



Pastor's Page

The Stepping Stone

DECEMBER 2018

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke 6:38

Dear Church Family,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

This has been a wonderful season of blessings and thanksgiving. God has done so much in the life of the church that I can hardly contain myself. On November 19, we celebrated an evening of thanksgiving with the Karen and the Nepali congregations. There were over 75 in attendance at worship. The music was amazing and the Karen choir blessed us with two songs, one was in their native language. We broke bread together and celebrated Holy Communion. It was a beautiful evening to come together as the body of Christ.

We also received an offering for flood bucket supplies. The offering that came in was \$1000. We hit our goal and were able to present Mike Block, the mission and outreach coordinator at the Upper New York Annual Conference with this gift. This will enable Mike to purchase supplies as needed to fill flood buckets which are in high demand right now.

Praise God for helping us accomplish this goal. It is good to give!

The next time you come into the sanctuary it will look different. We have been given a gift of television monitors which will replace our 10' wide screen. The monitors began as a dream and were provided for by Clyde Wolford, a colleague of mine who loves the church and wants to see us live into our full potential as a congregation. Two 75-inch monitors will be mounted on either side of the chancel area and one 55-inch monitor will be mounted in the back of the church above the doors as a confidence monitor for the speaker, band, and choir. This entire project is being done as a gift to the church. Praise God!

Friends the Lord has been so good to this congregation we need to give thanks for what God has done and will continue to do as we remain faithful. It is my hope that this act of generosity will inspire you to be continually generous in your giving. I want to thank you for all your gifts of time, talents, and resources.

As we enter this season of advent, I would like to take a moment and invite you to worship on Christmas Eve at 6:30pm. This will be a wonderful evening filled with music and fellowship. We will celebrate Holy Communion and remember the reason for the season; Jesus.

We will receive an offering on Christmas Eve. The offering will go to the Karen, Nepali, and Sudanese churches to help them with their financial needs as they are learning how to be church in their new building. Remember it is good to give, and you can't out give God!

I hope that you and your family are blessed to blessing to someone else in need this Christmas Season. Go in grace and walk humbly with your God! God is good!

In Christ,

Rev. Daniel T Bradley

DRUSS KUSUSI -

A program that tutors our New World Ministries children

During November we had tutoring for three weeks due to the Thanksgiving holiday. As always, we start with snack and then a time of reflecting on what happened that was good during the week. We all have so many opportunities to think about the difficult things or the things we don't like and it seems important, especially for children, that they think about what has happened that was good. Sometimes this task is difficult. We then pray.

The children made red velvet cookies which they then frosted. Some of them found the cookies too sweet, especially with the frosting which is very different from what we are used to with kids. The second week we made chicken pot pie which almost everyone enjoyed. Cooking not only gives the children a chance to learn the skill, but also helps them to try new recipes and foods and learn more about what different foods are.

Every week all the children who do not bring homework or are not specifically working on math with one of our math tutors, starts with a writing prompt. Typically, they are about the holiday or season or something that is happening at the moment such as elections. Every child is able to do this at their own level and then we correct them for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This is something that is difficult for children whose parents first language is not English. We then work on reading comprehension. Many of the children have learned to read words but often don't remember or understand what they read. Finally, we work on math. What we do with the children varies depending on the tutors available and any specific needs the child has. We also have one mother who is working on her GED who one tutor usually works with.

Toward the end of our time we have lunch – a sandwich, pretzels and dip, and fruit. It's also time to try whatever the children have made that day. Some children who are really trying to understand a subject continue to work on their skills as they eat. For the rest it is a social time.

If you are interested in helping with the tutoring program please see Kathy LaDuka. No special skill is needed – just an interest in working with children. It is not necessary for you to be able to be there every week. Everyone takes time off. If you are unable to help with the tutoring gift certificates for food are also helpful. I primarily shop at Price Chopper. -Kathy LaDuka



During November we have been working on lessons about Different Kinds of Family - Naomi and Ruth, Hannah, Samuel, and Eli, The Widow and Her Sons and Esther and Mordecai. December's unit will be Celebrate Advent with Your Family. Lessons will include - Elizabeth and Zechariah; Mary; Mary and Elizabeth; Joseph, Mary, and Jesus; and Simeon and Anna.

Clay, Nepali, Karen & New World Ministry Sunday Schools

Classes continue for all groups – the children at Clay, the Karen, the Sudanese and the Nepalis. We all use the same curriculum which is a United Methodist curriculum – especially important for new refugee congregations so that the people have a better understanding of what United Methodists believe. There have been more children attending the Clay Sunday School more regularly. We now often have two or three children in Sunday School – although the younger ones often prefer to play than to do the lessons, they are being exposed to our faith as they play.

Children have the opportunity to enjoy worksheets on the specific lesson and a craft. Some groups have the chance to sing some favorite children's church songs. We also work with the refugee groups to make sure they learn the Lord's Prayer in English.

- Kathy LaDuka

upcoming EVENTS



DATES TO REMEMBER: DECEMBER

- 2nd - Minnie Jordan Birthday
- 4th - Conversation & Refreshments gathering in Fellowship Hall
- 9th - Christmas Funtastic Family Night
- 15th - Order your Poinsettias by today
- 17th - Bonnie Bergan Birthday
- 24th - Christmas Eve Worship Service @ 6:30
- 25th - Christmas Day!



Date: Sunday, December 9th

Time: 4-7p.m.

**Come and enjoy a Christmas story, crafts, and supper in preparation for Christmas day! Don't miss out, bring your family, children, grandchildren and friends! This will be so much fun for all!



When: Tuesday, Dec. 4th

Time: 1p.m.

Who: Retired persons & older

Where: Faith Journey UMC, 8396 Morgan Rd. In Fellowship Hall, back of church.

Call if you have questions at 315-652-9186

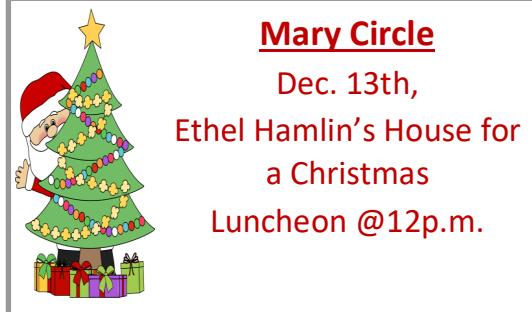
** Bring a friend or caretaker and enjoy some special time together.



Conversation & Refreshments

MARY CIRCLE

Christmas Eve
Worship Service
Dec. 24th @ 6:30



CHRISTMAS RULES

remember the reason for the season
NO PEAKING deck the halls
CHERISH TIME WITH FAMILY
honor family traditions
don't be naughty **BELIEVE**
GIVE SANTA COOKIES AND MILK
spread Christmas cheer
KISS UNDER THE MISTLETOE
Sing Christmas Carols
EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY





Thanksgiving weekend is just about over and Advent will start in one week. Christmas music has been on at least one station for two weeks now and Hallmark has been running continuous Christmas shows.

Children are asking for the latest toy or electronic device, adults are asking for bigger and better toys, prettier jewelry and whatever else they dream about and hope for. I think about when I was a daycare director and all the times parents would complain that their child was interested in that special toy they wanted for approximately one hour and gave it up for something they found to be more fun.

Today, my thoughts go to those who aren't looking at a Christmas filled with all the gifts, glamour and bling of the world. My experience at Catholic Charities reminds me of a family we were working with. They had been working hard on staying together as a family and we had selected them to receive Christmas presents from Catholic Charities. Families were allowed to request things they wanted or needed so that we could truly make it a special Christmas. The mother asked for some clothing for her children and some cookware for the kitchen since she had very little. We then asked the oldest child what she wanted. She said she wanted something pretty for her mom to wear. When asked what she wanted for herself – a special toy or whatever – she didn't want anything – she wanted food for a good meal and presents for her Mom.

I think of a young man who recently received a raise at NAVAC. He is single with health issues and ADHD, tries hard to make it on his own helping his mother out as much as possible and trying to have the normal life of a guy in his 20's. He had just been hired full time and when he came to my door he was almost in tears. He said, " You don't know how much being full time and getting a raise means to me. I have medication that I often can't afford and can't function without. Being full time means I have health insurance and the raise allows me to choose a plan that will keep my out of pocket expenses to a minimum. I am so grateful!" The tears in his eyes said it all. He didn't care about having the latest and greatest tablet or phone – he cared about being able to have the things that many of us take for granted – health insurance and enough money to be able to pay for our medical expenses. I felt so humbled – this guy went around to a lot of businesses to solicit gift certificates for NAVAC's dances, came in on his own time to help set up for them and volunteered to help in any way he could, knowing there would be no monetary reward. And a raise and health insurance were his biggest concerns so that he could take care of himself. The irony is he works in the health care industry.

My experience has taught me that the poorest children don't wish for the latest and greatest toys. Those children ask for clothes, food, or other basics to make their life a bit more comfortable. Adults who live in poverty hope for those things that will allow them to live a little more comfortably.

There are children who live in poverty and hope for a warm pair of socks and enough food; families who live in fear, who hope for a safe place to sleep in peace; people who live with abuse who dream of being loved and cared for. God gave us Jesus so that we could know that God is with us and loves us. Jesus teaches us to love those who are marginalized; to reach out to those who are in need; to comfort those who mourn or are poor in spirit. Emmanuel, God with us, is not all about the best presents and the glitz and glam of the holidays. Emmanuel is all about sharing God's peace, hope and love with those who need it most. This Christmas, I hope each of us will find a way to share God's love, grace and peace with someone who is truly in need knowing that God came to earth in the form of a small baby for them! O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

Have a blessed Christmas! - Kathy LaDuka



December is the twelfth and final month of the year in the [Julian](#) and [Gregorian Calendars](#) and is the seventh and last of seven months to have a length of 31 days. December got its name from the Latin word *decem* (meaning [ten](#)) because it was originally the tenth month of the year in the [Roman calendar](#), which began in March. The winter days following December were not included as part of any month.

December is...

- Aids Awareness Month
- Bingo's Birthday Month
- Buckwheat Month
- National Drunk & Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month
- National Impaired Driving Prevention Month
- National Pear Month
- National Tie Month
- National Write A Business Plan Month
- Operation Santa Paws (1-17)
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- Spiritual Literacy Month
- Take a New Year's Resolution to Stop Smoking
- Universal Human Rights Month
- Worldwide Food Service Safety Month
- Youngsters on The Air Month
- Cookie Cutter Week: 1-7
- National Hand Washing Awareness Week: 1-7
- Recipe Greetings For The Holidays Week: 1-7
- Computer Science Education Week: 1-7
- Birthday of Admiral Grace Murray Hopper
- International Coelenterate Biology Week: 2-6
- Older Driver Safety Awareness Week: 2-6
- Human Rights Week: 10-17
- Christmas Bird Count Week: 14-1/5
- Halcyon Days: 14-28 (Always 7 days before and 7 days after the Winter Solstice)
- Gluten-free Baking Week: 15-21
- Cookie Exchange Week: 16-20



Quotes

Remember This December, That love weighs more than gold!

~Josephine Dodge Daskam Bacon

In December ring Every day the chimes; Loud the gleemen sing In the streets their merry rhymes. Let us by the fire Ever higher Sing them till the night expire!

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

When dark December glooms the day, And takes our autumn joys away; When short and scant the sun-beam throws, Upon the weary waste of snows.

~Walter Scott

In cold December fragrant chaplets blow, And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow. ~Alexander Pope

December drops no weak, relenting tear, By our fond Summer sympathies ensnared, Nor from the perfect circle of the year Can even Winter's crystal gems be spared.

~Christopher Pearce Cranch

How did it get so late so soon? It's night before it's afternoon. December is here before it's June. My goodness how the time has flewn. How did it get so late so soon?

~Dr. Seuss

COMMUNITY GET INVOLVED

We here at Faith Journey UMC believe very strongly in the power of serving the community to grow the church. Serving is a way to treat people the way God wants to see them treated, it's the very essence of God's personality. That's why it's so powerful. One of the hardest parts of serving is figuring out what to do, that's why we wanted you to know what Faith Journey UMC has been doing for the year of 2018. If you want to help with any of the organizations listed below, please give the church office a call @ 315-652-9186 and we will set you up with the proper individuals to get you going in the right direction. Thank you to all who have volunteered, purchased multiple items, donated money, helped with organization, given your time to help with church services, prepared bags, helped with children's items, given multiple food items, prepared food, and the list goes on. Your time, efforts, donations do not go unrecognized. Faith Journey UMC Thanks you for everything. Have a Merry Christmas and may God bless you in all things this upcoming year of 2019!

AREAS OF INVOLVEMENT

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Community Garden⇒ Samaritan Center⇒ Rescue Mission⇒ Preparing meals for Brown Memorial⇒ Worship at Elderwood⇒ Food Pantries:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church◆ Brown Memorial United Methodist Church◆ Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church◆ North Syracuse Christian Church◆ Phoenix Area Food Pantry◆ Trinity Assembly of God | <ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Cradle & Beyond Sales/Collections⇒ New Worship Building⇒ UMCOR Flood Recovery Buckets & donations⇒ Thanksgiving Bags⇒ Southern Sudan Health Project⇒ Methodist Around the World - Andy's Camp⇒ POLM:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Druss Kususi◆ Sunday Schools◆ School Supplies |
|--|---|

Do you want to sing or play an instrument?

We are welcoming anyone interested in singing or playing an instrument to join the worship team during the 9:30 service. Practice is every Sunday morning at 9:00am in the sanctuary. Please contact Jake Melnyk at roadoutofhere@gmail.com for more information.



Recipes



I WANT YOUR RECIPES

Do you have a favorite recipe that you love to share with others, your favorite grandma's pie, aunt 's cake, or your own creation that is absolutely amazing? Then I would love to have that recipe. You can email me with information at fjoffice@fjumc.org or call me with information @315-652-9186. Don't miss out on sharing...and if we get enough recipes then we can make a FJUMC Recipe Book. Can't wait to see all the delicious items! Thank you!

Recipe by: Linda Stubbs - Zucchini Appetizers

INGREDIENTS

3 cups zucchini, thinly sliced & Unpeeled.
1 cup bisquick mix
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1/2 grated parmesan cheese
2 tbsp. snipped parsley
1/2 tsp. salt/pepper
1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
1/2 tsp. dried marjoram or oregano leaves
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 cup vegetable oil
4 eggs, slightly beaten

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350. Grease oblong pan 13x9x2. Mix all ingredients and spread in the pan. Bake until golden brown, about 25 minutes. Cut into pieces. It's much like a crustless quiche and can be served warm or at room temperature.



Do **YOU** want to be on the FJUMC email list? Please contact the church office at fjoffice@fjumc.org. If you know of someone else who like to be added, please have them contact Mechele Wright at church office 315-652-9186 or email.

Our "Stepping Stone" newsletter will be sent to everyone on the email list, rather than through the post office. If you would rather receive the newsletter in the mail, please contact church office.

December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building
2	3	4 1 PM - Conversation & Refreshments in Fellowship Hall Area	5	6 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building	7 7 PM - Gambler's Anonymous @ Clay Campus	8 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building.
9 4 PM - Christmas Family Funtastic Event	10	11 6 PM - Drum Circle @ Clay, bring food donation	12	13 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday 12 PM - Mary Circle @ Ethel Hamlin's House, Christmas	14 7 PM - Gambler's Anonymous @ Clay Campus	15 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building Poinsettia Information Due to Bon-
16	17	18	19	20 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building	21 7 PM - Gambler's Anonymous @ Clay Campus	22 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building
23/30	24/31 6:30 PM - Christmas Worship Service with Hot Cocoa & Cookies	25 Christmas - Office Closed	26	27 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building	28 7 PM - Gambler's Anonymous @ Clay Campus	29 9 AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building

Sunday Services Schedule

9:30 AM - Contemporary Worship @ Clay

11 AM - Traditional Worship @ Clay

12:30 PM - Traditional Worship @ Pitcher Hill Community Church at 605 Bailey Rd. in N Syracuse



Share Your Blessings

****We have received a Christmas Blessing!!!

Thank you to Clyde Wolford for gifting the church with monitors, wiring, and installation. What a blessing he is!

Thank you, Clyde!!





SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they
Shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

- Matthew 1:23



CHRISTMAS COOKING!



It's that time of year y'all!

Do you have holiday traditions? Do you love to cook or bake? I certainly do and when the holidays come around I am in the kitchen all the time, this is our family hub. We gather around, laugh, cook, bake, and play games. It's this time of year that I think about what God has truly done for us and His sacrifices. He was born for us to live!!! Merry Christmas and eat well.

Nutty Cream Cheese Tassies

- 12 C butter, softened
- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 1/2 C All purpose flour
- 1/3 C Packed brown sugar
- 1/3 C Honey
- 2 Tbsp melted butter
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 1/3 C chopped walnuts and pistachios

Directions:

1. In bowl, beat 1/2 C butter and cream cheese until blended. On low speed, beat in flour until dough forms. Cover, refrigerate 1 hour.
2. Heat oven to 350. Shape dough into 24 (1-inch) balls. Press in bottoms and up sides of ungreased mini muffin cups. Mix brown sugar, honey, melted butter, salt and egg with whisk. Stir in walnuts and pistachios. Spoon filling evenly into dough-lined cups, filling three-fourths full.
3. Bake 22 to 24 minutes or until filling is set and edges of cups are golden brown. Immediately run knife around edges of cookies to loosen. Cool 10 minutes; remove from pans to cooling racks.



LATEST NEWS!



POST-REFUGEE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS GIFTS

We will once again be giving Christmas gift bags to the Karen and Sudanese children for Christmas. We would like to make sure we give them a combination of things which will help them better understand the REAL meaning of Christmas. Also, this will keep them busy learning during the Christmas break. We would appreciate gift cards or money which would allow us to purchase these needed items.

Gift Cards - especially to the following locations:

- ⇒ Five Below
- ⇒ Dollar Tree
- ⇒ Ollies
- ⇒ Barnes and Noble

You may also make a monetary donation with cash or check. Checks should be made out to Faith Journey with Refugee Christmas Gifts on the memo line.

We appreciate all of your help in making the holidays more fun for these special children.

Gifts will be given to the children on Dec. 15th or 16th. All donations need to



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Minnie Jordan - Dec. 2nd

Bonnie Bergan - Dec. 17th



Order your
Christmas
Poinsettias 2018
today!

You can order poinsettias for our worship this season. They can be given in honor or in memory of someone of your choice. The Christmas Eve bulletins will include the names of those remembered or honored. Order forms on table in lobby and need to be ordered by Dec. 15th to Bonnie Bergan.





We have heard the need and FJUMC is answering the plea. We continue to answer the call to help thousands of people who have been affected by all of the floods this year. Thanks to you we collected \$1000 at our Thanksgiving Service for flood bucket supplies!!!

- ⇒ **WE ARE COLLECTING CASH DONATIONS FOR THE FLOOD RELIEF VICTIMS IN ALL LOCATIONS OF DISASTER.**
- ⇒ **CASH AND CHECKS ARE WELCOME. (Make out to Faith Journey with Flood Relief Fund in memo).**

All funds will go to Henry Clay Main Office to fill Flood Buckets with necessary items. Your donations enables UMCOR to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from the disaster of a flood.



Coming Full Circle...

Some years ago, volunteers heard the need for help in the flood-ravaged southern-tier. Off we went to a place called Westover UMC in Johnson City, NY. This church housed two congregations, the English and the Laotians. They did not worship together. We were fortunate to meet the Laotian Pastor, Sean Chanthasone, his family and his extended family. We worked there once a month for many months helping them to 'rebuild' the fellowship hall and Sunday School wing of the church. The organization and supplies were donated through UMCOR. A relationship blossomed and friendships started - this allowed FJUMC to grow stronger in our relationship with the post-refugee communities. Years later, annual traditions have developed. We enjoy worshiping together for Thanksgiving and in the summer at the Methodist Around The World celebration. More floods, devastating floods continue to occur. FJUMC is still helping UMCOR by having volunteers working at the UNYUMC's Mission Hub on a regular basis and by sharing monies collected on Sundays. What a blessing it was to collect \$1000. at our 2018 Thanksgiving worship along side of our friends from the Karen, Sudanese and Nepalese congregations. We have raised and delivered \$1000 in donations to UMCOR for continued flood recovery efforts. When we have faith to move out of our comfort zone, you never know where God will take us.

- Beth Jordan



Cradle & Beyond New Building

7778 Brewerton Road

Progress continues....

We had a donor come forth to pay to have the joint compound applied to the sheetrock, thanks to this person's generosity the sheetrock is ready to be primed and painted. Next up is insulating the ceiling and installing a 'drop-ceiling' and lighting. Your continued assistance and prayers as we work on this project is greatly appreciated.

National Grid and our furnace contractor are working to get the gas connected so that we will have heat in the building soon. All we need is a meter!

We continue to look for a licensed plumber so that the plumbing can be inspected.

The work-crew has moved into the worship-area to begin winterizing this area.

The Cradle and Beyond committee, trustees and the dedicated volunteers (work-crew) are working together to assure that the needs of the North Syracuse / Cicero communities are being met.



BROWN MEMORIAL FOOD DONATIONS

We have been notified by Thrivent Financial that St. Paul's Food Pantry will receive a check for \$500.00 due to your donation of over 1300 food items during our drive in October. On behalf of the families we serve I would like to thank all who contributed. - Judy Eyer

THANK YOU FROM BROWN MEMORIAL UMC

Hi Everyone!

THANK YOU for your faithfulness to the Brown Memorial UMC Sunday dinners!. We have been serving for almost 3 1/2 years and, by December's end will have served over 6000 meals in 2018!!

As the year closes I wanted to express my appreciation to all of you. We could not do what we do without the help of our partners. Because of the meal we are making new contacts, scheduling baptisms, seeing people choose to be Christ followers, and worship attendance is growing!

If you were wondering -- there are two end of the year dates open (the 30th of December and the 6th of January) if someone is looking for a Christmas season mission opportunity. Otherwise we are booking into February/March at this time.

As usual, please contact Rose Stoll at Erwin First UMC at 315-472-4082.

Again, Thank you!! - BJ Norrix, Lead Pastor



For the month of **DECEMBER** we will be holding an annual Hat & Mitten Tree for those less fortunate and making the winter a little warmer & welcoming. Items to donate: Hats, Mittens, Gloves or even socks. If you have any questions, please call the church office @ 315-652-9186. Thank you for all your

Empty Laundry Detergent Bottles

We are Collecting Empty laundry detergent bottles for St. Rose of Lima food pantry. They will refill the bottles with homemade detergent and give them out in their food pantry.



Seek

Serve

Share

We *seek* God's presence in our lives, to help others in their relationship with God, and to strive to see God's work through all people.

We *serve* God through missions, encourage everyone on their spiritual journey, and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

We create opportunities for all to share their gifts and talents, and demonstrate openness, acceptance, and hospitality.

God With Others

Office Location:

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Clay NY 13041

Contact Information:

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(315) 458-0890
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Website: www.fjumc.org

Faith Journey UMC Staff:

Pastor Rev. Daniel J. Bradley
Kathy LaDuka - Christian Education
Maryna Mazhukhova - Musician
Daniel Williams - Musician
Jake Melnyk - Musician
Mechele Wright - Administrative Assistant
Custodian – Sean Townsend