Facebook Check-in: As you arrive, please check in on Facebook.
▲ Please rise in body and spirit, as you are able.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

HYMN “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” vs. 1   BLUE 110

CALL TO WORSHIP:
Isaiah 11:1-10   Pew Bible page 640, OT
(We will read responsively – the lector will read the odd numbered verses and the
congregation will respond with the even numbered verses.)

▲ HYMN “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”   BLUE 103

▲ GATHERING PRAYER (Unison)
God of Peace, it is so hard to find peace, in our hearts, in our communities, and in
our world. We ache for it. We know this is not how you would want us to be. May
your will be done. May your peace prevail. May our longing for peace lead us on a
new journey to your sacred peace.
Amen.

▲ GLORIA PATRI
(Please sing the words most comfortable to you. Here are two options.)

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,

Glory be to the Parent
and to the Child
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,

GOSPEL READING Matthew 3:1-11   Pew Bible pg.2, NT
One: God is still speaking.
Many: And we are still listening. Thanks be to God

MEDITATION “Three in One”
LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES – Vivacqua-Petrus Family

ONE: Who do you say Jesus is?
ONE: To me, a tree, Jesus is like a strong root, giving me strength and support.
ONE: To me, a seed, Jesus is like a loving gardener, nurturing and caring for me.
All: We wait for Jesus, the firm foundation and careful gardener, who nurtures peace.
ONE: (The candles of Hope and Peace are Lit.)
ONE: We wait for Jesus.

CHORAL RESPONSE “We Light this Candle” (Peace)

ANTHEM “Come, Emmanuel” Price - Besig

HEBREW BIBLE READING Psalm 72 Pew Bible pg.533, OT
One: God is still speaking.
Many: And we are still listening. Thanks be to God

OFFERING

▲DOXOLOGY
(Please sing the words most comfortable to you. Here are two options.)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host’ Praise God above, ye heavenly host’
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.

▲PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)
Lord of us all, through these offerings we become partners with you in your cause. We join you in our concern for all people, and name them as our own family. We return these gifts of our material resources and our time to extend your redeeming will into this moment in history and into your world. Thank you for this privilege to seek and to offer the hope, peace, joy and love of this season. Amen.

▲HYMN “My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise” BLACK 106

DRAMATIC READING “Mary, Joe and the Angel” Rachel Miller

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

PASTORAL PRAYER
THE LORD’S PRAYER (Unison) (Please pray the words most comfortable to you.)

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Holy God, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

▲ HYMN

“Days of Elijah”

▲ BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Parts of today’s liturgy have been adapted from the worship resources of The United Church of Canada.

DAYS OF ELIJAH
MINISTERS OF GOD’S LOVE .................................................................................. Every Member of WPUCC
SENIOR PASTOR ................................................................................................. Rev. Jason Thompson
ASSOCIATE PASTOR ............................................................................................. James R. Furry
PASTORS EMERITI ................................................................................................ Rev. Don Norenberg, Rev. Larry Craig
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC .......................................................................................... Christopher Venesile, PhD
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR .............................................................................. Linda Ferro
RECORDING/SOUND SYSTEM ............................................................................ Mandi Salvino, Dan Karkoff
SOCIAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR .................................................................. Rachel Miller
POET LAUREATE .................................................................................................. Jean Clark
LECTOR .................................................................................................................. Faith Armstrong
SCRIPTURE READER .......................................................................................... Lisa Gibson
COUNTERS ............................................................................................................ Robin & Eric Jessen, Ed & Louise Gamary

WE WELCOME all who are here to worship with us today, especially our children and youth. Please sign the attendance pads and pass the pad to the side aisles by the windows.

PASTOR JASON’S office hours are Mondays, 2-4 p.m. and Wednesdays, 9am-3pm, or by appointment. Pastor Jason can be reached at the church office (216) 671-7228 or WestParkUCCPastor@gmail.com.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: Attendance last Sunday was 66 adults and 5 Youth/Children. Thank you for your offerings of Operating $2,382, OCWM $95, Children's Plate $50, Pink : Strengthen Our Church $25, Veterans of the Cross $35, Alternative Christmas $100, Poinsettias $56, Christmas Memorial Fund $70, Endowment Fund $20

Once again, the Season of Advent is upon us. How we wait with anticipation for the birth of our Savior! CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS add color and beauty to our sanctuary on Christmas Eve. Please consider honoring a friend or loved one at this time. The price remains unchanged at $8.00. Thank you in advance for your order, the Board of Deacons.

THE PINK ENVELOPE FOR DECEMBER is The Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund. The Christmas Fund is one of the four Special Mission Offerings of the UCC, and congregations have been generously giving to the offering for more than a century. Proceeds from the offering are used to provide direct financial assistance to UCC clergy and lay employees in several areas. Congregations across the country contribute to the Christmas Fund each year, and it is our December Pink Envelope here at West Park United Church of Christ.

WPUCC CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS are available in the Narthex before and after worship today.

BRING AND BUY BAKE SALE: On Sunday, December 15, we will host our annual Christmas Pageant in Bartter Hall at 10:00am. Following the Pageant, we will enjoy fellowship in a special coffee hour and bake sale sponsored by the Board of Christian Education. Please BRING homemade baked goods for the Board to sell and BUY the baked good that others have made! Our youth will also have West Park UCC Christmas ornaments available.

MITTEN LINE: During the colder months, we give away hundreds of mittens, gloves, socks, scarves and hats to those in our community of all ages who need a little help keeping warm. The items are hung on our mitten line in the front of the church and are free for anyone to take. Donations are appreciated and can be placed in the bin in the narthex.

ADVENT STUDY: Our Advent study this year will be hosted in partnership with Christ United Methodist Church. On Monday evenings during December (Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23), we will gather at Christ UMC (3625 W 138th St, Cleveland, OH 44111) at 6:30pm for a simple soup dinner and the study will begin at 7:00pm. We will examine the Rev. Adam Hamilton’s book *Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph*. Reading the book is optional and the book is available on Amazon. ALL ARE WELCOME.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR, Andrew Lloyd Webber’s award winning musical, returns to Playhouse Square in 2020 for its 50th anniversary. The story of Jesus Christ is captured in this timeless performance. We are putting a group together for a church outing to see the show on Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are $58 each. Space is limited, with only 30 spots available. Sign up in the narthex or by calling the church office. Payments for tickets should be made to the church no later than January 5, 2020.

DECEMBER BIBLE CHALLENGE: During December, please join us in reading the Gospel of Matthew. You are encouraged to read one chapter each day from December 1 through December 28. Don't be surprised if Pastor Jason asks which chapter you liked best and why!

ADVENT VESPERS Wednesday, December 11, 7:00 p.m. at Bethany English Lutheran Church, 15460 Triskett Road, Cleveland OH. The Advent Worship will feature portions of the first part of Handel’s Messiah. Come and enjoy a respite from Christmas preparations!
REVERSE ADVENT BAGS: Advent is the perfect time to focus on the joy and reflection of the season, but there are also those in our community who struggle with basic necessities. This year, we will once again collect items that will assist those in need. Each day during Advent, we will collect one item and place it in a ‘Reverse Advent Bag’ with our prayers. The bags are located in the narthex if you would like to participate in sharing. Please place the bags under the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary when you return them to the church,

TOYS FOR TOTS: To children, Christmas is a special time of year when they hope that Santa will have the perfect toy waiting for them under the Christmas tree. Not all children, however, are lucky to have this wish come true. In our ongoing efforts to spread God’s love to all, West Park UCC is partnering with Toys for Tots to host a Christmas Toy Drive for children in Cuyahoga County. If you are able, please bring a NEW and UNWRAPPED toy to the church and place it in one of the collection boxes located in the narthex and in the church office. **NEXT SUNDAY IS THE LAST DAY TO BRING IN TOYS.**

THE LONGEST NIGHT CHRISTMAS SERVICE – Joint service held at Christ United Methodist Church, at Lorain Ave. and West 138th St., Cleveland, Dec. 17 at 7:00 p.m. The holidays are traditionally a family time filled with joy, celebration and worshipping the great gift of God. Sadly, not all people experience this holiday spirit. There are many who struggle during this season. This service provides an opportunity to acknowledge what the world seems to ignore at this time of year.

PLEDGE REPORT AS OF DEC. 1, 2019 –
Operating $104,320: 53 giving units (25 couples and 28 individual donors)

    We are ahead of last year at this time by $1,614

OCWM $6,032: 20 donors - we are ahead of last year at this time by $700

CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Our friends at Blessed Trinity Catholic Church (14040 Puritas Ave, Cleveland, OH 44135) will offer their second annual choral Christmas concert on Friday, December 13 at 7:30pm. There is plenty of free parking on-site and the event is free to all. A reception will follow the concert. ALL ARE WELCOME.

PASTORAL ADVISORY will meet Today after church. If you have compliments or concerns please contact Jen Krejsa, Dan Moreland, or Robin Jessen.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A lector/SCRIPTURE READER? We are putting the schedule together for 2020. If you have not done it before, or in a few years, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. If you have served as Lector or Scripture Reader in the past year and want to continue, you do not need to sign up; however, if you do not want to be on the schedule for 2020, please indicate that on the sign up sheet. Thank you!
FAITH IN FILM: In January, West Park UCC will begin a film series to highlight the intersection of ongoing societal issues with our faith. Each film will be screened in the sanctuary on Saturday nights and followed by a panel led discussion about topics raised in the film. The first of these films is *An Act of Love*, the story of a United Methodist pastor who was defrocked after refusing to abide by rules that prohibit clergy from officiating marriages of same-sex couples. The panel that will lead our discussion afterwards will include J Bennett Guess, Executive Director of the ACLU of Ohio, Steven Bailey, District Superintendent of the North Coast District, East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church and Bentley de Bardelaben-Phillips, Executive of Justice & Local Church Ministries at the national setting of the United Church of Christ. This event will take place at 6pm on Saturday, January 18. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS CATALOG - This is the 37th year for the Alternative Christmas Catalog which gives us an opportunity to help others with our financial gifts. If you did not receive the catalog in our Christmas mailing, there are some available in the narthex. To name a few items in our catalogue: Bright Pink is for those who have a genetic high risk for cancer, Moving for Life provides dance exercise for patients recovering from cancer and other health issues and Youth Challenge provides recreational activities for youth with special needs. We also added the West Park UCC Emergency Food Pantry which is being used by many in the neighborhood. Your Alternative contribution is especially useful for saying thank you to a friend or neighbor. We have gift cards on the table in the narthex that you can fill out and give to your gift recipient.
THIS WEEK AT WEST PARK

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8:
10:00 a.m.  Worship
10:15 a.m.  Christmas Pageant Rehearsal in Bartter Hall
11:30 a.m.  Christian Education, Trustees, Growth & Outreach,
            Pastoral Advisory
3:00 p.m.  Bowling

MONDAY, 12/09:
6:30 p.m.  On the Road: Advent Study at Christ UMC
7:00 p.m.  Mood Disorder Support Group, Youth Room

TUESDAY, 12/10:
6:30 p.m.  MOPS, Parlor
7:30 p.m.  Recovery, International, Youth Room

WEDNESDAY, 12/11:
7:00 p.m.  Chancel Choir, Music Room
7:00 p.m.  Advent Vespers, Bethany English Lutheran

THURSDAY, 12/12:
6:15 p.m.  Low Impact Exercise, Bartter Hall
8:00 p.m.  AA, Chapel

FRIDAY, 12/13:
7:30 p.m.  Blessed Trinity Concert
7:30 p.m.  Al-Anon, Parlor

SATURDAY, 12/14:
10:15 p.m.  Alpha-Omega AA – Bartter Hall
12:00 a.m.  Westside Midnight AA – Bartter Hall

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15:
10:00 a.m.  Worship & Christmas Pageant in Bartter Hall
11:30 a.m.  Coffee with Santa, Art Show, Bake Sale