

Amherst United Methodist Church

396 Park Avenue

Amherst, OH 44001

440-988-8330

www.amherstchurches.org

aumc396@gmail.com

Worship at 10:30 AM

AUMC JANUARY NEWSLETTER



LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS FOR JANUARY 2026

As I write this article, the snow has melted and the temperature for Christmas Day is predicted to be in the 50's! The birth of Jesus is only a few days away. The sanctuary, with worship chair Judy Gutman's oversight, has been decorated with the congregation assisting in hanging of the greens. The children performed a wonderful Christmas sing along and everyone was invited to eat Christmas cookies along with a visit and photo with Santa after worship service. (Another way that our church's goal of growth of Sunday School and providing youth opportunities is being accomplished!) Beautiful poinsettias will soon adorn the altar in preparation for Christmas Eve service which will be at 4pm on the 24th.

Your Leadership Team met on Monday, December 8th at 11am for their monthly meeting. I was able to join via "phone speaker." I had very little voice but was able to listen to the discussion. Pastor was unable to attend, as he was in Philadelphia attending to his daughter's health needs. Pastor provided his recommendation for adjusting our organist Jesse's salary to \$175.00 per service beginning in January 2026. Also, our church secretary Aleah and custodian Colleen will receive a 3% raise starting in January. (Our congregation is blessed to have dedicated and caring staff!) The 2026 proposed budget was reviewed line item by line item. Your Leadership Team continues to diligently monitor spending to conserve finances but also take care of necessary church maintenance. This year's budget is being set at \$104,259.30 which is \$10,444.64 more than our 2025 budget. This takes into account increased utility, postage, maintenance of the church, and provision for repairs.

Trustee chair, Bob Kinser, reported that Sunshine Electric quoted the necessary electrical work for the new air conditioner to be \$1,349.00. This work is necessary in order to finish installation of the air conditioner needed in the south wing. Bob told us that Tad and Jennifer Clark will be painting the walls and fixing the cracks in the sanctuary. We thank them for donating their time and talent! Doug Haney brought three styles of hand railing to be installed in the sanctuary. Team reviewed all three and decided upon a single railing on the right side of the sanctuary that will be lined up with the left side of the pew. Looking for a wood that will match the oak that is already in the sanctuary. Possibly installation in March. Railing addition is addressing a safety issue and a way to make it easier to negotiate the altar steps! Bob will inform the congregation in January and provide opportunity for their input.

Kathy Blahay with nurturing committee advised that phone calls and cards are being generated to the homebound by not only nurturing committee members but others in the congregation! (This is one of our church's established goals.) Christmas party was fun.(A

thank you to Caroline and Doug Haney for conducting super Christmas games that were enjoyed by all! Also, a thank you to Diane Nahorn for surprising us with homemade and delicious pizzelles!)

Judy Gutman, worship chair, announced the arrival of 22 poinsettias to be delivered on December 22nd. The additional Christmas decorations were purchased from the Gumpf memorial monies. (Much appreciated!) Chris McCourt reported that Christmas gift cards are ordered. Chris and Mike Filbert have been working on transition to the new website. Also, a separate account has been established so that congregation can contribute their offering online. More information to be provided within this January newsletter. Caroline Haney has volunteered to serve on the scholarship committee. (Thank you Caroline!!)

Polly, Missions chair, indicated that donations for Second Harvest food bank are rapidly appearing and will be displayed on the altar. Hats and mittens are collected on the tree and will be delivered to the schools in January. Jeff Pietch has offered to deliver food items to Second Harvest and also to handle monthly food delivery to St. Elizabeth's. (Thank you, Jeff!)

Aleah Wilson, lay leader and educational chair, updated the team on the students' Christmas performance and shared that within the new resident packets provided by the City, our church is including the following: church's brochure, hall rental flyer, flyer for the clothing shed, and a mini Jesus. Aleah announced that there will be a rummage sale in 2026. More information to follow. The Ark trip continues to be arranged by the Mom Squad. In January, Aleah will provide verbal information to the congregation and a signup sheet. All are welcome to be a part of the June 2026 trip!

Picture retake and additions to be taken on December 14th. Jennifer Clark kindly is donating her time and talent to take and develop the photos to be used for the new directory in addition to compiling the information within the directory. (Thank you, Jennifer!)

As you have just read, there are many individuals who are donating time and talents to serve within the church! Thank you for your stewardship!! The next Leadership Team meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 12 at 11am. All are welcome to attend and share ideas!

May your Christmas be blessed and joyous and may you have a happy and healthy

New Year!!

Hugs from a social distance,

Jean Rounds, Chair

Communion Sunday	January 4 th
Take down Christmas décor	January 9 th 10:00AM
Leadership Meeting	January 12 th 11:00AM
Nurturing Committee	January 14 th 10:30AM
Mary Martha Circle	January 14 th 11:30AM
St. Elizabeth meal prep	January 16 th 2:30PM
The Folk Medleys	January 25 th During worship service
Last day to sign up for the Ark Trip	January 25 th
AUMC practices safe sanctuary and we do lock our doors for Sunday Service at 10:40AM. If you are running behind please ring the door bell and we will let you in.	
CALL IN NUMBER for CHURCH SERVICE (440) 462-2193 Or watch us on Zoom at amherstchurches.org	



Tuesday – 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Wednesday 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00PM
Office phone: (440)988-8330
Pastor Joe: (440)724-2433
Office will be closed New Year's Day!



Lisa Afrates Jan 2 Matt Denomme Jan 4
Brecken Bowers Jan 5 Darlene Morgan Jan 9
Jim McCourt Jan 17 Jo Goodsite Jan 17
Pastor Joe Jan 21 Evelyn Wilson Jan 27



If there is a Sunday with severe weather please be advised that the church will always be open for service. But if you do not feel comfortable driving in bad weather we ask that you stay home and watch on Zoom.



God blesses us daily with answered prayers.
If you have a situation that could use a prayer, we are here for you.
Please contact Pastor Joe or Judy Gutman



As we look forward to a new year, can we also consider service to our church? Hooray for the new cake bakers and delivery volunteer for St. Elizabeth Mission!

Would you consider serving as an usher from May through October? Our new liturgists are making a wonderful addition to our service!

How about nurturing committee with focus on shut-ins and church events?

Would you like to keep the table at the parking lot entrance in seasonal décor? Aleah does the fantastic bulletin boards!

Would you like to be the person who opens up at 9:15-9:30AM, unlocks both doors, turns on the lights and prepares the sanctuary for service?

2026 offers many opportunities to add to your stewardship at AUMC. For more information, see Judy Gutman!



Volunteers always needed for coffee hour. Signup sheet is on the bulletin board by the Dr. Elsie room.

Missions Update!

Thanks to your generosity, food has been delivered to Second Harvest Food Bank. Our very beautifully covered mitten and hat tree gifts will go to local schools. Our tree this Year was bigger (The old one had served the purpose for many years and was in poor shape) which means more gifts can be hung and delivered. Hooray for Amherst UMC! Our Missions for January is for personal care items and cleaning supplies to go to Lorain County Office on aging to assist their clients. These items go to mostly 1 person households, so smaller sizes are appreciated.



Annual Youth permission forms need to be filled out for 2026. Volunteers are also needed to help with Sunday school if interested in helping out for Sunday school or joining the Mom Squad for fun with fellowship events please see Aleah.

Amherst United Methodist Church

396 Park Ave.
Amherst, OH 44001



**Friday May 15, 2026 9:00AM- 3:00PM &
Saturday May 16, 2026 9:00AM- Noon**

**Drop off donated items on Tuesday,
Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00AM- Noon**

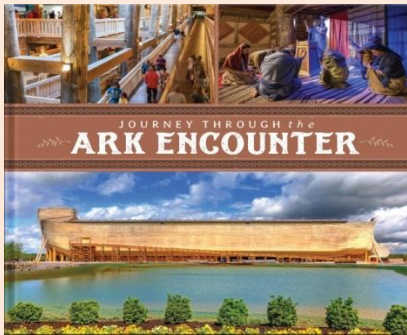
**GOOD CONDITION, CLEAN, gently worn clothing,
house hold items, toys, attic treasures in WORKING
ORDER gladly accepted!**

**All proceeds to support the missions and
ministries of Amherst United Methodist Church!**

Questions? Contact our office at 440-988-8330 or
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Thank you Mike Filbert!

A big thank you to Mike Filbert who has given many hours and much knowledge to migrate our old web server to a new one. He also helps with designs for more interest. Check it out at amherstchurches.org. Press that big blue Zoom button to watch the service live when you cannot attend. If you missed the youth leading a Christmas sing-along on Dec. 14th or you want to see it again, you can watch past service also on the website along with checking upcoming events. There are also some great pictures from the luncheon at Martino's. If you have pictures from events or other ideas, please contact Chris McCourt or let Aleah Wilson Know!



AUMC will be taking a trip to visit the Ark Encounter and Creation Museum June 25 - 27 2026! If you are interested in participating in the trip please see a member of the Mom Squad to sign up, please do so by January 25, 2026 so we will be able to organize pricing of Tickets, hotels, and group T-shirts (t-shirts are optional) Additional information will be provided as the date gets closer and we have an accurate head count.

Thank You

I want to take a moment to thank my Mom Squad, Jennifer Clark, Megan King, Heather Denomme, and Tiffanie Alley, because of all your help and support we were able to bring so many great activities this past year for our kids and members of our congregation. Such as movie night, our Easter egg hunt, community picnic, ice cream social, cookies with Santa and so much more. None of these events would be possible without your dedication time and planning. I look forward to seeing what our 2026 year has to offer!

Aleah Wilson

CHRISTMAS FUN!



Christmas Eve Candle light service

It was great to see the Lord's house so full for our Christmas Eve service.

