

## **"The STEEPLE"**

**A Newsletter of Commerce UMC - JANUARY 2024**

**1155 N. Commerce Rd, Commerce Twp, MI 48382**

**Phone: 248-363-3935**

**Sunday Worship: In-Person Worship 10:00 AM**

**Our Worship Services LIVE STREAM our YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/> and also linked through our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/commerceumc](http://www.facebook.com/commerceumc)**



## **Heights**

I enjoy hearing stories about the former pastors of Commerce UMC. In large part, it's because I am an opportunistic thief. Yes, I am happy to steal... steal ideas, that is. If there is a good idea out there, I will snatch it right off the table and shove it in my pockets. I am always looking for good ideas to steal. So, when church members share with me something that Pastor Park or Pastor Wyllys had done in that past that proved effective, I think long and hard about its current application.

For example, I understand that as an incentive to grow the Vacation Bible School attendance numbers, Pastor Wyllys said he would sit on the roof of the church and eat a snickers if the church hit their goal. The church did, and of course, Pastor Wyllys went up on the roof and ate a snickers. This seems to have left a lasting impression on many of you as I hear the story repeatedly almost annually.

As for Pastor Park, he had some attendance related incentive as well. I understand there was something about a ladder. The details are a bit fuzzy, but if my memory serves me correctly, he preached from a ladder during service and claimed wouldn't get down until weekly attendance hit 200. If those details are wrong, feel free to tell me the story again. I am all ears especially because I know his incentive worked. The church averaged 200 people in attendance and he was able to move on from the whole ladder ordeal.

Based on my predecessors' success with driving attendance up with height-related incentives, I am tempted to offer something similar. What if I told you I would eat a snickers bar on a ladder placed atop of the church roof on the condition that we averaged 200 people for in-person worship in 2025? Would that work? Would we see 20 more regular in-person individuals at worship every week? If so, I am all in!

In reality, I do not necessarily care about the attendance numbers increasing for in-person worship. What I care about is the meaning behind the numbers. If we had over 200

people for in-person worship, what this likely means is, our folks are attending more regularly. It also likely means that those who have fallen through the cracks have been remembered and personally re-invited to church. Look, when I re-invite people either by phone call or email, it is not very effective. I am ignored, but when *you* do it, when a friend or fellow member reaches out, things change!

All this to say, I want to put it out there that I would absolutely love to average 200 people for in-person in 2025. Yes, I would love it if those who attend once a month, decided to attend twice a month. Or, if those that attend twice a month chose to attend four times a month. It also means I would love your partnership in reaching out to your friends that have not been present in some time so that you can give them a gentle nudge and express this truth: "We miss you. We need you. We are not the same without you."

And if these changes do happen, I'll be happy to climb a ladder, eat a snicker, and/or sit on the roof... with a fox in a box, with a goat in a boat, or whatever you want, because it will mean that we are taking the right steps toward building stronger disciples, stronger community, stronger faith together. I look forward to all our gracious God has in store for us.

Pastor Andy

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# LADIES YOGA

COMMERCE UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH

All ages.  
All abilities.  
All are welcome.

EVERY SECOND  
MONDAY

6:30-7:30 PM

Check CUMC website calendar  
to confirm meeting information.



January 2025 Christian Education News...

Mark you calendars:  
January 22<sup>nd</sup> Kids Klub +

## Sunday School

Sunday School for elementary aged children takes weekly during service. Children start the service with their parents, and are then dismissed upstairs after to sing songs of worship and learn through hands-on Sunday school lessons.

## Kids Klub+

Kids Klub + is an opportunity to share a community meal, and then send the kids upstairs for an hour of fun! This month we will have some "Frost Free Fun" complete with hundreds of indoor snowballs.

## Kids of the Kingdom Comedic Christmas

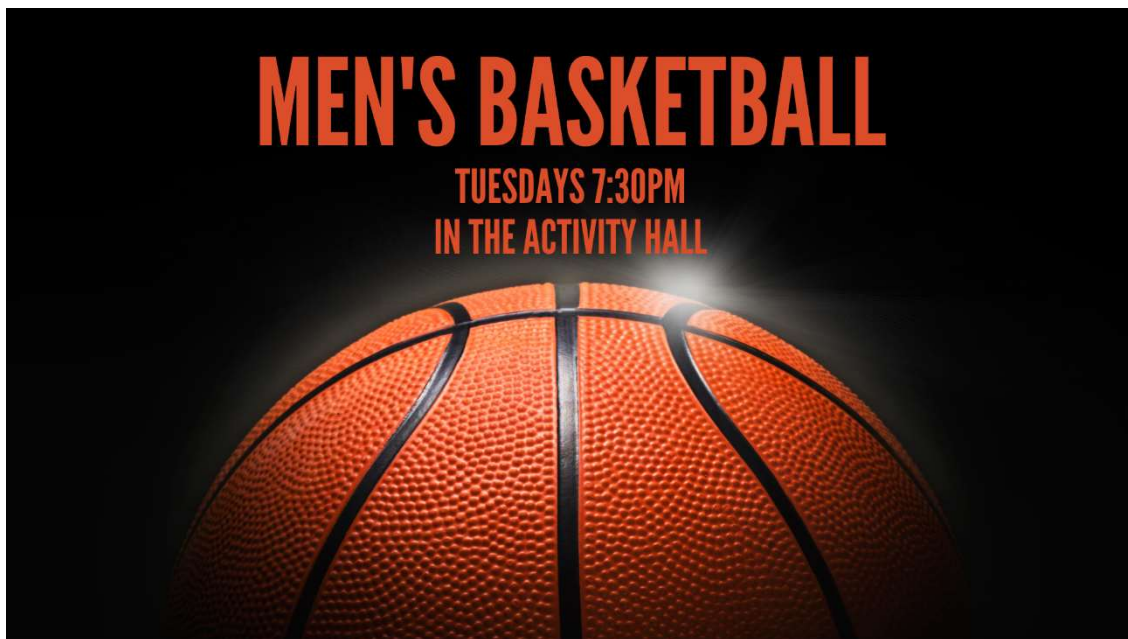
What an amazingly successful production! Dozens of adorable children sharing their love of Jesus through songs and skits. Many thanks to Emily and Kyle Gnagey, Soomi Chun, Kim Gnagey, Kristine Van Dussen, the AV team, parents, grandparents and siblings!

#### Kids On a Mission

As you may already know, on the Second Sunday of each month, our children do a "Kids On a Mission" project. This is an opportunity for children to do hands-on missions work for friends in our community. We need a few adult volunteers to assist the children with stuffing care packages, etc. and are hoping that you can assist! We have created a Sign-Up and would love to see you upstairs. [Commerce UMC: Kids On a Mission](#)

Kristine Van Dussen- Christian Education Director

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# THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING

JOIN US IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

## COFFEE HOUR

Please sign up in the  
Narthex to host a  
Sunday

**COFFEE HOUR** provides not only great food and drinks, but a wonderful time to fellowship with people after service. Thank you to those who have signed up in the past and have served in this capacity. If you are feeling led to host a coffee hour with a few of your friends or with your committee/organization, please sign up either in the Narthex or click the link below. We are specifically **looking for hosts for January 12th & 19th**. If you've never hosted before, we will provide you with everything you need to know and will be there to help!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0E4BACAE2BA57-46927626-commerce>

Thank you for hosting a coffee hour! Kati Brush and Dana Wenz

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**MISSION COMMITTEE  
MEETS 2ND SUNDAY AT  
11:15 AM IN THE  
CONFERENCE ROOM**

**MISSION COMMITTEE IS NEEDING SOMEONE TO LEAD THEM  
PLEASE CONSIDER THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK  
IF YOUR INTERESTED PLEASE SEE PASTOR ANDY**



**Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Philippians 4:5**

Your kindness in prayer, time, donations, and volunteer work was made known through Anchored Hope in the following ways in November 2024:

- 174 meals were served/2357 YTD
- 15 hygiene kits were distributed/405 YTD
- 10 evenings of outreach
- 69 individuals were served

### **DECEMBER PACKING EVENT**

A huge thank you to all that came and packed the many, many bags and kits. Seventeen people came and packed the following:

- Meals Packed: 40
- Snack Kits Packed: 30
- Christmas Bags Packed: 24
- Cookie Containers: 30
- Hygiene Kits Packed: 40
- PB&J made: 20
- 2 Baskets of Candy Bags

- AND a ton of meal bags with written verses

Thank you to everyone who came out and helped during our event! Because so many volunteered, we were able to get a huge amount done! Our next packing event will be in February.

### **ADVENT CANDLE**

We were honored to light the HOPE candle during the advent season. We had 15 CUMC members represent Anchored Hope during the lighting. Thank you for including us and we are grateful to have been able to be a part of the service in this capacity.

### **THANK YOU MISSION COMMITTEE**

A huge thank you to the Mission Committee for including us in their Giving Tree in November. We received so many gloves, hand warmers, blankets, and much more. With the cold upon us now, we go through warm items on a regular basis. Thank you to all who donated for helping supply us with these things to help prevent sickness, frostbite, and other health concerns.

### ***“WHAT ARE YOU IN NEED OF?”***

We are frequently asked by you what our needs are. Our wish list can be found below by clicking on our LinkTree link. Thank you for all your support and donations every month! When we help with the immediate needs of those we serve, things like food and clothing, many times the help is felt at a deeper level, and we are allowed by those we serve to help with their longer-term needs, like assistance going into recovery.

### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH**

January is human trafficking awareness month. Human trafficking awareness is crucial because it empowers individuals to recognize potential victims, report suspicious activity, and, ultimately, help prevent this serious crime. Knowing accurate and legitimate information is of the utmost importance. The following are valid resources to learn more about human trafficking:

- Michigan Abolitionist Project
- Polaris Project
  
- Share Hope International
- Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign

**Myth: Traffickers target victims they don't know.**

**Reality: *Many survivors have been trafficked by romantic partners, including spouses, and by family members, including parents.*** (Polaris Project)



## Your prayers make a difference!

Please consider adding the following prayer requests to your daily prayers:

- For the light of Christ to enter hearts this Christmas season
- For safety from the cold
- Willingness to enter recovery
- Healing from wounds and sores

**You, your prayers, and your contributions make all of the above possible!**  
**Thank you!**

**Connect with us! Social Media, Meal Sign-Up, Website, and much more!**

<https://linktr.ee/anchoredhopeoutreach>  
[anchoredhopeoutreach.org](https://anchoredhopeoutreach.org)

[info@](mailto:info@anchoredhopeoutreach.org)

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## Women's Book Group

If you enjoy books and conversation  
you are welcome to join us for lively  
discussions, encouragement,  
and friendship.

Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Questions? Call Diane Senk 248-770-0711





A green graphic featuring a pickleball paddle silhouette on the left and a pickleball silhouette below it. The text is centered in the right half of the paddle shape.

**PICKLEBALL**  
**IN THE ACTIVITY HALL**  
THURSDAYS AT 7:00PM  
SATURDAYS AT 10:00AM

CHECK CUMC WEBSITE CALENDAR TO  
CONFIRM GAME INFORMATION

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The Angel Tree collected over 100 tags this year. We received many toys, clothes, winter items; along with gift cards and money. Hospitality House, Baldwin and Anchored Hope would like to thank you for making someone's Christmas a little brighter!

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Please Pray for



Al Young's Brother-n-Law, Pat's brother Dick Otto, Millie Kargol and the Kumm family for the passing of Bruce Kargol, Glenna Callahan's Cousin Betty Gordon, daughters Diane and Wendy

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**Thank YOU for ALL YOU DO to  
Serve at Commerce UMC!**  
If you would like information about helping  
with a committee or mission of the church  
please contact Pastor Andy at the church office  
or by email: [commerceumc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:commerceumc@sbcglobal.net)

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#### JANUARY BIRTHDAY'S

- 2 Tim Contesti, Emma Fagan
- 3 Samson VanDussen
- 5 Ava Higuchi
- 6 Joe Wichowski
- 8 Ed Wenz
- 9 Denise Pistana, Courtney Long, Jeffrey Fagan, Noelle Lee
- 10 Kristine Van Dussen
- 11 Paul Elliott, Len Kumm, Nathaniel Inglis-Dubin, Emma Nelson
- 15 Ethan Schulz, Michelle Lyon, Frank Larrabee
- 16 Stephen Bollinger
- 17 Hannah Brassell, Becky Lund
- 20 Taylor Mroz, Rosa Bergner, Brock Nelson
- 21 Ellie Gnagey
- 25 Elizabeth Lyon, Hailey Lyon, Thomas Lyon
- 27 Pastor Andy Lee
- 30 Marsden MacCarreall
- 31 Mike Marcelli, Genika Landry

#### JANUARY ANNIVERSARY'S

- 4 John & Lynn Delaney

**11 Ernie & Jane Sampson**  
**27 Robert & Nancy Strohs**