



## Route 55 Newsletter December 2025



Orchard Friends,

The holidays are in full swing now with our annual **Route 55 Christmas Celebration** coming up soon! **Join us in the Commons on Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5pm.** We'll be serving up a traditional meal consisting of a variety of egg bakes, wholesome baked oatmeal with all the trimmings, sausages and, of course, Cherry-stuffed French Toast. Yum! We'll sing a few carols and enjoy a short concert performed by the Proud Image Chorus. There may also be an appearance of the big oaf, I mean elf, himself! Don't miss this fun evening!

You'll find details about other fun opportunities throughout the rest of this newsletter.

Before we move on, though, on behalf of the Women's Connection Dinner planning team, I just have to share that we are still basking in the warmth of a wildly successful event. God was truly with us as we made intentional efforts to connect with Him and to sisters seated at our tables and around the room. If you attended, thank you. If you decorated or hosted a table, thank you. If you helped serve the meal and clean up, thank you. We especially want to thank Laurie Watje, Janet Fischer, Jess Hansen and Craig Patterson for all they did to make the event happen, by providing wisdom, enthusiasm, leadership and a lot of hard work. Thank you.

We intend to offer the event again in early November of 2026. One thing we learned this year is that we need additional help. We could use a few more planners and several more event-day helpers. Will you participate? Please pray on this and respond with your commitment to join our team and/or to offer suggestions for how we can improve.

Finally, for all readers, our hope is that the Spirit will continue to lead you to next steps in your faith life. We invite you to join a small group or engage in a service opportunity as we prepare our hearts for Christmas.

Grace and peace,

*Kim Manning*



Our Monthly Lunch group helped Kathrine Krukow celebrate a very special birthday!



## RECENT EVENTS



The Commons was ablaze with candle light and abuzz with conversation and laughter as 150 women connected with old and new friends.



Some of the guys receive last-minute instruction before serving the meal. Thank you!



Jess Hansen delivers an insightful devotion.



Juliette Crouch, Maggie Verdugt and Jonah Crouch perform during the social and dinner hours.



OHC men serve up salads with flare.

## FEATURED EVENTS



### Route 55 Christmas Celebration

Tuesday, December 2, 5pm

OHC Commons

Enjoy our traditional breakfast menu, fellowship with Route 55 friends, and special entertainment provided by The Proud Image Chorus. A \$5 donation is encouraged but not required. Sign up in the Route 55 binder, email [kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org), or call 319-231-1619 to let us know you are coming. We wouldn't want to run out of Cherry-stuffed French Toast!



### Route 55 Monthly Lunch

Wednesday, December 10, 11:30am

Village Inn

6319 University Avenue

**DON'T FORGET THERE'S FREE FRUIT PIE ON WEDNESDAYS!**

We gather for lunch every month on the second Wednesday. All are welcome. Please reserve your place by signing up in the Route 55 binder, or email [kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org), or call 319-231-1619. This will allow us to report an accurate number so the restaurant can prepare.



### Second Sunday Senior Social

Sunday, December 14, between worship services

OHC Commons

Join us for coffee, conversation and pastries every 'Second Sunday'. In addition to providing important fellowship, we hope to create awareness of Route 55 and Connect & Care opportunities to members of the church who have not yet participated. **We will appreciate your help spreading the word by inviting friends.** No reservations are necessary, although we are seeking volunteers to bring fruit or pastries.



### Route 55 and Mom's Morning Out Caroling at NewAldaya!!

Wednesday, December 17, 10:30am

NewAldaya Lifescapes, 7511 University Ave.

Calling all singers! Join us as we partner with moms and children from Moms Morning Out to sing Christmas Carols for NewAldaya residents. We'll meet in the Main Street area (just inside the front entrance) at 10:30am and serenade residents throughout the building.



## LOOKING AHEAD



### Comedy Club at the Commons

**Saturday, January 24, 4pm**

OCH Commons

Everyone needs a chuckle in January, so join us for this annual laugh-a-thon. Our comedian is yet to be determined (it will be a video) so watch our weekly emails for additional details. We are open to ideas, so please share some if you have them! *Additional fun and frivolity are planned* so come and spend an hour and a half or two with us. Light snacks and soda will be provided. There is no cost to attend. Please RSVP by contacting Kim Manning at 319-231-1619 or [kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org). All are welcome as we focus on building community.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES and OPPORTUNITIES WEEKLY

### Wednesday Walks

**Weekly on Wednesdays, 1:30pm**

Pfeiffer Park

Get outside with friends and walk the trails. This friendly group makes an hour of exercise go by almost without notice! All abilities are welcome and no one is ever left behind. To learn more including weather-related announcements, contact Jean Gedlinske, [gedlinskejean@gmail.com](mailto:gedlinskejean@gmail.com), 319-486-1340.

### Quilting Ministry

**Weekly on Thursdays, 9am-11am**

Orchard Hill Church Room 111

Contact Kim Manning at [kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:kmanning@orchardhillchurch.org) or 319-231-1619.

### Zoom Social Hour

**Weekly on Thursdays, 11am-Noon**

Virtual

Contact Sarah Hess for a link at [shess@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:shess@orchardhillchurch.org), 319-596-6223.

## MONTHLY

### Women's Breakfast

**Friday, December 5, 6:30am**

OHC Commons

Breakfast is a space for women to connect with God, scripture, and one another no matter their season of life. A light breakfast will be served followed by a brief message and table discussion. A \$3 donation is encouraged, but not required. Text MORNING to 319-553-6690 to register or to receive monthly reminders.

*Kindly consider volunteering to help with the cook team. You'll have made a lasting impact – and – then you can be on your way to a productive Friday! Contact [hferienup@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:hferienup@orchardhillchurch.org).*

### Grundy County Women's Coffee Crew

**Wednesday, December 10, 9:am**

Grundy County Campus Lobby

All women are invited for coffee and conversation. Bring your own snack and drink and enjoy a casual time of belonging in community and friendship that generally lasts for 1 ½ hours. Come when you can and leave when you must.

## **Community Meal**

**Wednesday, December 10, 5:30pm to 6:15pm**

*OHC Commons*

Bring your family, friends and neighbors for a great meal. Free will donations will be accepted. If you are interested in helping, please contact Ben Fienup at [bfienup@orchardhillchurch.org](mailto:bfienup@orchardhillchurch.org).

## **Cedar Falls Men's Breakfast**

**Friday, December 12, 6:30am**

*OHC Commons*

Most of us lead busy lives and it's tough to find time for anything outside of work and family obligations. Men's Breakfast is the perfect opportunity to break away for good food and connection with other guys. A brief message will be provided followed by discussion at the tables aimed at getting to know one another better. A donation of \$3 is encouraged to cover the cost of food. Want monthly reminders? Text 319-553-6690.

## **Christmas in Walnut**

**Saturday, December 13, NOON**

*Boys and Girls Club, Waterloo*

Christmas in Walnut is partnering with Love INC and other partner churches to organize the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Store. There are many ways to get involved! See [ChristmasInWalnut.org](http://ChristmasInWalnut.org) to learn more!

## **Grundy County Mobile Food Pantry**

**Tuesday, December 16, 4:15pm**

*Grundy Center Community Center, 705 F Avenue, Grundy Center*

Volunteers from area churches help the Northeast Iowa Food Bank unload the truck, arrange food, assist with distribution, carry bags and boxes to vehicles and clean up. Additional details at [OrchardHillChurch.org](http://OrchardHillChurch.org).

## **Habitat for Humanity Build**

**Saturday, December 20, 8:30am-3:30pm**

*Waterloo*

OHC hosts a Habitat build every third Saturday. Volunteers work alongside a Habitat employee and need no previous experience. Additional information is at [OrchardHillChurch.org](http://OrchardHillChurch.org). Half-day shifts are also available.

## **Atrium Christmas Orchestra**

**Sunday, December 21, 10am between services**

*Atrium*

Don't miss this special intergenerational orchestra! What a fun way to enjoy some Christmas cheer! Simply show up and enjoy in the atrium between 10am and 10:30am. If you'd like to join the orchestra, see [OrchardHillChurch.org/events](http://OrchardHillChurch.org/events) for details.

## **Christmas Services**

### **Cedar Falls**

Tuesday, December 23, 7pm

Wednesday, December 24, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm

### **Grundy County**

Wednesday, December 24, 3pm, 5pm

### **Waverly**

Wednesday, December 24, 3pm, 5pm

See [OrchardHillChurch.org](http://OrchardHillChurch.org)/Christmas for additional details.

See [OrchardHillChurch.org](http://OrchardHillChurch.org) for additional news and events. You may also want to check out the [Community Groups](#) section as there are lots of fun offerings!