact in 2021!

Thanks for joining us at this feast of abundance, ready to feed our community and the world!

In Gratitude,  
Ken Horner  
Maren Koepf  
Ann Lentz  
Martine Scheuermann  
Laura Taylor, staff liaison

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## A Very UCC Christmas: 2020

*Brought to you by the United Church of Christ National Setting*

We are thrilled to be able to join with UCC churches across the country in worship on December 27 through the national staff Christmas Pageant. This production will offer a real look at church life in 2020, and hold hope for the Christ Child in the world, as well as allow us a time to worship with our siblings and sisters and brothers across the United Church of Christ.

We hope you join us at 10:00 am on December 27 on our YouTube channel: TheFederatedChurch. You can easily access the link by going to [fedchurch.org/live](https://www.fedchurch.org/live).

# Federated News & Info

## Generosity Impact Moments

Each Sunday we share a Generosity Impact Moment during the service. Since last month, Hamilton and Mark have shared these moments in which YOU are making a difference through Federated throughout the year:

November 1	<b>Social and Environmental Justice Group—Electronic Recycling</b>	The member and community collection resulted in filling four HUGE pallets – diverting the recyclables from landfills.
November 8	<b>Faith Formation—Sunday School</b>	Weekly Zoom lesson with a story, a discussion, and a related activity AND a YouTube video summarizing a ‘behavior over belief’ curriculum that encourages the children to meet God through their own inner wisdom and embodiment of the Spirit.
November 15	<b>Mission &amp; Service Commission—Winter Clothing Collection</b>	Collected 15 large trash bags of warm clothes for distribution by Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH). Over half were brand new!!
November 22	<b>Telling Our Story Commission—Capital Campaign Rebranding Initiative</b>	Update about campaign-funded rebranding and messaging initiative that will welcome us into the next 100 years!

Federated Church is a Charity of Choice for both our congregation and the community at large.

Last month we shared a story about a local business that donated 14 guitars, asking Pastor Mark to work with local nonprofits to deliver them to youth in need.

This month we want to highlight another story that touched our hearts. During this time of COVID-19 two of our members have been active helpers to a neighbor – doing simple things like offering to run an errand, fixing something, or arranging a gathering that’s socially distanced. This neighbor, who is not a Federated member, made a recent gift to our members’ charity of choice - Federated Church - to express her appreciation of their help and support. Sometimes it’s the smallest acts that can make the biggest difference!

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## Christmas Poinsettias on Sale

With a generous offer from the leaders of Work Camp, the usual recipient of the annual poinsettia funds, our Livestream Music Ministry is raising funds through the sale of holiday poinsettias. As in years past, these holiday flowers will decorate our Chancel during the Advent season. The poinsettias may be purchased in your name, In Honor Of, or In Memory Of a loved one or friend. The cost is \$20 per plant. A listing of those named will appear in The January edition of The Spire newsletter and on our website.

This year, after our livestreamed Christmas Eve services, we will donate the poinsettias to local retirement communities and assisted living facilities, unless you let us know that you’d like your poinsettia(s) delivered **to your home**.

Fill out this form (please print) and mail it to the church **before Friday, December 18**. If writing a check, note “Poinsettia” in the memo line. If giving online, use the memo line to add your dedication. Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Plants: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of / In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please circle)

# Thank You Corner

It was so delightful to receive this note from a person in our Federated faith family! The staff appreciate your appreciation! You're continually teaching us how to offer the types of faith-filled support and connection that you need during these times. And thank you for your patience as we figure out the logistics! As this email states, you are a generous people and we are so fortunate!

*Dear Fellow-Federated Parishioners,*

*I'm just catching up on listening to a sermon from last week and wish to somehow express how fortunate we are to have raised funds to buy the new organ that Marcia is so proud to play so well each week. Especially now in these strange COVID-19 times.*

*I remember listening to her explain all the features of our organ and I thank God that she is so skilled to play so beautifully most every Sunday.*

*It means so much to be able to hear each week's service that so many participate in - to make sure we are not completely alone each Sunday. I want to pass along my thanks to all who are so skilled technologically and creatively - who keep reaching out in so many different areas, keeping Federated informed of all that's happening during these months. Your efforts are so appreciated by so many.*

*Thank you for your generous sponsorship of JustHope's Wine for Water. Your ongoing support of JustHope, in the midst of difficult times, says a lot about who Federated is as a congregation and a mission partner.*

*In solidarity,  
Laura Law (board of JustHope)*

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## Mission & Service

### Parish Nurse Corner

#### An update from Federated's Parish Nurse

Yesterday felt like a typical morning at St. Paul's, with the clinic having the same busy traffic that we used to have pre-COVID (except, of course, we were all wearing masks!) Many of our old-timers were back, signing up for boots/socks (from Avon UCC), picking up a pack of thermal underwear, some hygiene products, mittens and gloves. But then one of my favorite weekly clients, Charlie, came in needing comfort.

Our conversation began: "Hi Charlie, how have you been?" Surprisingly for him, he shook his head back and forth in an unhappy response. "Oh, oh. Did something bad happen?" Quietly he answered, "My Uncle died suddenly last week." "Was it from COVID?" I asked. Now whispering, "No it was cancer. But I didn't know he was so sick. He took care of me when I was little, and he was always fun to be with. I can't believe he is gone... no one told me he was sick," he repeated. "But the funeral was nice. He was a vet so he had a military ceremony, and two officers came to pay their respects and offer sympathy to all of us. That meant a lot. I just can't believe he is gone." We sat quietly together for a while, while he was feeling his grief, occasionally apologizing. At that, I said "I am glad you told me about your uncle's death... But I am sorry about how it makes you feel. Sometimes it helps to just share your feelings."

This is the essence of our Parish Nurse mission at St. Paul's: to offer friendship, a safe place to come to for supplies, and to experience friendship and support through trust. I am beginning my 6<sup>th</sup> year at the clinic and am always strengthened by my experiences.

If you want to be a part of this mission now, it's easy to donate your time, talent, material supplies, and/or money. Please call me if you have questions. Thank you!

Kathy Kolcaba, Parish Nurse  
440.655.2098



# Federated Happenings

## Search for the Christ Child

Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 pm | Online

We are excited to share with you that Search for the Christ Child will be offered as an online journey this year. This event has turned into a Federated tradition to start off the Advent season. 2020 will be no exception. Things will look a little different, but we can still allow the joy and celebration of the season into our hearts even while we are socially distant from our church family.



On Sunday, December 6, Search for the Christ Child will be offered as an online journey on our church website. We will have a premiere viewing at 6:00pm where we can, as a collective church body, view the journey together. The video collection will be left up on the website for the rest of the month of December in case you are not able to make the premiere or if you would like to go on the journey for a second, third or fourth time.

From the comfort and safety of your own home, you will be able to view video recordings of all the stations of Search for the Christ Child from our website. All your favorites, from the Proclamation Angels to the Baby Jesus, will be available to "journey through" online.

Please use this link: [fedchurch.org/sftcc](https://fedchurch.org/sftcc) to log onto the Federated Website beginning Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 pm — or after December 6 anytime through December 31 — to take a fun journey through what the Christmas season is really about. We thank you for your continued support of this ministry and encourage you to share the link with family, friends, and neighbors.

May God bless you this beautiful time of the year and may this journey help kick start your family's holy holiday season.

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## Advent by Candlelight

Monday, December 7 at 7:00 pm | Online via Zoom

Federated Church and Congregational Care Commission welcome all to join us on Monday, December 7 at 7:00 pm via Zoom for Advent by Candlelight. Although things are different this year, we invite you to join us as we read through the Christmas story and journey through lighting the advent wreath together.



This is an all church event, and we encourage you to have candles or an advent wreath with you so you can follow along and light your own Advent Candles. As in previous years, food and drink have always been a big part of Advent by Candlelight, so please feel free to eat and drink your favorites when you join us December 7. Use the following link to access the Zoom meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/y4ryf3rb>.

We look forward to worshipping with you as we explore Hope, Peace, Joy and Love this Christmas season. A recording of the evening will be available on our YouTube channel, TheFederatedChurch, after December 7. If you have any questions, please contact Kiersti Critchfield at [kcritchfield@fedchurch.org](mailto:kcritchfield@fedchurch.org) or 440.247.6490 x103

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## White Privilege course

The Social and Environmental Justice Committee at Federated continues to offer a White Privilege course to all interested folks, regardless of any religious affiliation. This course is a seven-week in-depth look at what it means to be white in the United States, historically and currently. The meetings are on Zoom and last 90 minutes.

The next course will begin in January. Anyone interested in more information or to sign up may contact Bill Shaul at 513.280.2836 or by email: [theshauls@msn.com](mailto:theshauls@msn.com).

# Federated Happenings

## Call for Christmas Greeting Videos

Please help Federated put together a video montage of Christmas greetings to begin our Christmas Eve services. Even though we won't be together this Christmas we can still wish each other Merry Christmas.

Simply, make a few seconds video with a brief Christmas wish from your family saying, "Merry Christmas, Federated! From (family name(s))" and send it to Trisha at [communications@fedchurch.org](mailto:communications@fedchurch.org) before **December 10**. Consider making the video even more festive by sitting in front of your tree or by wearing Christmas sweaters.

Can't wait to "see" you!

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## Join Mark in studying the Book of James

This winter, Rev. Mark Simone is offering a Zoom Bible Study on the Book of James, which is one of his favorite books in the Bible. It will be a straightforward, five-week study and will cover a chapter a week. Dates are Thursdays from 6:30 to 7:30 – January 14, 21, 28 and February 4, 11. Sign up is required and the class will be limited to 12 homes so that discussion can be possible. This is offered through our Spiritual Formation Commission ongoing ministries. When presenting this idea to the Spiritual Formation Commission, one of the members asked Mark, "Why James?" Excellent question.

He answers: *"To me, the Book of James has an Old Testament feel to it, similar to the book of Proverbs, but adding the New Testament sense of the resurrected Christ. James argues for practical action in our faith life. The book has a feel like what is called the Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament. God's people are encouraged to act like God's people. James offers few latitudes for those who do not measure up. James believed that we Christians show indication of faith by walking the walk and avoiding the bright and shiny distractions. For James, a faith that does not produce change is a faith that is worthless (James 2:17)."*

There is no cost for the class. If you would like, there is an optional Scripture Journal available for \$6.00. You may refer to your favorite translation for insight variety.

To join the study, please contact Mark through his church email at [msimone@fedchurch.org](mailto:msimone@fedchurch.org).



## Gentle Slow Flow Yoga

with Dawn Dole, RYT

Virtual class on Zoom. Open to everyone.

Mondays at 10:00 - 11:15 am (December 7, 14, 21, 28)

Thursdays at 7:00 - 8:15 pm (December 3, 10, 17)

This Gentle Slow Flow class links the breath, meditation, movement, and poses together. All levels of Yoga practitioners can find their comfort level, as they slowly and mindfully move through the class. Balance, focus, and peacefulness result from attention to breath as we move through physical "asana" or poses in our yoga practice. Modifications will be suggested as needed. This class is open to everyone with the ability to move through seated, standing, kneeling, and reclined positions unassisted.

You will need a computer or iPad to join the class via a Zoom link from the comfort of your own home/space.

To register, or if you have questions, email Dawn Dole at [newdayyoga.dawn@gmail.com](mailto:newdayyoga.dawn@gmail.com).

# Federated Happenings

## Social and Environmental Justice (SJAM) News

SJAM is a group learning about and taking action on a wide variety of societal justice issues such as gun violence, criminal justice, LGBTQ+ rights, environmental issues, racial justice, voter registration, and more. Sound interesting? We welcome you to join us at our next meeting. SJAM is open to all in the community who are looking for ways to work for social justice. To learn more, please contact Kathy Franz (440.821.7795 or wfranz@roadrunner.com). Please feel free to log onto the call and check us out! No obligation. Just join the Zoom and see if what we are about speaks to your heart. We welcome you!

### Next SJAM Meeting — Sunday, December 13, 11:15 am on Zoom

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/261964671?pwd=czFEQ1lRZjJlUjJkZdHE4NGdQaVFTUTog>

### Coming Together as a Nation

#### December Movie Night

**Monday, December 14, 7:00 pm**

At your leisure watch the Film: [DIVIDED WE FALL: UNITY WITHOUT TRAGEDY](https://tinyurl.com/yyteajey). This film brings ordinary citizens together to wrestle with the complex issues that divide our nation. Breaking out of partisan echo chambers to listen to one another, the participants - equal numbers of whom strongly approve and disapprove of President Donald Trump - explore what it means to be an American. The film is about an hour long: <https://tinyurl.com/yyteajey>

Then join the discussion: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83980206716?pwd=SotkU2ZyU24vWTB1RWZHM1ODNLDz09>

\*\*\* Note: This movie night is on the second Monday instead of the usual third due to Christmas. \*\*\*

### Environmental Justice

#### Eco-Friendly Holiday Tips

- Eco-Donations - Make a donation to an environmental charity instead of meaningless spending this holiday.
- Thermostat Downtime - Counteract your increased winter electricity bill by turning down the thermostat when you go to bed.
- Keep It Local - Do your best to keep food and purchases this holiday season organic, local, and sustainable.
- Lights – Use LED Christmas lights and save more than 95 percent of energy over time. Go for mini lights instead of larger lights, and shut them off when you go to bed.
- Make or Reuse Decorations - Rather than splurging on new Christmas décor, give a DIY or Pinterest project a whirl; or make a tradition out of reusing family and vintage Christmas décor.
- Trees – Buy a locally farmed Christmas tree, or buy a “Balled” Christmas tree and plant it in your yard.
- Recycled Paper - Wrap your gifts in recycled paper.
- Reusable Wrap – Use reusable bags as a fun way to wrap gifts. Another cool idea is to wrap gifts in decorative boxes, reusable vessels, or wearable items like scarves.
- Select Gifts Carefully - Some gifts come in ambiguous containers or boxes and don't need wrapping, others are small enough that they require less paper.
- Give Digitally - Sending digital cards is an effective way to reduce waste, check people off your gift list, and ensure that your beloved ones will like what they receive. Wrapp.com is another fantastic option—the iPhone app allows users to send digital gifts directly to any friend's Facebook wall.
- Card Composition - If you choose to send cards, try to be mindful of where the paper is sourced. Look for recycled paper or wildflower-seeded cards, and recycle cards you receive.
- Use The Web – Send an E-Card for the holidays.

### Economic Justice

#### Chagrin Falls Park Community Center

Chagrin Falls Park residents need dish soap and laundry detergent (unscented). Drop off at the Community Center at 7060 Woodland Ave. Knock on the door and let someone know you have left your donation at the door.

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**FEDERATED CHURCH**  
United Church of Christ  
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**ADDRESS:** 76 Bell Street, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022

**EMAIL:** [fedchurch@fedchurch.org](mailto:fedchurch@fedchurch.org)

**WEB:** [www.fedchurch.org](http://www.fedchurch.org)

**PHONE:** 440.247.6490

**FAX:** 440.247.2516



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