



Pastor's
Page



The Stepping Stone
December 2024

Faith Journey UMC has received so many 'thank you letters' from our monthly food pantry collections and our loyal support of various outreach missions and programs. I wanted to share their messages of thanks with you and show how ***our mission to Seek, Serve and Share God with others*** has been put into action through your endless effort to contribute and support these very important programs. During the holiday season, it's a great reminder of how small acts of generosity and kindness can have a significant impact on others, and demonstrates the power that each small gesture has to create a big difference in our community! - Sara Mertz, Office Manager



Dear Faith Journey UMC, on behalf of our entire Board of Directors, I wish to express our profound appreciation for your generous donation.

Your contribution is crucial to our mission of achieving food equity for children in need within our community. Our belief is that every child should have access to food, irrespective of their circumstances, and your donation helps us edge closer to this goal. Thanks to your kindness, we are providing meals to children throughout the summer, ensuring they have the sustenance they need to thrive.

Your donation is not just a gift of food; it's a gift of health, hope, and opportunity. It helps bridge the gap for many families struggling to provide three meals a day for their children when school is out. At Erin's Angels of CNY love and kindness guides us and your kindness embodies this core value and spurs us to pursue our efforts with increased vigor and enthusiasm.

As a cherished partner, we aim to keep you informed about our programs and initiatives. If you have not already, please subscribe to our monthly newsletter via our website, we also encourage you to visit our facilities to see the impactful work your support enables. To arrange a tour or meeting, please contact Sheila @erinsangels.com.

Together, we are creating a tangible impact in the lives of children facing hunger, one meal at a time. Should you have any inquires or seek more details about our organization and its endeavors, please reach out to us. We are grateful for your support, which extends love and leaves an enduring mark on these children's everyday lives.

With warm regards, Sheila Dion (Founder)

Life House



Dear Pastor Dan and Faith Journey UMC,

John and I want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering generosity towards Life House. Your support has been a cornerstone of our journey, and we are deeply thankful for your commitment. We wanted to thank you personally and share some exciting and impactful changes happening within our Life House program.

Over the past year, we have seen a significant increase in the need for our Restore program, which provides essential support to vulnerable women experiencing homelessness and the entrapment of sex trafficking. In response to this growing demand, we have made the strategic decision to restructure Life House. As part of this restructuring, we will be phasing out our residential program and integrating our services in collaboration with IMFK's Outreach program.

This strategic shift will enable us to extend our support to a much larger number of women experiencing homelessness and exploitation. Instead of being limited to just two residents, we will now be able to provide holistic care to many more women in need. Under this new structure, Life House will continue to offer a safe place for women to reset, restore and rebuild their lives. Our Life House Restore outreach program will address their physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the women we serve. By integrating holistic elements and life skills, we aim to foster long-term healing and empowerment.

We are incredibly grateful for your past support and hope that you will continue to stand with us as we embark on this new chapter. Your ongoing generosity will be crucial in helping us bring healing and hope to even more women in our community. Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to those who feel invisible, and for championing the mission of In My Father's Kitchen. We look forward to sharing more updates as we embark on this transformative journey.

Personal Note Included: *Faith Journey & Pastor Dan — "Thank you for believing in the mission and your heart for the Lord's leading in ministry. You have championed our mission and we are so appreciative for your prayers and support! We are meeting these women right in the middle of their mess, but God loves getting into those broken place to make something lasting and beautiful!"*

Warm regards, John & Leigh-Ann Tumino, Founders of IMFK & Life House

What's Happening

DECEMBER:

December 14th—FJUMC/C&B Holiday Party, 3-5:30 @ FJUMC
December 19th—Star Wars: The Musical, 7PM @ Pulaski Theater
December 20th— Star Wars: The Musical, 8PM @ Pulaski Theater
December 21st— Star Wars: The Musical, 8PM @ Pulaski Theater
December 21st—Monthly Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC
December 24th— Christmas Eve Worship Service, 6PM @ FJUMC
December 25th— Christmas Day (*office closed*)
December 31st— New Years' Eve

December 24th—January 1st: C&B will be closed from 12/24 to 1/1, reopening on Thursday, 1/2

January 1st—New Years Day (*office closed*)

January 16th— TBA: We have plans for a possible Chili Cook-off, more details to come!



JOIN US FOR

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

STARTS AT 6:00 PM

Bring family and friends to Faith Journey UMC on Tuesday, December 24th at 6:00 p.m. for our Christmas Eve Service

FAITH JOURNEY UMC
8396 MORGAN RD. CLAY NY 13041

Great Northern Artists Collaborative Presents



Star Wars: The Musical



at The Kallet Theater

Thursday, December 19, 2024 - 7:00 PM

(Doors open at 5:30 PM)

Friday, December 20, 2024 - 8:00 PM

(Doors open at 6:30 PM)

Saturday, December 21, 2024 - 8:00 PM

(Doors open at 6:30 PM)

Come enjoy dinner and drinks before the show! (*Must be 21+ with valid ID to order from the Bar*)

Get Tickets at [Ticketor.com/GNAC/tickets](https://www.ticketor.com/GNAC/tickets) *Ticket sales will end on Dec. 20th at 6PM

Great Northern Artists Collaborative
The Kallet Theater
4842 Jefferson St. Pulaski, NY 13142
Parking can be found behind the bank (the left)

Monthly Pancake Breakfast at Faith Journey UMC



NEXT DATE—December 21st at 9am in the upper Café area

Bring family and friends!
(There is no cost, but donations to continue ministry are welcome)

FJUMC—8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041



Cradle & Beyond 2.0

7778 Brewerton Road

Store hours:

Tuesday 4 pm - 7 pm
Wednesday 10 am - 4 pm
Thursday 10 am - 4 pm
Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

Contact Information:

Phone: (315) 980-8004
Email: Cradleandbeyond2@gmail.com
7778 Brewerton Rd. Syracuse, NY 13212



What a November we've had. Our black Friday and Saturday sales were unbelievable. We had 50% off everything and sales totaled \$720 on Friday and \$557 on Saturday. Sales for the month were \$3323 more than we made in November 2023!

Most importantly, we connected with so many new people.

We had two customers come into the store, not to shop but for prayers as they were struggling and verbalized that they knew they could come into Cradle & Beyond for prayers. God is amazing - he is using this amazing thrifty boutique as a vessel to reach out and make a difference in the lives of others. These two individuals shared not being 'church-goers' but love C&B and what we do!

At the end of the day on Friday, 10 people came into the store (after shopping together all day) and LOVED IT! They had never been in and asked so many questions about our store and mission and of course will be bringing their donations here from now on (haha).



As a reminder, our holiday party will be at FJUMC on Saturday 12/14, 3:00 - 5:30. Come hungry - we will be having ziti, meatballs, salads and rolls from Utica Pizza. Drinks too will be provided.



Attention to all bakers - we hope that you bring your favorite desserts to share with others. And, don't forget to be festive and wear your Ugly Sweater for our Ugly Sweater Contest.

Have a very Merry Christmas - looking forward to spending a wonderful 2025 together.



CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

As is our tradition, C&B will be closed 12/24, 12/25, 12/26, 12/28, 12/31, and 1/1. We will re-open with a beautifully cleaned and updated space on Thursday, 1/2/2025.



SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER - "THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS"

"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told."

- Luke 2:20



DECEMBER

With the holiday season upon us and the new year right around the corner, it's a great time to reflect on the year; our successes, failures, the joyful times or the unexpected heartbreaks and just feel blessed with what we have and where we are in life regardless of what has come our way. Our belief in God and ourselves will always be the guiding light towards the other side of healing and hope. It's been a tough year for all, I hope everyone feels the joy of the holiday season to uplift their spirits and remember what's important—family, friends, community and most of all—LOVE.



Advent Alternatives to More "Stuff"

Are your closet's full? Is there nothing you really need, but your family still insists on buying you a Christmas gift? Perhaps you would consider asking them to make a donation in your honor instead of shopping at a store. Here are some suggestions:

- * **Southern Sudan Health Project supporting 8 health care workers in South Sudan since 2008**
- * **Harvest Café in Cambodia supporting the work of Tina Nguyen**
- * **In My Father's Kitchen and Life House supporting homeless and trafficking victims**
- * **Samaritan Center providing free meals in Syracuse every day for anyone in need**
- * **Brown Memorial on South Geddes Street providing meals, clothing, and support for families in one of the most depressed areas in Syracuse**

Donations can be made through Faith Journey United Methodist Church, with a notation in the memo line for which project is being supported. Contributions can be dropped in the offering box on Sunday morn or mailed to Faith Journey UMC at 8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041

All donations will be forwarded to the proper agency at the end of Advent.

BIBLE TRIVIA

Ordained Before Birth By God

1. What strongman was ordained before birth to deliver Israel from the Philistines?
2. What child, who later ministered with the priest Eli, was ordained before birth to serve God?
3. What apostle was foreordained to minister to the Gentiles?
4. What kinsman of Christ was ordained to be his forerunner?
5. What Greek ruler's reign is usually considered to be predicted in the book of Daniel?
6. What prophet was ordained before birth to be God's messenger?
7. What king of Judah had his birth and reign foretold to King Jeroboam?
8. What psalm, usually assumed to have been written by David, talks about God knowing him before his birth?
9. Who foretold Jesus' birth and ministry to Mary?

Miraculous Voyages

1. What prophet was able to travel for 40 days on just the strength from a cake and water?
2. Elijah and Elisha walked across the Jordan river on dry ground after Elijah struck the waters with what?
3. Elijah outran a king's chariot, running all the way from Mount Carmel to Jezreel, almost 10 miles. Who was the king?
4. How was Elijah taken up into heaven?
5. Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry ground and also crossed a river on dry ground. Which river?
6. What carried Philip from Gaza or Azotus?
7. What two people walked on water in the midst of a storm?
8. Who took Jesus to a pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem?
9. Ezekiel was lifted up by a spirit, which held him between earth and heaven. What was the spirit holding onto?
10. Who was taken up into heaven in the sight of his followers?
11. What man knew someone who had been caught up to the third heaven?

⇒ *Answers are located on the bottom of Page 9*

DECEMBER SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN



The Birth of Jesus and Hope



Each of the scriptures below takes ten minutes or less to copy out. Commit to spending ten minutes each day listening to God's voice and Connect with the word!

Day 1 - Isaiah 9:6

Day 2 - Luke 2:11

Day 3 - Matthew 1:23

Day 4 - John 1:14

Day 5 - Luke 1:31-33

Day 6 - Micah 5:2

Day 7 - Luke 2:14

Day 8 - Matthew 2:11

Day 9 - Luke 2:29-32

Day 10 - Isaiah 7:14

Day 11 - Galatians 4:4-5

Day 12 - Hebrews 12:28-29

Day 13 - Matthew 2:2

Day 14 - Luke 1:35

Day 15 - Luke 2:7

Day 16 - 1 John 3:16

Day 17 - Luke 2:19

Day 18 - Matthew 1:21

Day 19 - Luke 1:76-77

Day 20 - Isaiah 11:1

Day 21 - Luke 2:10-11

Day 22 - Matthew 2:10

Day 23 - Luke 1:46-47

Day 24 - Isaiah 10:9-11

Day 25 - Luke 1:32-33

Day 26 - Matthew 2:9-10

Day 27 - Hebrews 1:1-2

Day 28 - Titus 2:11-14

Day 29 - Luke 1:78-79

Day 30 - Isaiah 60:1

Day 31 - Luke 2:38

What are Scripture Writing Plans?

Scripture Writing plans are something you can do every day and it will help you in your journey with God. Get your bible out and write out the scripture for that day. It is a proven fact that when you write something down it resonates more fully than just reading it.

So, write it out and speak those words into reality, this will also help with memorization of the word of God and your daily walk with Him.





Chocolate Caramel Thumbprint Cookies

"If you want a thick, chewy cookie that's loaded with chocolate flavor and smooth caramel, these caramel thumbprint cookies are perfect. With chopped pecans and a chocolate drizzle, these cookies will be the star of any party or potluck."

Recipe by: Elizabeth Marino

Author: Taste of Home, Suzanne S. Wiley

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 large egg, separated, room temperature
- 2 tablespoon 2% milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup baking cocoa
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans

Filling for Cookies

- 12 to 14 caramels
- 3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon shortening

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk, milk and vanilla.
2. In another bowl, whisk flour, cocoa and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Refrigerate, covered, for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
3. Preheat oven to 350. Shape dough into 1-in. balls. In a shallow bowl, beat egg white. Place pecans in a separate shallow bowl. Dip balls in egg white, then in pecans, patting to help pecans adhere.
4. Place dough 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Press a deep indentation in a center of each with the end of a wooden spoon handle. Bake 10-12 minutes or until set. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
5. In a large heavy saucepan, melt caramels with cream over low heat; stir until smooth. Fill each cookie with 1/2 teaspoon caramel mixture. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cookies; let stand until set. Store in airtight container for freshness.

Cookie Tips, Variations and Substitutions:

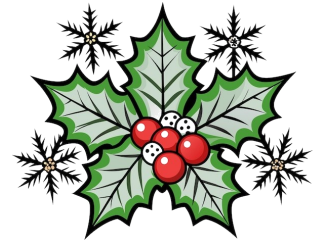
- * There are a few substitutes for the heavy whipping cream: melted butter, evaporated milk, full-fat coconut milk or half and half are good since this recipe doesn't require you to actually whip the whipping cream—you can also combine half-and-half and melted butter in a 7:1 ratio (seven parts half-and-half to one part melted butter).
- * Try different types of nuts instead of pecans. Walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts are all nice options.
- * If you want a change from chocolate and caramel, you can use white chocolate from the drizzle and maraschino cherries for the filling.
- * You should be able to make these cookies gluten-free by using gluten-free flour, though the texture may change a little depending on the mix you use.

Prep Time: 25 mins. + chilling

Bake Time: 10 mins. Each batch + cooling

Yields about 2-1/2 dozen cookies

DECEMBER 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	6	7 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building.</small>
8	9 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	10	11 <small>9:30 AM - Prayer & Holy communion in Pastor's Office</small>	12 <small>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Build- ing</small>	13 <small>PSC Group, 1:30-4</small>	14 <small>FJUMC / C&B Holiday Party, 3- 5:30pm @ FJUMC</small>
15	16 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	17	18 <small>9:30 AM - Prayer & Holy communion in Pastor's Office</small>	19 <small>Star Wars: The Musical, 7PM @ Pulaski Theater</small> <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	20 <small>Star Wars: The Musical, 8PM @ Pulaski Theater</small> <small>PSC Group, 1:30-4</small>	21 <small>Monthly Pan- cake Breakfast, 9am</small> <small>Star Wars: The Musical, 8PM @ Pulaski Theater</small>
22	23 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	24 <small>Christmas Eve Worship Service, 6:00 pm</small>	25 <small>Christmas Day</small> <small>9:30 AM - Prayer & Holy communion in Pastor's</small>	26 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	27 <small>PSC Group, 1:30-4</small>	28 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
29	30 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	31 <small>New Years Eve</small>				

Bible Trivia Answers: 1. Samson, 2. Samuel, 3. Paul, 4. John the Baptist, 5. Alexander the Great, 6. Jeremiah, 7. Josiah, 8. Psalm, 9. The angel Gabriel // 1. Elijah, 2. His mantle, 3. Ahab, 4. In a whirlwind, 5. The Jordan, 6. The Spirit of the Lord, 7. Jesus and Peter, 8. The devil, 9. A lock of Ezekiel's hair, 10. Jesus, 11. Paul



Share the warmth



For the month of **DECEMBER**, we will be collecting **Men's socks for *In My Father's Kitchen*, Children's socks and underwear for *Elementary School (TBA)* and Hat, Mittens and Scarves for our **Annual Hat & Mitten Tree.****

Thanks so much for your support!

Seek

.....
 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.

Serve

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

Share

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

God With Others

Office Location:

8396 Morgan Road
 Clay NY 13041

Contact Information:

Phone: (315) 652-9186 or
 (315) 458-0890

E-Mail: fjoffice@fjumc.org

Website: www.fjumc.org

Faith Journey UMC Staff:

- Pastor Rev. Daniel J. Bradley
- Maryna Mazhukhova - Musician
- Daniel Williams - Musician
- Jake Melnyk - Musician
- Sara Mertz - Office Manager
- Sean Townsend - Custodian