



# The Discipler

December 2022

## Poinsettias Orders Due!

The deadline to place your order is Sunday, **December 4th**. Merlin's is charging \$15.00 per poinsettia, same as the last number of years, and they will be wrapped in foil with a beautiful bow. You can pick up a form from the table in the hall near the office, or you can email or call the office with your order. Please make a check payable to "UCB", drop it in the box provided on the table in the lobby or drop it off to the office.



Advent began  
on November 27th!



5 pm Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service

10:30 am Christmas Worship  
Service with Communion



## Cookie Walk and Bake Sale with SANTA Joining Us 10 am to Noon ~ December 10th



After a two year absence, our Cookie Walk is back! The Alternative Christmas Fair will not take place this year, but we are adding a bake sale! Baked goods such as breads, pies, cakes, candy, jams, etc. will be welcome! Time to show off your special skills! We look forward to your goodies! You know, we are our own

best customers! All proceeds from the cookie walk and bake sale will go towards the Love Meal program. For the Cookie Walk, we'd love donations of five dozen--or more, if you can! We need helpers that day also. Sign up sheets for cookie walk workers and cookie/candy makers are on the table in in the hallway. You can bring your items on Friday, December 9th, 9:30 am-12:30 pm, 1:30 pm-5 pm or on Saturday, December 10th between 8 am-9 am. If you have questions, call the church office at 234-8777.



**Santa will be here!** So bring your children and/or grandchildren. There will be hot beverages and goodies to sample.





**Financial Report as of October, 31 2022**

	<u>MO</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>YTD /2021</u>
Operating Income	\$22,751	\$194,850	\$194,543
Operating Expense	\$14,163	\$197,257	\$163,700
Net Inc. or (loss)	\$8,588	<b>(\$2,407)</b>	\$30,843
Cash for Operations (General Fund, Capital)	\$146,618		\$171,211
Other Funds (Fellowships, restricted)	\$31,958		\$25,096

**Legacy/Endowment Committee**

**Endowment fund values as of November 17, 2022:**

Norris Fund .....	\$40,984.70
Strub Fund .....	\$7,800.40
Jarret Fund .....	\$7,945.97



There is grant money available from each of the funds, and for those who would like to apply, please contact the church office for application forms. The Endowment Committee would like to mention that for those interested in a way to give to our church funds, one way would be to use an IRA required minimum distribution as a tax free charitable gift. Ask a committee member or your tax advisor for details. Committee members are: Cliff Freeman, Mike Gyorkos, Ron Beem, Tim Bohrer, Lori Smith and Greg Wills.

We invite you to consider joining this committee as we welcome new ideas and perspectives in the management of these funds. This committee meets every other month or so. Meetings usually last only 30-45 minutes in length. The next committee meeting will be determined at a later date.



Due to lack of attendance, the **Basics of Medicare and Social Security** educational program will be returning sometime in early Spring 2023.



**Support United Church of Byron While You Shop**

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible "AmazonSmile" purchases to United Church whenever you shop on "AmazonSmile" You can select a charitable organization after signing in to "AmazonSmile" It is the same Amazon you know; same products, same prices, same service. This is a great and easy way to support UCB. Thank you to those already supporting UCB through this program. Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and sign up!

**RaiseRight: FKA SCRIP Gift Cards**

Your last dates to order gift cards for Christmas is December 6th and 13th, and they need to be here by noon. Order forms and a list of available businesses offering gift cards is located on the table just outside of the church office. **Did you know that if you order Visa gift cards thru Scrip, there is no activation fee to use it like there is for the cards bought from a store?** If you have any questions, talk to Marsha or Carla.







## Pastor's Corner

I've told this to people before, but my father loves Hallmark movies. He loves the beauty of the season, the romance of it all, and the perfection that seems to come from it. In some ways I agree with him. The perfect, untouched blankets of snow. The lights streaming out of stained glass on Christmas night. It's absolutely beautiful and heartwarming.

But that beauty is not the case for everyone around Christmas. In fact, I'd say that most people don't experience the perfection of Christmas. Even the holy family whom we celebrate on Christmas didn't have this "ideal" and perfect Christmas. If you don't experience Christmas as something as less than ideal, or if you feel you are broken in a season of expected wholeness, this is for you.

The first Christmas was hardly a Hallmark movie. Joseph and Mary do not learn the true meaning of Christmas from their events. Joseph and Mary are called away to a place they have never lived before, forced to stay in a crowded house, and Mary gives birth there. It is so crowded that they have to put their new baby of dubious origins in a feeding trough. The only people that seem interested in their new baby is some poor shepherds, who claim some angels told them about it. The two don't leave with any grand understanding. They are ultimately confused by the claims. Then, they have to run away, fleeing to an even more foreign land before their government leader kills their baby. Merry Christmas!

By all accounts, other than a baby being born, this is an awful Christmas. It is filled with uncertainty, discomfort, and terror. There is no moment of enlightenment at the end. It's a story of broken people – a poor couple in a place where they aren't really welcome. The miracle of the story is that God is literally with them through it all—that God can be present in these ordinary but uncomfortable moments in our lives.



So, if you feel broken this season, know that that is what this season is about. God taking broken things and making something beautiful out of them. If God can do that with a far-flung couple, God can do it with you too. God is with you, and the birth of our savior in such a broken place proves that.

Blessings to you all this holy season,

*Rev. Tyler Spellions*

### Update on Afghan Family

Elaine Breck and Sue Winterton were at Catholic Charities recently and they asked about the family of 11 from Afghanistan that our congregation supported last year in November.

REFUGEE SUPPORT



**Good news!** They have acclimated amazingly well. The older men in the family are working. (They were translators for our government.) The children are doing well in school, and speak English and act like typical American children. The family found and moved into a more comfortable home for which they are paying expenses. It was good to hear the family is doing so well! Thank you to Missions for making it possible for us to be a part of helping support this family!



### In order to get credit for your 2022 pledge, your donation must be in by December 31, 2022!



The 2023 offering envelopes will be arriving soon. Be sure to keep an eye out for them. They will be set up on a table in the narthex. You can pick them up when you are able.

### 2023 Pledge

Is your 2023 pledge turned in? The stewards need your pledge in order to plan the budget for the upcoming year. Please get it in as soon as possible. Thank you!



Please bring the blue "Stewardship in Service" sheet to the office.



Annual Congregational Meeting  
February 12, 2023

2022 Committee Annual Reports due no later than  
January 20th!

### Our Christmas Offering 2022 People Helping People & The Christmas Fund



### People Helping People

People Helping People (PHP) is a non-profit food pantry operated by volunteers with a mission to improve the lives of those less fortunate in Byron, Marion, Rockvale, Monroe, Scott and Leaf River Townships. Clients must



People Helping People Needs

reside in one of these townships to receive food from this pantry. PHP is run and manned totally by volunteers.

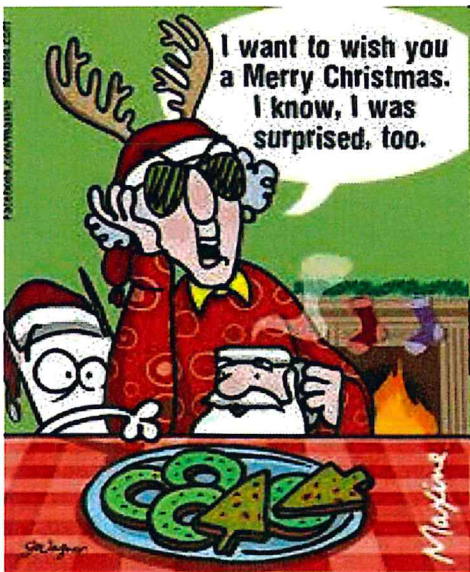
Your donations help many people who are struggling to put food on their table.



### The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund provides direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy, lay church employees, and their surviving spouses/partners—the funds do not support programs or institutions, but people. Your continued generosity helps individuals receive the support of the Church in their time of need.

There will be offering envelopes available in the Christmas Eve bulletins.







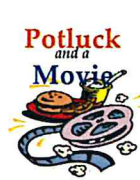
### School Kits for Church World Service

For approximately, half an hour immediately after church on Sunday, Dec. 11, we would appreciate help packing approximately 500 bags with school kits. These kits are distributed throughout the world by Church World Service to children in need. We are grateful to Char Meyers for making all these bags; the Missions Committee will gather the supplies required to fill them. All we need is your help to put the kits together, and if you are able, to donate what you can to help with increased transportation costs at Church World Service. Thank you!



## BELIEVE in the CHILDREN

Our church is again participating in the collection of Christmas gifts for children in foster care through the "Believe in the Children" organization in Forrester. We are asking for your help by donating new unwrapped toys, gifts cards or cash to help us make it a Merry Christmas for the children who need it most! There is a list of suggested items on the sign up table in the hallway you can take with you. There will be a special area in the church lobby for the donations you bring in. The last date for dropping off you donations to the church is **December 11.**



### Potluck and Movie Night

Save the date of Friday, **December 16th** for potluck and movie night at Art and Elaine Breck's: 9002 Hedge Road, Byron. Potluck is at 6:30 PM with the movie (TBA) following. Come for some great food and fellowship!

### Monthly Men's Breakfast

Join the men at Swedish Pancake House Restaurant on December 3rd and 17th at 8 am for some good food and fellowship. All men are welcome!



### Neighbors Nursing Home Christmas Gifts 2022

It's our tradition to add to the enjoyment of Christmas for our neighbors next door at the nursing home. There are a number of residents for whom we can share in the fun of gift-giving. To participate, there are stockings (some do not have names) hanging on the Christmas tree in the Lucy Woodcock room. Please wrap the gift and mark it with the resident's name (or you can attach the stocking to the wrapped gift) and take it to the receptionist at Neighbors no later than Monday, December 12th. This gift of sharing is appreciated so much.





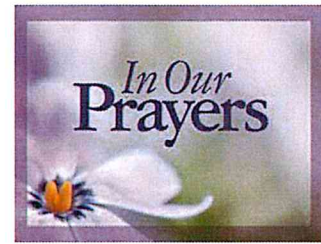
Thank you to **Greg and Karen Wills** for mowing our lawn this summer. We are so appreciative of you taking on this work. It's a big job, and it takes a lot of time to mow our church lawn. It looked beautiful all summer long. A big **THANK YOU** to both of you for your hard work.

A big thank you to **Meredith Townsend** for brightening our church property by the sign at the corner with all the beautiful flowers. She planted annuals along with the perennials, and maintained the flower beds again this past year. **Thank you Meredith!** We appreciate your work and the beauty you created.



### Faith & Family Night at an IceHogs Game

Are you interested in going to an IceHogs game on December 10th that starts at 7 pm? There will be a Faith & Family Night at the BMO, and church groups will receive a free hat. Check the info on the signup on the long table in the hall. **Deadline to sign up is December 1st.** If we have enough who want to go, Carla will make the arrangements for the tickets.



Denny Arjes  
Hannah Beintum  
Mark Belito  
Keith Benson  
Cheryl Bonte  
Steve Bonte  
Jennifer Brandt  
Norma Browning  
Susan Caruso  
Lisa Stevens Colbert  
Ginger Compton  
Jill Faber  
Joann Farris  
Joe Farris  
Cindi Frye  
Jan Frye  
Ron Glisan  
Ali Groen  
Dave Groharing  
Betty Grubb  
Gary Hahne  
Pat Ingram  
Wayne & Nancy Jaquet  
Kathy Johnson  
Janet Logan  
Tony Maanavi  
Tom Mahon  
Bill Michaux  
Betty Morris  
Meghan Newbold  
Pat Nicoloff  
Tim O'Hare  
Clyde Patterson  
Paul

Allan Petersen  
Judy Picha  
Edie Pierce  
Ellen Rippon  
Hal & Dixie Rowland  
Anna Saltzgeber  
Paul Saltzgeber  
Mary Sanders  
Randy Sarlo  
Diana Snodgrass  
Tori Spanbauer  
Linda Stein  
Barney & Sharon Sterbez  
Holly Stukenberg  
Stan Sutton  
Linda Tarpley  
Shelley Trussoni  
Karis Turner  
Toby Way  
Diane Williamson  
Tim Wittmer  
Jerre Woodworth

Our Homebound, our first responders and health care workers, and those around the world in need of special prayers.



For Our Troops, Their Families, and Our Country  
Copyright © 2002 Christian Apologetics Center

**Tatiana (Leon) Orsted  
and Jerick Orsted  
Stationed in Italy**





### SERVING THE CHURCH

If you are unable to serve on your scheduled Sunday, please switch with someone and notify the church office of the change as soon as possible. Thank you!

#### December 2022

	<u>12/04</u>	<u>12/11</u>	<u>12/18</u>	<u>12/24 (5pm)</u>	<u>12/25</u>
Acolyte	K. Gyorkos	K. King	Beitel	Gyorkos	C. King
Scripture Rdr.	J. Eisfeller	Wilson	Tarpley	TBD	King
Advent Wreath	M. Gyorkos	Groen	volunteer needed	Wilson	—
AV System	Freeman	Jenkins	Gyorkos	Gyorkos	Bonte
Guest Center	M. Gyorkos	Jenkins	King	M. Gyorkos	K. Gyorkos
Nursery	Scherz	Ingram	Wilson	—	—

Offering Counters for December: Ali Groen & John Gibson  
 Communion Preparer for December: John Gibson

**People Helping People Collection Items:  
 Cake Mix & Canned Fruit**

#### January 2023

	<u>1/01</u>	<u>1/08</u>	<u>1/15</u>	<u>1/22</u>	<u>1/29</u>
Acolyte	M. Gyorkos	T. Jenkins	Benson	Johnson	Smith
Scripture Rdr.	Sutton	Huls	Smith	K. Gyorkos	T. Bohrer
AV System	Freeman	Jenkins	Gyorkos	Bonte	Freeman
Guest Center	King	Wilson	Tarpley	Townsend	Trommer
Nursery	Schertz	Ingram	Wilson	King	Schertz

Offering Counters for January: Brad Townsend & Karyn Wilson  
 Communion Preparer for January: Karyn Wilson  
 People Helping People Collection Items: Soup, Crackers & Kleenex

Be sure to check your emails or TV stations when there is a bad snowstorm predicted. If we do get one, we will inform the TV stations that worship has been cancelled. We will also send out an email. If ever in doubt about the conditions, please use your judgement about getting out. Stay home if you are unsure. Your safety is of utmost importance!



If you wish Pastor Tyler to visit you, and you would also like communion, please call him or call the church office. Pastor Tyler's phone number is 309-230-4951, and the church office is 815-234-8777.

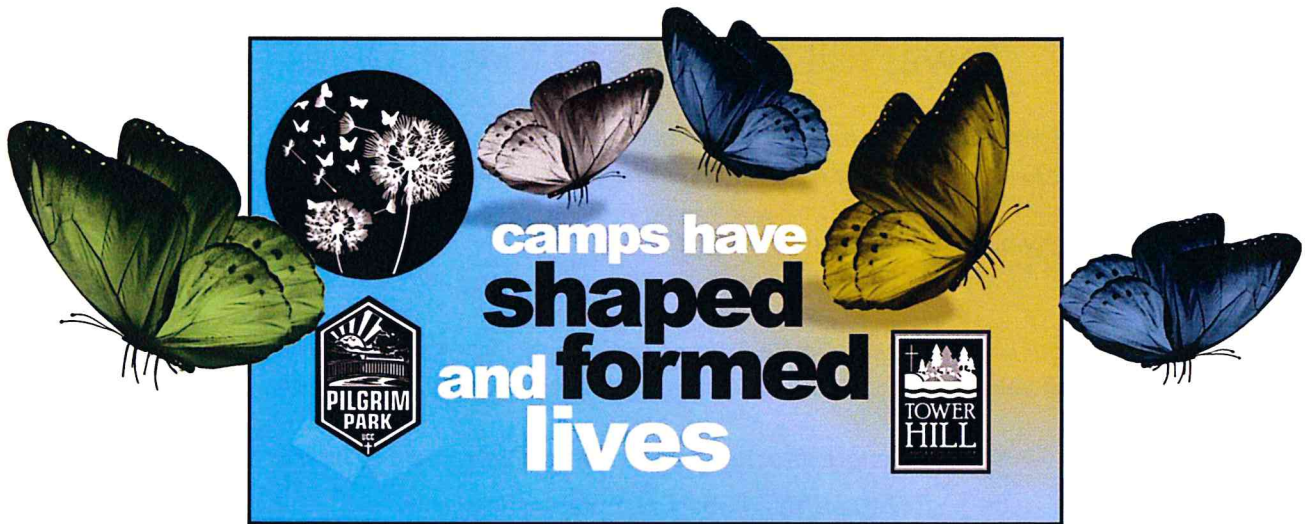


# December 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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<p><b>4</b></p> <p>2 pm Church Service at Neighbors by Pastor Tyler</p> <p>Communion</p> <p><b>Poinsettia Order Deadline Today</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>7:15 PM Missions Mtg</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Esther Circle</p> <p>3:30 PM Love Meal Prep</p> <p>6:00 PM -7:30 PM Cub Sct Mtg</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>9:00 AM -10:30 AM Yoga in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>10:00 AM Memorial Comm Mtg.</p> <p>7:15 PM Choir Practice</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>10 to Noon Fellowship Hall Cookie Walk Bake Sale</p> 																																																																																				
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>11:30 AM School Kit Assembly with Missions in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>6:00 PM Lydia Circle Christmas Party</p> <p>7:00 PM BY-Y Badgers 4H Mtg</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>3:30 PM Love Meal Prep</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>9:00 AM -10:30 AM Yoga in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>7:00 PM Building &amp; Grounds Mtg</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>12:00 PM Rotary Club</p> <p>7:15 PM Choir Practice</p> <p><b>Newsletter Deadline</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>6:30 PM Potluck &amp; Movie Night at the Brecks</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Men's Breakfast at Pancake Hse</p>																																																																																				
<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>6:30 PM Stewards &amp; Deacons Mtgs</p> <p>7:00 PM Council Mtg</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>3:30 PM Love Meal Prep</p> <p>6:00 PM -7:30 PM Cub Sct Mtg</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>9:00 AM -10:30 AM Yoga in Fellowship Hall</p> 	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>7:15 PM Choir Practice</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>  <p>5:00 pm</p>																																																																																				
<p><b>25</b></p> <p>10:30 AM Communion Served</p> 	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>7:15 PM Missions Mtg</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>3:30 PM Love Meal Prep</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>9:00 AM -10:30 AM Yoga in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p> 																																																																																				





Valued friends of our camps:

...going off to camp for many became a place to discover ourselves, a pivotal point *that shaped and formed our lives*. We reflect on the experience of Tower Hill, of Pilgrim Park, as we visually recall the campfires, the friends, these very *special moments that shaped our life*. We remember the volunteers, the dedicated staff that welcomed us, accepted us as we explored what we could be and who we can be. We were *spiritually given a gift that gave us flight*.

...*when I was ten years old*, and then over the next 14 years (camper, counselor, program director & summer staffer) camp became the place that shaped my life. I found my spiritual voice on Vesper Hill, and at the top of the sand dunes. I found courage to be myself through the love and communion of fellow campers and leaders. Throughout the turmoil of adolescence camp was my safe place and a touchstone that I still cherish, and I am forever grateful.

**Liz Perryman, Peace Memorial UCC**

...*looking back on the last 18 years* I realize that Pilgrim Park has given me a home away from home and a second family. I began my experience at our camp as that shy kid who got homesick but as time went on camp helped me grow into "that" outgoing person who dances around the campfire and wishes the summer would never end. My relationship with God flourished here and it continues, and will always remain, my favorite place to connect with my faith.

**Danielle Carter, Tuscola UCC**

...*thank you, volunteers*, as our son now wants to follow in your footsteps, and we couldn't be more pleased! He recently said, "...I felt we all got to be who we really are without our phones with us at all times". A week of fellowship jam packed with activities, kids come from all walks of life but at camp, there's no status, color or hate. Friendships are made to last a lifetime, it's the best week they have all year, and the toughest part is saying goodbye.

**Karen Williams Carroll, HUG Camp Mom**



... *on the last night* of Confirmation Camp "way back" in 1994, while most campers were at the dance and loving it, a few campers and pastors, including myself, sat on the basketball court looking at the stars and talking those big questions and deep feelings that only come out in safe places. I can't recall what was said, but I will never forget the feeling of it, the honest, relaxed, trusted sharing of youth and the patient, comfortable listening of adult mentors.

**Pastor Jennifer Amy Dressler, Open Table UCC**

The real value of camp is this *opportunity to be lovingly shaped and formed*. You can help directly to keep our campers "soaring" towards the future, changing lives and *discovering God's Grace*. The best investment you will ever make is *helping a guest experience this*.



## There are several ways to keep Pilgrim Park and Tower Hill shaping and forming lives

*The first* is a financial gift, a heartfelt contribution. There are various ways of pledging a donation. Whether you give \$20 or \$20,000 or a legacy bequest to our camps, every dollar is sincerely, and greatly, appreciated.

*The second* is putting your skill to work. If you have the time, experience, and talent to offer, we have enough work for any skill level. Many jobs (large and small) are needed and any help is a considered a blessing.

*The third* is Pilgrim Park and Tower Hill are more than "just" camps! We have amazing accommodations for all ages, and available all year. Call to see how we can serve you, your family, your friends, or your congregation.

You can *donate directly* to either camp *online at these links*:

<https://pilgrimpark.campbraingiving.com>

<https://towerhill.campbraingiving.com>

Questions? Call 815-447-2390 or e-mail Tara Cade at Outdoor Ministries :

[OutdoorMinistries@ilucc.org](mailto:OutdoorMinistries@ilucc.org)



I (we) wish to support the Outdoor Ministry Programs through this gift during this fundraising appeal:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00 **Total Contribution**

I have enclosed a Check (payable to Outdoor Ministries)

I am using a Charge / Debit Card (filling out info below)

Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ (on back of card)

Mail completed form to: Outdoor Ministries  
26449 1340 N Avenue, Princeton, IL 61356

I would like someone to personally contact me for my contribution to Pilgrim Park or Tower Hill Camps

*We appreciate your support and prayerfully anticipate your support during this 2022 fund-raising event.*

Rev. Tracy Heilman  
Mitch Kloster

Director, Tower Hill Camp & Retreat Center, Sawyer, Michigan  
Director, Pilgrim Park Camp & Conference Center, Princeton, Illinois

TracyHeilman@ilucc.org  
MitchKloster@ilucc.org