

December, 2025 &
January 2026



Parish Messenger

Christ Community United Methodist Parish

A Note from Pastor Jess



Emmanuel—God with us, it is such a lovely thought. Years ago, I read an article called “Rethinking Service” by Samuel Wells. While mission/service may not seem connected to Christmas, the author spoke about the nature of the incarnation, God in flesh. He made a point that for many of us we want to be for people, we want to do things for people, and we want God to be for us, to do things for us. But the incarnation, the Word made flesh, is not really focused on God for us.

Most of all, “for” is not the way God relates to us. God does not simply set the world straight for us. God does not simply shower us with good things. God does not mount up blessings upon us and then get miserable and stropy when we open them all up and fail to be sufficiently excited or surprised or grateful. “For” is not the heart of God.

In some ways we wish it was. We would love God to make everything happy and surround us with perfect things. When we get cross with God, it is easy to feel that God is not keeping the divine side of the bargain—to do things “for” us now and forever.

But God shows us something else. God speaks a rather different word. In Matthew’s gospel, the angel says to Joseph, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, ‘God is with us.’” And then in John’s gospel, we get the summary statement of what the Christian faith means: “The Word became flesh and lived with us.” It is an unprepossessing little word, but this is the word that lies at the heart of Christmas and at the heart of the Christian faith. The word is “with.”

They shall name him Emmanuel; God is with us. Christmas time is a time when we try to do a lot of things for people, for our loved ones, for those in need. Doing things for people is not bad so long as it does not replace being *with* people. We cannot skip the relationship part. Jesus, God incarnate, was born among us as one of us. He showed us a new dimension of how God relates to humanity, not apart from us, but in this beautiful and messy life with us. In a world where people are struggling to connect with one another, in a world where it seems no amount of things will satisfy us, perhaps we need to step closer to the manger. Perhaps we need to join the shepherds and the magi, the angels singing God’s glory and the people looking for hope. At the manger, we gather not alone but in community around the One who came to be with us.

Have a Merry Christmas & a Blessed New Year -Pastor Jess

A Parish Christmas Pageant

Last year, our no-rehearsal Christmas pageant went so well it was requested we do it again...by the kids! The script will be different even though the story is the same. If a child, youth, or adult wants to participate and have a speaking part, please let Pastor Jess know. She will gather with those who have speaking parts ahead of time but everyone else can show up day of to participate in this retelling of the birth of Jesus. The pageant will be at a joint parish worship service on December 14 at 10:30 at Corydon UMC. (The only service that day.) A potluck lunch will be after the service. Table service and drinks will be provided.



December Birthdays

3—Pam Lawyer, Kathy Mason
 5—Russell Lantz
 7—Geri Gardner
 8—Susie DeVore, Connor Runyon
 12—Sawyer Roe, Judy Werts
 15—Jani Ellis, Diane Olson Schroeder
 16—Drake Bailey, Aleigha Shields
 17—Ralph Alshouse, Wayne Jackson
 18—Joan Bailey, Kyle Nickell
 19—Geannie Radcliff
 21—Richard Mason
 27—Gary Henderson, Kalli Miller, Missy Petty
 29—Marilyn Jackson
 30—Jim Carlyle

December Anniversaries

4—Brian & Cindy Shelley
 27—Mike & Jani Ellis
 28—Jim & Marlene Carlyle
 30—Neal & Dorene McCart



January Birthdays

1—Karin Jones
 3—Brad Sindelar
 11—Wanda Muse, Julie Rouse, John Shields
 12—Kim Arnold, Tasha Bailey
 13—Earnestine Hysell
 18—Dan Rockhold, Joanne VanDyne
 20—Betty Abel
 22—Dennis Annis, Sarah Moorman
 23—Rita Muilenburg
 26—Jim Shields
 27—Renee Graber
 28—Linda Prunty, Emery Wallace
 30—Deanna Brennecke



January Anniversaries

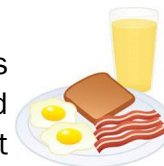
2—Burton & Linda Prunty
 26—Mark & Jeanne Winslow

2nd Sunday Meal at Corydon UMC

January 4, 2026 after worship plan to join removing of Christmas decorations and enjoying pizza and pop provided by second Sunday funds. All help is greatly appreciated.

Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast Group meets at Corydon UMC on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7:00 am for breakfast and Christian fellowship.



Millerton UMC Weekly Community Breakfast



Every Monday morning at 7:30 people gather at Millerton UMC for coffee and breakfast. All are welcome.

Bell Choir Practice

Corydon Handbell Choir practice will be on most Tuesdays. Bell ringers are always needed, both full time and substitutes. Everyone who has a heart for music is welcome. Contact Wayne Jackson at 641-872-2140 if you have any questions.



Corydon Chancel Choir

All who enjoy singing are welcome. Since we do not practice every week, an email is sent out before practice as a reminder. If you are not getting the email or you need to receive a text or call, please let either Anita, Wayne or Pastor Jess know.



ATTENDANCE

November	2	9	16	23
Allerton	12	13	8	5
Corydon	32	43	29	24
Lineville	20	26	23	10
Millerton	15	16	20	12
New Zion	34	35	28	28
Total	114	133	128	79

Average parish attendance for November was 114
 November 23 was Joint service at New Zion UMC.



United Women in Faith

The United Women in Faith cordially invite everyone to the December 4th, 2025, luncheon. We will start at 11:30 and progress to eating at noon. We will be serving a soup potluck. Anyone attending may bring a snack to share, however the soup, crackers, one vegetable/cheese tray, and dessert will be supplied by the members.

Since we have the luncheon in the beginning of the month, there will be no December meeting on the 4th Tuesday. The monthly meetings will restart in January 2026, weather permitting.

Pastor Jess will share the outcomes of the local mission distributions on the Parish Facebook page. Thank you for your donations and purchases to make this goal be fulfilled.

Lastly, United Women in Faith is for everyone. Any Christian, male or female, may join the United Women in Faith in person or on the digital platform (<https://uwfaith.mn.co/spaces/9299549/feed>).

God Bless, Shari Dunlap-Sindelar, Unit President

Festival of Trees & Holiday of Lights Tour

For the past four years we have been participating in the Festival of Trees. This annual event raises money that goes right back to community programs. Our themed trees always look amazing and people seem to enjoy seeing what we are doing from year to year. There was even a picture and small write up about the parish trees in the Seymour Herald last year. So, get your trees and decorators ready for this community event that is fun for the whole family. **Dates of Festival of Trees & Holiday Lights Tour are November 28-30 and December 5-7. from 5:00 to 9:00**

Themes for each church are: Allerton--Away in a Manger, Corydon--O Little Town of Bethlehem, Lineville--Joy to the World, Millerton--Angels We Have Heard on High, and New Zion--We Three Kings

Pastor Jess Office Hours

Mondays

7:00-9:00 a.m. at Millerton UMC
11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. at New Zion UMC

Tuesdays

This is the pastor's Sabbath (day of rest)

Wednesdays

8:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. at Corydon UMC

Thursdays

12:00-2:00 p.m. at Allerton UMC

Fridays

2:00-4:00 p.m. at Lineville UMC

Christmas Eve Service

Corydon UMC at 6:00

Allerton at 8:00

Christ the Savior is Born! Join us at either of the two parish worship services as we hear from scripture the good news of great joy and sing songs proclaiming the birth of our Savior.

Tim's Thoughts

We are entering a very busy time of year. Things are really starting to ramp up for Thanksgiving, and we will not slow down again until we are well into January. This year, Advent begins the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Advent is supposed to be a time of anticipation, as we joyfully await the coming of our Savior. But with the busyness and stress leading up to the holidays, it can be a challenge to be joyfully anticipating Christmas. Between our work, all our commitments, and holiday planning, we can easily find ourselves anticipating the moment when Christmas will be over and things can settle back down to 'normal' levels of stress. So, what do we do in this season of waiting to stay focused on the right things? We must reexamine the question: what are we waiting for?



Advent is not just about the anticipation of the Savior's coming birth at Christmas, it is also about his second coming. In the early days of the church, a lot more emphasis was placed on the second coming during Advent. Indeed, many of our recent readings have been preparing us for this. The reading we just had from Isaiah 65 was about the new earth with no weeping, infant mortality, nor homelessness; with the wolf and the lamb feeding together. The week before that, in Luke 20 Jesus spoke about how our current rules and norms will not make sense in the new life we will have in the resurrection with the God of the living. Then the week before that was All Saints Sunday, with Jesus telling us in John 14 that he is going on before us to prepare a place for us, and Revelation 21 speaking of the new heaven and the new earth where God "will wipe every tear from their eyes; death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more."

This is something we can joyfully anticipate! Instead of waiting for it all to be over and returning to normal or even waiting for the exciting moment remembering the birth of our Savior, we can anticipate the return of our Savior; bringing with it a time free of all stress, filled with nothing but peace, hope, love, and joy. So, as we journey through Advent and beyond this year, I invite you all to anticipate the second coming of Christ, to let the Hope of it fill your hearts with Peace, that you may share his Love with all you encounter, and so bring more Joy to the world as we all await Jesus' return!

Wishing you all a blessed Advent, Christmas, and New Year, Tim

Supplemental Secretary Position

The parish is looking for a supplemental secretary. This is a 16-hour-a-week position that aids the primary secretary in completing weekly, monthly, and annual tasks. Beginning pay is \$14 per hour. There is some flexibility with days and times which can be discussed.

Tasks will include answering the phone, helping people who come in for Aid & Assistance and keeping track of who has received help from this fund, assisting people who come in to use the copy machine, putting together the weekly worship slides for the churches, updating the website, and assisting the primary secretary in getting the weekly bulletins and monthly newsletters out.

Applicants must be good with technology, communicate well, work well with others, keep things confidential, and detail oriented. Experience with Word, Publisher, Excel, and PowerPoint is preferred.

Contact the Parish Office by phone, 641-872-1569, or email, coryumc@grm.net, to apply.



Row 1 Left & Row 2 Right: Millerton UMC decorating for Christmas

Row 1 Right: Parish decorating at Festival of Trees

Row 3 Left: Lineville UMC decorating for Christmas

Row 3 Right: Lineville Dinner Worship

Row 4: Games UWF purchased games for Corydon Specialty Care

Row 4 Right: Work on new entrance at Corydon UMC





Row 1: Prayer Shawls

Row 2: Corydon UMC outdoor Christmas lights

Row 3: Left: Lineville Children's sermon

Row 3: Right: Latest Lineville Quilt

Row 4 Left: The Parish served cupcakes for the November birthday party at Corydon Specialty Care

Row 4 Right: Men's Group donated to the Wayne Community School lunch program.



Looking Back on the Year

It has been an amazing year at the parish churches! Praise God for all the blessings we have experienced and the blessings we have been to one another and the community this year. We met our goals and had a great time doing it. Here are a few highlights from the year.

Allerton United Methodist Church

- Sent 36 school kits complete with bags to the conference ingathering.
- Continues to make sure people are getting food by delivering Mobile Meals once a month and helping with the monthly food truck.
- Helped the American Legion put up flags in the cemetery.

Corydon United Methodist Church

- Continues to update and improve the church building which is so widely used by the church, parish, and community. This year three rooms along the east hallway had carpet removed and replaced with durable carpet in one room and wood flooring in another. The northeast door where meals are handed out on the last Wednesday of the month has a roof over the sidewalk.
- Held a fun Super Bowl watch party with a great turn out.
- Last Christmas, the Walk Thru Nativity brought around 100 people into the church building to experience the good news of Jesus' birth.
- Had three baptisms.

Lineville United Methodist Church

- Held Dinner Church 4 times which has turned out to be a wonderful way to invite people who do not attend regular worship to hear God's word, eat good food, and enjoy fellowship.
- Camped out, provided breakfast for the campground, and worshipped outside twice this year with a wonderful turn out.
- Had a baptism and received a new member.

Millerton United Methodist Church

- Hosted a block party at the church that included a bounce house, hayride, food, fellowship, and games. It was well attended by the church and the community.
- Continues with their community breakfast which is a great time of gathering each week.

New Zion United Methodist Church

- Held their annual Egg Dying & Pretzel making which was well attended by people of all ages.
- Held a "Bread of Life" retreat day that included hands on breadmaking, a demonstration, speakers discussing their faith, and the sacrament of holy communion. It was well attended.
- Hosted a pool party for the parish which was a fun evening for all ages.

Parish Ministries

- The Last Week Supper ministry continues to give out around 200 meals on the last Wednesday of each month.
- Disciple Bible Study finished the four-year study this spring with thirteen people completing the final year!
- The Parish Vacation Bible School combined with the Lineville Community Vacation Bible School that was held at the Lineville UMC. Eight churches put together a wonderful three-day event, between helpers and participants there were over 70 people involved!
- The United Women in Faith held monthly meetings and gave away \$1,500 to the following ministries: Corydon Specialty Care Center, Wayne County Home Health Visit fund, School Meals & Milk Fund, Empty Stocking Program, and Families Forward!
- The Men's Group gathered for breakfast twice a month and the number of participants from the community continues to grow! In November, the group decided to give \$250 to Empty Stockings and \$250 to the school lunch fund. (See picture on page 6)
- Prayer Shawl group has given out 88 shawls and 336 crosses.

Final Words from Pastor Diane

Dear CCUMP friends in Christ,

When I graduated from high school in 1970, our class motto was, "In every ending is a new beginning." Life is full of new beginnings. You might agree that God leads us all to journeys of unknown territory. Along the way, we blunder, we gain wisdom and strength in challenges, and we also find that, once in a while, we are surprised with unspeakable joy at what happens. Bittersweet, maybe, but inevitably, this happens over and over to us.

Such is this time. Truthfully, never in my life did I expect to be writing a letter to you quite like this one. In 2008, when Bill Poland asked this teacher thinking of retirement if I would consider being a pastor, I had not thought that much about it. I had sensed for several years that God was leading me toward...what? And when I became your associate pastor in July 2009, I remember the very first time I was asked to pray-- for missionaries. I couldn't do it. It was all so overwhelming. I realized that, only with God's help could I serve the churches as God willed me to.

But this letter is to you, not God, and you all need to know that Mike and I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to you, the good people of all five beloved churches, for the love and care extended to us in so many ways. You always stepped up when we needed support: with Mike's Parkinson's diagnosis, when I broke my arm, when we lost each of three parents. Those times and others, your many expressions of kindness, encouragement, and support have sustained us more than you will know. The power of your prayers lifted us up and let us know we were not alone. We thank you all.

In these 16 years or so, I believe we've all grown together in understanding who God is, who we are as churches and a parish, and what we are being called to be and do as God's people. Wow, have there been a lot of changes or what? I have been there with you through many transitions; five senior pastors have taught me so much, as well as all of you! Counting Sewal until 2011, together we have prayed to be led by the Spirit. When we lost saints in the churches, we have wept as one with our hearts aching at the losses. We have rejoiced together with many baptisms and weddings in the churches and the community. We have served in mission together, to include serving literally thousands of meals to those needing them. It has been a great honor to be a part of this faithful, dedicated parish!

So I never thought I would be called to another time of beginning with the Humeston parish. As I write this, my heart is full, because I continue to grieve not being part of your lives as before. I still miss the privilege of walking, praying, and worshipping with you through the many new beginnings of your own lives, as well as the joy of being a part of all the new things that God will be doing at Christ Community Parish in years down the road. But each day, I anticipate with joy working with those in my own longtime church and the LeRoy church. I am excited for the opportunity to be involved in all the ways God calls me to be here, present in the lives of this church family, as Mike and I continue to work for Jesus and his Church. Times are bittersweet for us.

In the past sixteen years of ministry, I have been so very blessed to work alongside amazing people, committed staff, leaders, and congregation members whose main desire is to serve God with energy and grace. I will treasure each of you in my heart forever, and I will always cherish the memories of our times together. And I wish the best to Pastor Jess and Pastor Tim for many more years of inspired and inspiring ministry to the parish. God surely knows what he's doing!

So thank you all so much for these past years spent in ministry together with you. I am positive God will continue to bless you abundantly in the years ahead. *"I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy...I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace...And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight...having produced the harvest^f of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God."* (Philippians 1:3-11 selected passages).

Love and peace in Christ, Pastor Diane Olson Schroeder

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	2	3 Men's Breakfast at Corydon UMC 7:00 am	4 UWF Christmas Pot Luck 12:00 Yoga 3:30	5 Allerton UMC Deliver Mobile Meals Festival of Trees—Dec. 5-7	6 Lineville Community Party 2 to 3:30 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
7 New Zion Children's Program <u>Ugly Sweater</u> Contest and Movie at <u>Corydon UMC 3:00</u> J-C & M T-AL & N	8 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	9 Prayer Shawl 9:30 at Corydon UMC	10 Allerton Community Christmas Program 7:00	11 Yoga 3:30	12 Quilt at Lineville UMC 2:00	13 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
14 Joint Service Christmas Pageant at Corydon UMC 10:30 Potluck After	15 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	16	17 Men's Breakfast at Corydon UMC 7:00 am Last Week Supper 5:00 to 6:00 Lineville Christmas Carol 6:00	18 Food Truck at Allerton 2:00	19 Chapel at Corydon Specialty Care 11:00	20 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
21 Communion T-C & M J-AL & N	22 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30 New Zion Cookie Decorating	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 6:00 at Corydon 8:00 at Allerton	25 	26	27 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
28 Food Pantry T-C & M J-AL & N	29 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	30	31 New Years Eve Party/Bingo at New Zion UMC			

The schedule is subject to change

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 	2 Allerton UMC Deliver Mobile Meals	3 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
4 Communion & Aid & Assist. J-C &M T-AL& N	5 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	6	7 Men's Breakfast at Corydon UMC 7:00 am Martha Circle 9:30 Joanna Circle 1:00	8 Corydon Ad 9:30 Blood Drive at Corydon UMC 1:00 to 5:30 Lineville Ad Meeting 5:30	9 Quilt at Lineville UMC 2:00	10 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
11 J-C &M T-AL& N	12 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	13 Prayer Shawl 9:30 at Corydon UMC	14	15 Food Truck at Allerton 2:00	16 Chapel at Corydon Specialty Care 11:00	17 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm .
18 Communion T-C & M J-AL& N	19 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	20	21 Men's Breakfast at Corydon UMC 7:00 am	22 Parish Council at Millerton 5:30	23 Quilt at Lineville UMC 2:00	24 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm
25 Food Pantry T-C &M J-AL& N	26 Community Coffee at Millerton 7:30	27 UWF at Corydon at 1:30	28 Last Week Supper 5:00 to 6:00 & Planning Meeting	29	30	31 St. Francis Mass 6:30 pm

The schedule is subject to change



United Methodist Church
213 W. Jackson
Corydon, IA 50060

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Pd. Permit # 19

Corydon, Iowa

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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Parish Secretary

Becky Feters—coryumc@grm.net

Parish Prayer Chain

Call one of the pastors



Worship Times

Allerton

Worship 8:30

Corydon

Adult Sunday School 9:30 ~ Worship 10:45

Lineville

Worship 9:45 ~ Children's Sunday School 10:45

Millerton

Worship 9:00

New Zion

Sunday School 9:45 ~ Worship 11:00