November 2026 Newsletter

Wadsworth United Methodist Church

my people. my place. my joy.



5 Minutes for Faith

A word from Pastor Kim

The Church as a Handrail

If you've been in our church lately – or watched online – you may have noticed that we have a simple addition to our sanctuary. It's a handrail.

Perhaps you don't consider this to be an exciting feature, but it is a welcome item intended to provide necessary support for anyone walking up or down our three steps to the chancel/altar area. Our intention was to boost the safety of participants in our worship services while also being aware of the aesthetics of our sanctuary.

I appreciate the installation of this handrail, but it also got me thinking about the symbolism of it. In other words, I began to contemplate the analogy of the church as a handrail.

In basic terms, a church can offer support and stability to an individual who is in need – if they're willing to receive it. The church can be a safety net for those in depression, recovery, grief and many other stages of life. A stable foundation is sometimes created by the offerings of a church – from youth group to Sunday School classes to Bible studies to discipleship to fellowship events.

That handrail image can be powerful, as it may represent comfort to the grievers, hope to the suffering and a belief that "you are not alone." Through the church, it is something we can share with fellow believers and with our neighbors.
The concept of the "church as a handrail" is a strong metaphor to describe the structural and supportive nature of the church in someone's life. Like the handrail, the church can be a steadying guide to help people navigate their spiritual ascent toward God.

It's also important to note that the handrail is not the staircase itself, nor is it the destination at the top of the stairs. Its sole purpose is to provide leverage, safety, and stability as you climb.

The physical church building, the sermons, the choir and the traditions are not God Himself. They are tools – spiritual handrails – designed to help us steady our footing so we can reach, experience, and get closer to God.

So, if you find yourself unsteady – in life or in our sanctuary – please use the handrail.

Serving Opportunities

- Teachers for our children and youth ministries
- Prayer team member
- Visitor for My People Visitation Ministry
- Helper for Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Contact the office for more information.

Think on this...

"The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."

Luke 17:20-21



Ribbon cutting for food waste composting

Celebrating God at work in our church...

- Beautiful new handrail in the sanctuary
- Ribbon cutting with Mayor Robin Laubaugh to celebrate opening the food composting bin - September 21, 2026 (see picture above)
- Healthy financials in September with giving ahead of expenses by $35,000
- Launched My People Visitation Ministry in October

Living Green

WUMC is partnering with Rubber City Reuse to provide food waste composting for free for church members and to community members for a monthly subscription fee. Food waste in landfills does not biodegrade because landfills lack oxygen. Food waste that is composted can be turned into soil in three months and then be used in garden and flower beds. Check with the church office if you want to participate.

Worship

2026 Ministry Focus

Worship is the vital heartbeat of our church, serving as the essential backbone that fuels our faith, ministries and community outreach.
Here are three action points:

- **Gathering** together each week; it unites us as one body in Christ.
- Warmly **Inviting** everyone - whether longtime members or first-time guests.
- **Experiencing** an authentic, spirit-filled movement during worship that will renew your heart, deepen your faith, and prepare you to serve the world.

Discipleship

2027 Ministry Focus

Next year, our ministry will intentionally focus on deepening our discipleship by actively learning, serving, and giving together as a church family. We are excited to grow closer to Christ and impact our community through these core pillars of our faith. Stay tuned for more details and exciting updates, which will be shared at the end of this year!

Ministry Spotlight

Community Thanksgiving Dinner



A Feast of Faith

Annually, WUMC plans and provides a full Thanksgiving meal at the church for those in the community desiring a time of fellowship and good food with others on this holiday. At this Community Thanksgiving Dinner, church volunteers offer their time to set up, clean up, serve, cook, greet attendees and more.

This church-sponsored community meal has been feeding hundreds for four decades. Church member Ed Kauffmann started it, and a succession of Jerry Penrod, Carl Bohn and Chuck Biddle took over the coordination of it. For the past 10 years, the leaders have been Debbie and Tom Redding, and Maryann Toney.

Inside Fellowship Hall, approximately 100 people are seated each year. Previously, take-out meals were offered, but that was eliminated because it interfered with the operation of the kitchen, and those guests easily adapted. It also helps that meal deliveries fill the need for shut-ins; last year, the team delivered 90-plus dinners.

So, what does it take in terms of food and manpower? Typically, the team orders 300 pounds of pre-cooked turkeys and at least 200 servings of mashed potatoes and gravy from Buehler's. Everything else (green beans, stuffing and more) is cooked in the church kitchen. Rolls and pies are donated.

"We have close to 100 volunteers, many who have been with us for years and treat it as a family tradition," said Tom Redding. "Our volunteers come from every part of Wadsworth and many of our fellow churches. They donate pies, they set up on Wednesday, they carve turkeys, cook green beans, make stuffing, enhance the gravy, greet, serve, clean, wash dishes, deliver, and break down the tables at the end. Our Scout troop papers Wadsworth with flyers about the meal."

At its core, the event provides a family meal for the elderly, the lonely, the financially disadvantaged, and anyone who wants to be part of a common meal and enjoy some fellowship. It reflects Matthew 25:35, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."

Meal leftovers are delivered to Haven of Rest Mission in Akron, which serves two meals that day of more than 500 people each.

Author: Jim Davis

This year's dinner:
November 26
11:30 a.m.

Want to help?
Sign-up sheets will be available in the lobby.







What's happening at WUMC?

Upcoming Events Link

Nov 1	All Saints Sunday - 11:00 a.m. - Remembering our members who passed during the past year
Nov 4	Senior Connection - 1:00 p.m. in fellowship hall, Speaker: Tom Doak
Nov 10	Parent Meet-up - 6:00 p.m. in room 209, for parents of elementary and preschool aged children, light dinner provided
Nov 15	Sonnenberg Station - 3:00 p.m. in sanctuary, Mens' a cappella performance
Nov 19	Lunch Bunch - 12:00 p.m. at Angie's Restaurant in Barberton, open to all
Nov 26	Community Thanksgiving Dinner - 11:30 a.m. in fellowship hall - call the church office to make a reservation
Dec 5	United Women in Faith Christmas Luncheon, Time coming soon
Dec 6	Advent Churchwide Luncheon - 12:00 p.m. in fellowship hall
Dec 17	Lunch Bunch - 12:00 p.m. - Hong Kong Buffet in Wadsworth Wadsworth Christian Preschool Christmas Program - 6:30 p.m. in sanctuary
Dec 19	Blue Christmas- 3:00 p.m. - a service for those grieving the loss of a loved one
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Worship - 8:00 p.m.

Our Vision

my people. my place. my joy.

my people.

Everything we do is about loving people because God loves people.

my place.

We have many "congregations" in our lives....our homes, our city, our church. These are all our places where we can take ownership. Instead of pointing out problems for someone else to fix, we will take responsibility and ask how can we work together to fix it.

my joy.

When we live with people as our focus and our places as our responsibility, joy will fill our lives.

Highlights

Children's Ministry

A word from Director Jen Beck

On October 4, we hosted our first We Are Family Night, and it was a wonderful evening of fellowship, food, and small-group learning. We talked about the importance of going out and inviting others, remembering that we may never fully know the impact we have on someone else's life simply by reaching out and sharing God's love. October has also been a busy month with our Pumpkin Cafe and Scare on the Square! Thank you for your tremendous support of both events. Proceeds from these events will go toward supporting foster care families through Caring for Kids.

Student Ministry

A word from Director Tiffany Simonson

In October, the students learned that They are Valued and in November they will learn that They are Forgiven.
The first Sunday of each month, the youth will attend the 11:00 a.m. worship service instead of Sunday School. They will serve as ushers, read scripture and participate in other ways. This is a wonderful way to teach them what to expect as an adult.