

December
2025

The Candle

pastor's Message

*"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."
— John 1:5*

December is a month of contrasts. Advent invites us into quiet, hopeful waiting—candles lit one by one, promises whispered in Scripture. Yet our calendars often tell a different story: shopping lists, school programs, travel plans, and not nearly enough rest. By the time Christmas arrives, many of us feel worn down rather than lifted up.

Into all the noise comes John's Gospel with a simple truth: *there is darkness, but it does not win*. God's light shines right in the middle of our busy, complicated, joyful, and weary lives.

That is the heart of Christmas. God doesn't stay at a distance. In Jesus, God steps into our world, our stress, our questions, and our hopes—up close and personal. Christ comes not to overwhelm us but to be with us.

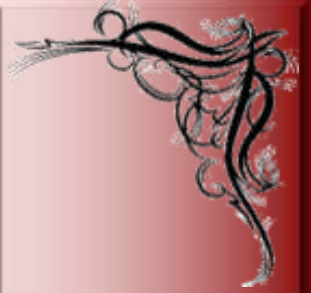
As we journey through Advent toward Christmas, I invite you to make space for Christ in a few simple ways:

Let worship anchor your month. Advent isn't just a countdown; it's a gift of time to prepare our hearts. I hope you'll join us for our Advent Sundays and our Christmas services of candlelight, carols, Word, and Sacrament.

Look for Christ in ordinary moments. A kind word, a shared meal, a quiet prayer, an act of generosity—these are places where Christ's light shines most clearly.

Remember those for whom this season is difficult. Christmas can stir up grief or loneliness. Reach out, care gently, and know that if this season is hard for *you*, your church family and your Lord walk with you.

Pastor's message continued on page 5



Annual Meeting
December 7
10am



Christmas Cookie
Gatherings
Saturday, December 13
Sunday, December 14



Christmas Eve
Worship
December 24
3pm, 7pm, 9pm

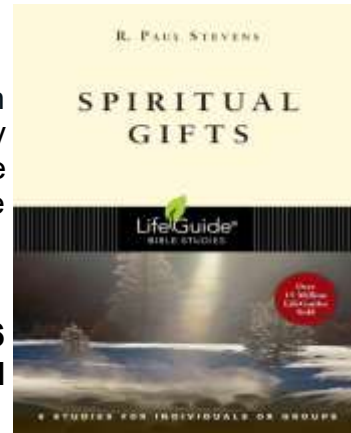


The Candle is the newsletter of Advent Lutheran Church, ELCA
Our Purpose: "Loved by God, we share Christ's love with ALL"

Sunday School Adult Sunday School Begins a New Study

You are unique. You have been created and invited by God to participate in his kingdom-work. Yet, you may have also experienced feelings of uncertainty about how to serve God, about what gifts you must use, and about God's purpose for your life. This eight-session LifeGuide Bible Study entitled “***Spiritual Gifts***” by R. Paul Stevens helps you to recognize your spiritual gifts and the gifts of others. The author leads you to consider how to practically use these gifts to glorify God in your relationships, your work, and your world.

Spiritual Gifts features easy to understand chapters which accompany study questions at the end of each section. The study guide is available through Amazon.com for \$7.90 in the paperback edition (ISBN 9780830830626) and \$7.50 in the Kindle edition.



This 8-session study will begin on Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 10:15am in hybrid format. This means it will be conducted in-person and on zoom for people requiring remote access.

If you are interested in joining us, please call/text Tim Krueger at (440) 391-0369 so that you can be placed on our email list (which is how the zoom information is sent out). You can email Tim at: LTCTKRUE@aol.com.

Prayer Chain

Do you wish to feel strengthened and fulfilled by offering your time to help others? Nothing could be more gratifying than lifting someone up in prayer in their time of need.

Please contact Sue Keeley @ 440.862.2790/440.257.5565 or by e-mail at suesworkout@gmail.com/adventmentoroffice@gmail.com if you would like to become part of the prayer chain ministry, have a prayer request, or if you have any questions. Prayer is Powerful!!

Pastor Prayer Intercessors

November 29-December 5
December 6-12
December 13-19
December 20-26
December 27-31

Jenny Dubeansky, Sara Coleman
Becky Spudich, Fernanda Alves
Nancy Marshaus, Rose Schrum
Lee Sundblom, Kay Smith
Becky Young, Sue Keeley



“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5: 17



Points from your Parish Nurse

- ♥ As another year comes to an end, it's natural to look back over the past 12 months. What joys did you experience? Any sorrows? Did the craziness of today's world influence your decisions? Did you read the Bible more? Did your relationship with Jesus grow or take a step back? The season of Advent is upon us. Are you prepared for the coming of our Savior?
- ♥ The next quarterly Care Team meeting will be our annual Christmas breakfast on Saturday, December 6th at 10am in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to attend.
- ♥ Caregivers Support Group will meet on Thursday, December 11 at 12noon at TJ's on the Avenue for our Christmas meeting. Next month we will meet at Advent at 1pm on Thursday, January 15 as I will not be available on January 8th. If you are a caregiver or know someone who is, please invite them to join us. The meetings are informal and all information shared is kept confidential.
- ♥ Blood Pressure screenings will be held on Saturday, December 20 after the 4pm service by Mary Jo Jones and Sunday, December 21 at 10am in the Parish Nurse office. Hope to see you there.
- ♥ Advent has been providing meals for Project Hope's Families Moving Forward on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. There are typically 8-12 persons including children in need. The calendar for January and February is up on the bulletin board waiting for volunteers. Meals are to be dropped off at 5pm at Door #4 in the back of the building. Address is 25 Freedom Rd., Painesville, OH 44077. Call or email me with any questions.
- ♥ May this Christmas season bring good health, peace and joy to you and your families. Have a Merry Christmas, Advent Family!
- ♥ Always remember, "When in doubt, Point to the Cross!"

Your Servant in Christ,
Christine Noble, Parish Nurse



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Care Team



Nov 23-Dec 6	Lida Mackey, Becky Young, Amy Moyer
Dec 7-20	Kathy Kling, Kathy Jennings, Barb Caspell
Dec 21-Jan 3	Mary Jo Jones, Barbara Louis, Rose Schrum

Upcoming Blood Drive

Friday, January 9, 2026
10am - 4pm

call 1.800.RED.CROSS
~or~ RedCrossBlood.org
Key word: Advent



Help Save a Life!

"For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14

C o u n c i l M i n u t e s - O c t o b e r

In Attendance: Pastor Steve, Bob McClanahan, Andy DiLiello, Carla Colo, Christine Noble, Joan Hamm, Bob Adkins, Dave Mattson, Leesa Mecozzi

Excused: Rob Hilston

Call to Order: 6:57pm

Approval of September Council Minutes: Motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Pastor's Report: verbal

- We will celebrate Affirmation of Faith/Rite of Confirmation, on November 16, for 3 of our youth.
- Pastor Steve presented the following youths for approval: Brooklyn Walker, Audriana Walker and Evelyn Scripp.
***Motion was made to accept Brooklynn Walker, Audriana Walker, and Evelyn Scripp, for Affirmation of Faith on November 16; seconded; and approved by all.*
- First Communion (3rd graders) – we will have possibly 7 youth making first communion during holy week. Pastor currently is teaching the confirmation youth but will also need to teach the First Communion youth – leading up to holy week. This will be a conflict. If anyone is interested in helping with either group, please let Pastor Steve know.
- Pastor has been busy making visits and communion visits to our shut-ins.

***Motion was made and seconded, and pastor's report was approved.*

Treasurer's Report:

- Income below -5.% (\$11,297.90) and Expenses under budget 2.1% (\$5,213.96).
- Ministry teams currently under budget.
- In order to hit our \$213,000 budget, we will need to bring in \$4,000 over what we budget for income for the next 3 months.
*** Motion was made to approve the September Treasurer's report, seconded, and the September report was approved.*

Ministry Team Reports Received: H&W, W&M, Fellowship (on file)

- **Property:** front beam (outside soffit) repair is complete. Soaker hoses worked great this year, they have been put away for the season. Boiler maintenance is done, AC window units have been taken out.
Ceiling lights in the Sanctuary need new bulbs, possibly new fixtures. What is the best way to go about this? Suggestion for getting scaffolding, not using ladders.
- **Outreach:** We received a nice thank you note from the Council on Aging, for work done for Mentor residents during our DOS. Thanksgiving/Christmas baskets will be done again this year, in conjunction with St. Andrew, for distribution at the Food Pantry. We are asking for financial donations, not food items.
- **W&M:** Carla is looking into getting special musicians for Easter/Reformation (2026)
W&M has asked council to make a decision about a July Sabbatical for 2026 before February next year. This will be discussed with the new council in January.
***Motion was made and seconded, and the ministry reports were approved.*

Administration/Housekeeping Items:

Annual reports will be due by December 1.

Old Business:

- **Parsonage Fund Steering Committee Update:** team has planned a Congregational Workshop – Saturday, November 15 from 9am-2pm. Workshop will start as a group presentation, then small group work. Council is encouraged to attend. Priorities that are identified/finalized from this workshop will then be taken to council, who in turn will make a motion to the congregation to be voted on (January Annual Meeting). Sign-up sheets will be posted in the Narthex. Thank you to Joan, Dave and Kim for their leadership.

- **Cameras/Security System and Key Policy:** Horner is looking at installation around the end of October. Info will be placed in the November newsletter, as a “heads-up.” Bob Adkins agreed to draft an article. The Emergency phone in the Narthex is working.
- **Election Day:** help is needed – sign up sheets posted in the Narthex.
- **Council 2026:** 2 council members are needed. Pastor Steve is working on this.

New business:

- **Budget Planning Meeting: November 19 at 7pm.** Council and ministry team leaders are encouraged to attend.
- **Living Lutheran Magazine:** Magazine of the ELCA, has returned to hard-copy, from only electronic copies in previous years. Do we wish to renew this magazine for our members to pick up in the Narthex, if they wish? Carla Colo volunteered to make a donation to cover the cost of this subscription for 2026. Thank you so much Carla!
- **Disaster Relief Plan:** will be discussed in January.
- **Christmas Party:** does the council wish for a Christmas party this year? Yes. Carla Colo has graciously volunteered to host again this year. It will be December 14 at 4pm.
- **December Annual Meeting:** December 7 at 10am – immediately following 9am worship.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made, seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Keeley, Council Secretary



Pastor's message continued from page 1

As we close another year, we give thanks for the many ways God has been faithful in our congregation—through worship, service, learning, generosity, and countless quiet acts of love. And as 2026 approaches, we trust the same God will continue to guide and strengthen us.

My prayer for you this December is that you will feel God's love deeply, notice God's light even on the darkest days, and find moments of peace that remind you: Christ is still coming, still shining, still with us.

Blessed Advent, and a Merry Christmas to you and yours.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Steve

First-Half Annual Meeting

Sunday, December 7 @10am



- **Election of new council members for 2025**
- **Update from our Parsonage Steering Committee**

Devotions for Advent

Please be sure to pick up an Advent Devotional booklet, found in the Narthex.



OK Gang

Happy Holidays to all!!! Mark Monday, December 15, 2025 for our holiday O K Luncheon. It will be at the Pub 1812 at Rider's Inn, 792 Mentor Avenue in Painesville, Ohio at 12:45pm.

Recently reopened under the ownership of Hospitality veteran Leonard William and his daughter Alishia, they decide to change the name after finding a vintage oval sign reading Rider's Inn Pub 1812 honoring all those in the past who have left their footprint there.

They have done extensive renovations including the kitchen and putting it back together again with the main focus on the restaurant and beverage service. The menu is not super big yet but will balance comfort and creativity. He plans to offer breakfast and an old -fashion Sunday Brunch with additional menu items in the near future.

So put on your glad rags and join us as we revisit the 213 year old treasured restaurant and celebrate the Christmas spirit.

Fellowship Event

Please join us on December 14th in the narthex for Christmas cookies, coffee and fellowship. If you would like to make cookies to share with everyone please bring them on December 14th. We will be serving a portion of these cookies on December 19th with the neighbors that shop at the food pantry for their Christmas dinner. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*We will also have cookies following the Saturday worship service on December 13.



Group Studies

Men's Studies

- ♦ **Retired Men's Group** meets the first **Thursday** of every month at 9:30am. If you are a retired man and would like to share your thoughts and discuss a wide variety of subjects, please join us. We would welcome your participation. ***Note: will meet January 8, not January 1.**



Women's Studies

- ♦ **Sophia Project:** Meets on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from 10am-11am in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us.
- ♦ **Hope Circle:** Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30am. All are welcome!



"...but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'" Matthew 19:14

Stewardship

The Stewardship Team would like to **extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to our Advent Family** for participating in the Pledge Commitment. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and very much needed. It is through being Good Stewards of God's Love that Advent Ministries are able to continue their integral work for our congregation and our neighbors.

For those who have not yet pledged we encourage you to do so. Our giving in 2025 has come in lower than expected and creating an accurate budget with uncertainty and declining donations is very challenging.

For those who are still wondering how they are able to contribute, please remember that no gift is too small. Any contribution of your time, talent and/or treasure truly helps our Advent Ministries.

Thank you, Advent Lutheran Family, for your work as God's Stewards. As a congregation we can do together what we cannot do alone.

God Bless ~
Your Stewardship Team



The Piecemakers of Advent Lutheran Church are very excited and thankful for the generous support of our congregation for our mission. We celebrate our success of completing 81 quilts this past year. We also were able to provide 5 member comfort quilts, a baptism quilt and potholders to our new members. The winner of the quilt raffle was Elaine Dobransky. Your support of \$1040.00 provides funding for our quilt supplies and the ministry committees of our church. We delivered 17 quilts to Lutheran Relief and the others went to Appalachian Relief and were being sent to Alaska. We are sincerely grateful to the congregation for their support this year. We invite anyone interested in participating with us to join us on Thursday mornings 9:30- 12:00.



"...But with God, all things are possible." Matthew 19:26

HOLIDAY OUTREACH PROJECT



Once again this year we are asking for donations to the Advent/St. Andrews Food Pantry. We are planning to provide a Christmas bag in December filled with either a ham or turkey, all the sides and a dessert to go with it.

During the holidays we usually serve over 60 families. In order to make all of the bags alike and to be able to buy in bulk, we are asking for financial help. Our neighbors that shop at our food pantry really depend on us to make their holiday meal special.

If you would like to contribute, please write a check with "holiday food pantry" written in the memo section of your check. Thank you for your generosity!!

*Deuteronomy 15:11 - Since there will never cease to be some in need on earth,
I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor
and needy neighbor in your land'.*

Any questions, please see Dave Mattson, Denise Janosko or Bev McArthur



Community Outreach

**Food Pantry (St. Andrew's)
Donations:**

December:
shampoo & toilet paper

**Volunteers
Needed**



Advent's Little Free Pantry

**Our current needs are: oatmeal,
anything you'd like to donate**

**There is a collection box outside the
church office. Thank You!**

Please see the Weekly News sheets each weekend for our most current pantry needs. Thank you for your support and for making a difference in the lives of those we are helping!

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul." 3 John 2

Holiday Worship Schedule

- ♦ Christmas Eve Services • 3pm (family service)
7pm (Candlelight)
9pm (Candlelight)
- ♦ Saturday, December 27 • 4pm
- ♦ Sunday, December 28 • 9am & 11:30am



Holy Communion is celebrated at all worship services

**** Youth Sunday school will not meet on December 28th or January 4th.
Adult Sunday school will not meet in December. Will resume January 4th.

Confirmation

On Sunday, November 16, three of our youth affirmed their faith in the Rite of Confirmation.



Evelyn Scripp
Audriana Walker
Brooklynn Walker

God's Blessings!

Council Person of the Day

December 7	Rob Hilston
December 14	Bob McClanahan
December 21	Christine Noble
December 28	Carla Colo

Worship Assistants

We need your help!

What a joy and blessing it is to serve the Lord!

**We need ushers, lectors,
and communion assistants**

**Please see the sign up board in the
Narthex or you may call the church office
to sign up.**

Altar Flowers

December

6/7	Hamilton
13/14	Mach
20/21	Kulma
27/28	Jastromb



2026 Flower Chart is posted

**Note: You will be billed directly
from the florist. Beginning in
December, we will be using JD
Balantine Florist.**

Upcoming Communion Bread Bakers

Month of December

Cathy Doering

Thank you for your ministry!



Finance Update • October 31, 2025

<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
Balance 1/1/25	\$ 26,472.96	26,472.96	
Income	235,346.23	251,136.00	\$(15,789.77)
Expenditures	267,247.07	270,040.83	2,793.76
Ending Balance October 31, 2025	<u>\$(5,427.88)</u>	<u>\$7,568.13</u>	<u>\$(12,996.01)</u>

Year-to-Date...

**We've spent
\$31,900.84
more than we've
received**

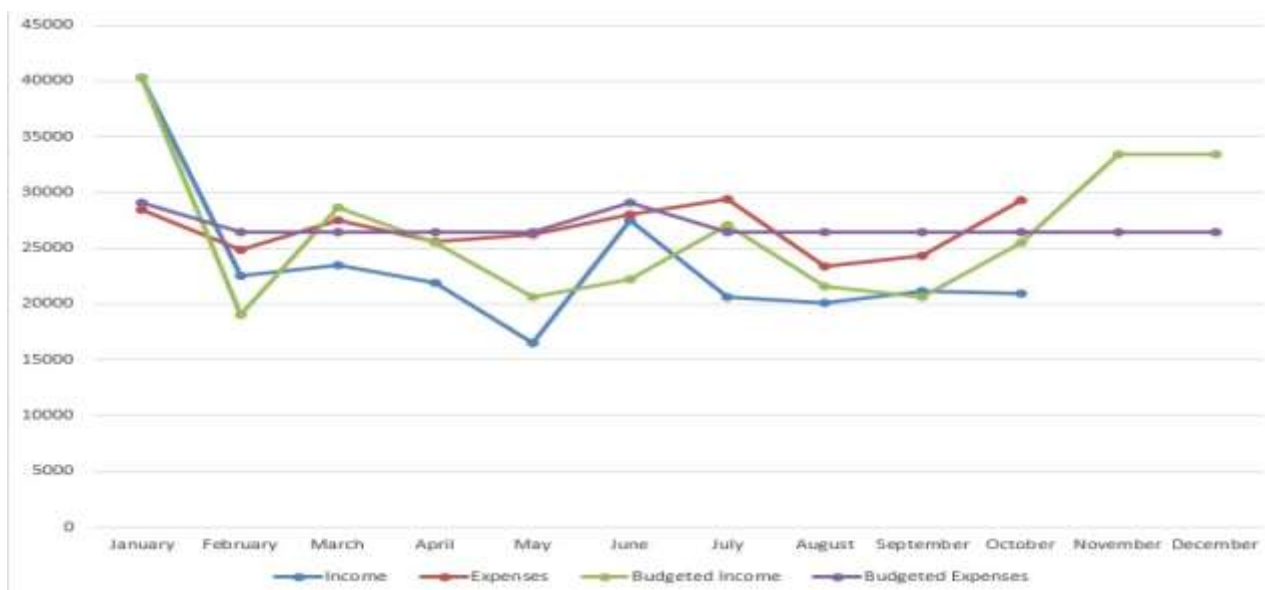
DESIGNATED/ RESTRICTED FUNDS

Balance 1/1/25	\$424,096.18
Income	36,222.68
Expenditures	54,607.11
Ending Balance October 31, 2025	<u>\$405,711.75</u>

Treasurer's Report with Fund Balances are posted at the end of each month on the council bulletin board outside the church office.

Advent 2025 Financial Performance

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Income	40,302	22,554	23,445	21,930	16,522	27,541	20,612	20,143	21,119	20,948			
Expenses	28,482	24,862	27,458	25,644	26,177	27,995	29,443	23,406	24,330	29,271			
Project Income	40,302	19,080	28,620	25,440	20,670	22,260	27,030	21,624	20,670	25,440	33,390	33,474	318,000
Projected Expenses	29,125	26,464	26,464	26,464	26,464	29,125	26,464	26,460	26,464	26,464	26,464	26,464	322,886



Online Giving: If you would like to support Advent's ministry electronically, scan this QR code to visit our online giving page. Thank You!



ADVENT'S STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Steven C. Bond 440.710.4757
 Office Administrator: Sue Keeley 440.862.2790
 Organist: Elizabeth Sumiejski 440.255.5489
 Chancel Choir Director: Doreen Mattson 216.389.7611
 Praise Team Director: Tracy Ammon 440.749.0690

VOLUNTEER CONTACTS

Lay Assistants
 Doreen Mattson 216.389.7611
Worship Assistants
 Church office 257.5565
Worship Tech
 Greg Preske 216.317.8148
Altar Guild Chairperson
 Becky Young 440.221.4531
Sunday School
 Beth Hamilton 669.1902
Service Outreach
Food Pantry
 Dave Mattson 440.897.5466
Youth & Family Ministry
 Beth Hamilton 669.1902
Prayer Ministry
 • **Prayer Vigil**
 Sue Keeley 862.2790
 • **Prayer Chain**
 Sue Keeley 862.2790
 • **Healing Touch**
 Christine Noble 346.3120
Meals for Members
 Barb Caspell 440.840.5393
 Barb Louis 352.7055
Youth
Memorial Gifts
 Barb Zahn 440.223.2852

Funeral Luncheons

Christine Noble 346.3120
 Paula DiLiello 290.7506

Blood Drives

Church office 257.5565

Webmaster

Church Office 257.5565

Liturgical Arts

Fawn Patrick 357.7898

Quilting

Betty Steimle 440.534.1174

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pr. Steve Bond 710.4757
 Rob Hilston, President 207.632.5949
 Joan Hamm, Vice President 440.476.1494
 Carla Colo 216.970.0219
 Leesa Mecozzi 440.231.1930
 Andy DiLiello 440.290.7506
 Bob Adkins 832.971.6414
 Bob McClanhan 440.867.3663
 Christine Noble 440.346.3120
 Dave Mattson 440.897.5466

Council Secretary

Sue Keeley 440.862.2790

Treasurer

Bob Adkins 832.971.6414

Financial Secretary

Becky Spudich 440.487.7897

Asst. Treasurer

Dave Mattson 440.897.5466

MUTUAL MINISTRY

Deb Laukiavich 725.4929
 Cathy Doering 379.7338
 Jenny Helland 974.1776

Deadline Reminder:

Newsletter information:

due by the 15th of the month

Christmas Blessings to
you and yours!

May you find joy and
peace in the New
Year!



To submit items to *The Candle*,
 contact: Sue Keeley - Office Administrator at: 440.257.5565
 You may also e-mail your information to:
 adventmentoroffice@gmail.com

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH
7985 MUNSON ROAD
MENTOR, OHIO 44060-3703

Dated Material - November 24, 2025

Smile! Know that God Loves You!



ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Worship Schedule

- ♦ Saturday's @4:00pm
Sunday's @9:00am ▪ Sunday's @11:30am
- ♦ Youth Sunday School ▪ Sunday's ▪ 10:15am
- ♦ Adult Sunday School ▪ Sunday's ▪ 10:15am

ON THE WEB: adventmentor.org

E-mail: adventmentoroffice@gmail.com

Pr. Steve Bond: pastorstevebond@aol.com

Christine Noble: adventparishnurse@gmail.com

Advent Welcomes You!

Welcome! With delight, we greet all who come to worship. You are sincerely welcomed and invited to be a regular worshipper here in God's house. If you are looking for a church home, you will find a ready welcome here at Advent Lutheran Church.

Welcome Friends



Rev. Steven C. Bond, Pastor
7985 Munson Road, Mentor OH 44060-3703
• 440.257.5565



Advent's Purpose Statement: *"Loved by God, we share Christ's love with ALL"*