



## Pastor's Page



# The Stepping Stone February 2025



## A Joyous Treasurer's Report for 2024

“Joyous” and “Treasurer’s Report” are words seldom seen in the same sentence. But it is a summary of 2024 that I wanted to share with you.

This is the first time since I have been Treasurer that we ended the year with all the bills paid (except the full amount of Shared Ministries assessed by the conference) without borrowing from savings or investments. This can be attributed to:

- ⇒ Paying off the church mortgage at the beginning of 2023
- ⇒ Reducing staffing costs by rotating musicians instead of all three playing every week
- ⇒ Continued support by the congregation on a weekly basis as well as special offerings for heating system repairs and the Pastor’s health insurance.
- ⇒ Additional rental income by opening our church to the GNAC theater group and Parents of Special Children as meeting places during the week.
- ⇒ Additional support from C&B 2.0 when requested.

Regular offerings during the year are just over \$170,000 for operating expenses. This included a \$3,000 rebate from National Grid plus \$7,000 from the congregation toward improving the heating system, which I am sure you have all noticed is consistently warm and comfortable on Sundays as it is throughout the week for our rental groups. At the end of the heating season, I hope to be able to show a reduction in the National Grid gas bill to show increased efficiency.

Aside from operating costs, we received and distributed over \$11,000 in monetary missions to local causes, international causes like Southern Sudan Health Project, as well as conference missions like UMCOR. In addition to monetary donations are the monthly contributions to organizations such as Erin’s Angels, Diaper Bank, socks and mittens, and Thanksgiving bags. This only touches the surface of the benefits we can share with others when we all work together.

Our focus should always be on our mission to “seek, serve and share” with others, and this is made possible by having the support of a strong congregation base to build on!

Thank you,  
Linda Rauli, Treasurer



## Southern Sudan Health Project

Faith Journey became a supporter of Southern Sudan Health Project (SSHP) when Bradford Hunt was the shared pastor of Andrews Memorial in North Syracuse and Trinity here in Clay. It was an organization that Rev. Hunt helped to get started in response to the lack of health care in South Sudan which came to his attention when Andrews supported one of the “Lost Boys” who arrived in Syracuse from South Sudan. Rather than building a clinic that people would have to travel too (a difficult task, if not impossible, in South Sudan). SSHP trained 8 home health care workers that would travel in pairs to local villages to treat people in their homes. SSHP supplied the workers with medicines, a small salary and bicycles to bring basic health care to the region.

Over the years the people of South Sudan have seen droughts, epidemics, floods, wars, evacuation to refugee camps and most recently incoming refugees from Sudan due to fighting in that country. Health care remains at the most basic level, treating diseases such as malaria, diarrhea (which can be fatal in children) and pneumonia. Seven of the eight health care workers trained at the beginning are still dedicated workers—the original eighth worker died and was replaced by his wife. The dedication of these health care workers was noted by a Spanish mission that built them a secure building to store their medicine supplies in. An agency of the United Nations organization brought electricity to that building. The workers still travel by bicycle to their villages and submit monthly reports of how many villagers they have treated.

There are multiple churches in our area that join together in supporting SSHP. In the past, we have provided the annual monetary support of one of the health care workers, Rebecca, in the amount of \$1,500. We have done bottle returns – “Cans for Sudan” – and some monetary donations but have fallen short of our goal.

Below are two pictures from South Sudan...the workers with the medicines provided by SSHP and the 8 health care workers. Please watch for promotions throughout the year to help support this mission.



# What's Happening

## **FEBRUARY:**

**February 1st, 2nd & 3rd**—Beetlejuice Jr. Auditions @ GNAC  
**February 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th**—Free Theater Workshop @ GNAC  
**February 8th thru 15th**— ‘Thrift Your Heart Out’ Bucket Sale @ C&B 2.0  
**February 15th**—Monthly Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC Upper Café  
**February 18th**— SPPRC Meeting, 6:30pm @ FJUMC  
**February 24th**—Ministries Council Meeting, 7pm @ FJUMC  
**March 30th**—Samaritan Center Volunteer Day, 12:30-3pm

## **Free Theater Workshops at GNAC – Every Wednesday in February!**

*Ready to dive into the world of theater? Whether you're an aspiring actor, a seasoned performer, or just curious about the arts, GNAC is offering FREE theater workshops every Wednesday night throughout February! These workshops are perfect for ALL experience levels and ages—come learn from a team of professional instructors with decades of experience!*

### **Workshop Details:**

📅 **When:** Every Wednesday in February

🕒 **Time:** 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

📍 **Where:** GNAC Theater, 8396 Morgan Rd, Clay, NY 13041



### **Topics Include:**

- 👉 Stage Combat
- 👉 Character Development
- 👉 Auditioning Techniques
- 👉 Diction & Voice Projection
- 👉 Lighting Design
- 👉 Technical Design
- 👉 Choreography
- 👉 Improv
- 👉 Costuming
- 👉 Stylized Movement
- 👉 And much more!

### **Why Attend?**

- ✓ Learn from professional instructors with vast experience in all areas of theater.
- ✓ Workshops are free for all experience levels and ages!
- ✓ Great opportunity to learn new skills, sharpen your craft, and build confidence on stage.

*Mark your calendars and join us every Wednesday in February at GNAC Theater for these free and exciting workshops! Whether you're interested in stage combat, lighting design, or choreography, there's something for everyone. Don't miss out—come ready to learn, create, and perform!*

## **Monthly Pancake Breakfast at Faith Journey UMC**

**NEXT DATE**—February 15, 2025 at 9am in the upper Café area

### **FUTURE DATES:**

March 15, 2025 @ 9am



**ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!  
Bring family and friends with you!**

*Please note: There is no cost to attend this breakfast, but donations to continue ministry are very much welcome and appreciated*

Faith Journey UMC  
8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041

## Church Business Meeting



### **SPPRC Meeting**

Tuesday, February 18th at 6:30 PM

### **Ministries Council Meeting**

Monday, February 24th at 7:00 PM

Faith Journey UMC  
8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041



# Cradle & Beyond 2.0

## 7778 Brewerton Road

**Store hours:**

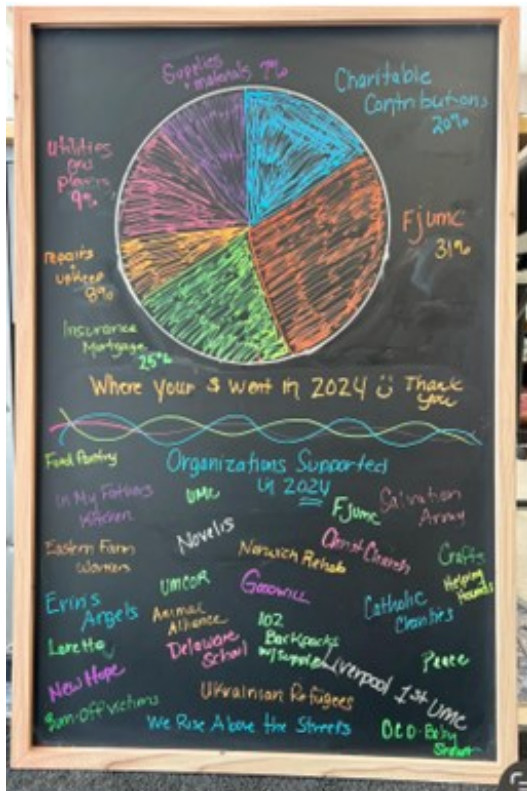
Tuesday 4 pm - 7 pm  
 Wednesday 10 am - 4 pm  
 Thursday 10 am - 4 pm  
 Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

**Contact Information:**

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

# HAPPY FEBRUARY

**Wow, winter has arrived in CNY after a dormant couple of years. We've had some rough weather days but have managed to staff C&B and be open, on time - every day - Thank YOU!**



Here is our yearly 'poster' - as you see, it's updated with a pie-chart of how our revenue is distributed. We've had more than a few customers ask about this (as we are non-profit) and thought this could be an appropriate, easy way to share it with them. We've tried to improve the way that we price our merchandise to reduce confusion to customers and volunteers, please share feedback as we're always looking for ways to improve our flow.

**We are excited to share that our February Bucket Sale "Thrift Your Heart Out" and will be held Saturday 2/8 - Saturday 2/15**

**"THRIFT YOUR HEART OUT"**

**BUCKET SALE**

**SATURDAY 2/8 - SATURDAY 2/15**

**CRADLE & BEYOND 2.0**

**7778 BREWERTON RD. SYRACUSE, NY 13212**

We've had such a great response from customers who donated diapers (adults / child), hygiene products and cash that will be given to the CNY Diaper Bank. In addition, two bags of new and gently used winter wear were delivered to Novelis this week - this will be shared with people of Oswego County.

We hope that our 'snowbirds' are enjoying the warm weather - some are away for months while others are away weeks, this leaves the schedule needing to have some extra help on certain days - there is not a need to cover every shift, but if you're able to cover a shift - it will be greatly appreciated.



Have you ever thought of volunteering at the Samaritan Center in Syracuse? They are in need of volunteers and I would like to get a team together for March 30th (12:30 - 3:00). Please let Beth know if you're interested. It is such a great organization and they make it so easy to volunteer - even if it's your first time. Stay warm and think sunny thoughts :)



**SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - FEBRUARY - "NO FEAR IN LOVE"**

*"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*

- 1 John 4:18



**FEBRUARY**

It's the month of love! Valentine's Day has always been my favorite holiday because it's not just about love between couples—it's about celebrating love in general and I wish the marketing would reflect that. I'm sure friends and neighbors would love a box of chocolate too! The love we have for one another is something that should be championed and celebrated everyday of the year, but Valentine's Day is a time to highlight those you love and shower them with gratitude and affection. I hope you all receive love this month and give it back in return!

**"Change for Change" Mission Return**



Some of you will remember a few years ago when we would pass around a container at the beginning of the church service collecting "Change for Change" for various mission projects. Similar to our product donations (such as the diaper bank in January), we would like to bring back the "Change for Change" for cash donations to a different mission each month.

We will place the "Change for Change" container near the offering basket and invite you to add your loose (or folding) change to the mission of the month.



**The mission for February will be the Samaritan Center**, which provided 117,567 meals to homeless or low-income people in Syracuse in 2024. Over 11,000 volunteers helped to prepare and serve meals every day in addition to providing personal care items, socks, hats, mittens and over 55,000 diapers.

The mission for March will be SSHP (Southern Sudan Health Project). If you know of a mission that you would like to see highlighted in the future, please see Linda Raulli.

# **BIBLE TRIVIA**

## *Hugs & Kisses*

1. What two hostile brothers met and kissed each other, weeping all the way?
2. What soldier murdered a man while kissing him?
3. What prophet talked about kissing calves?
4. Who kissed Barzillai, an old man who had provided supplies for the army?
5. Who kissed Absalom after his two years in exile?
6. Who poured oil on Saul's head and kissed him?
7. What aged father kissed one son, mistaking him for the other?
8. Who met Moses in the wilderness and kissed him?
9. When Jacob died, who wept over him and kissed him?
10. What bereaved woman kissed her daughters-in-law goodbye as she left to return to her own country?
11. What rebel was so magnetic in personality that the men of Israel couldn't help kissing him?
12. Who kissed David when he was fleeing from Saul?
13. Who met Moses by the mount of God and kissed him?
14. Who kissed his brothers in a tearful family reunion?
15. Who kissed and blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons?
16. Who kissed his nephew the first time they met?
17. Who returned home after making peace with his son-in-law and kissing his grandchildren good-bye?
18. What book begins, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine"?
19. What book says, "Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer"?
20. Who had a tearful farewell, with many kisses, at the city of Miletus?
21. Which epistle says, "Greet with a kiss of charity"?
22. According to Proverbs, whose kisses are deceitful?
23. Where was Jesus when the sinful woman kissed his feet and anointed him?
24. Which epistles end with Paul's admonition to greet fellow Christians with a "holy kiss"?
25. Where is a kiss described as lustful?
26. Who kissed Jesus as a supposed sign of friendship?
27. Who kissed the prodigal son?
28. Which book says, "Kiss the son, lest he be angry"?
29. Who kissed Rachel almost as soon as he met her?
30. What prophet protested men kissing the image of Baal?
31. To whom did Job speak about kissing the hand as an act of homage?

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



## **Connections Ministry Opportunity**

To be a friend or connection to one of our older members (80+) or someone who needs to know they are not forgotten by their church whether or not they are active in church activities or no longer able to be out and about.

Connections ministry's mission is to identify such persons, get contact information and then connect by phone calls, cards, visits, and any creative ideas you may have.

We have a list of persons who qualify which is constantly needing to be updated. You can get started with the type of person you would be interested in connecting with by a phone call to Beth Schnipp ((315-447-2443)

# FEBRUARY SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN



## Steadfast Love

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 - Psalm 103:1-3

Day 2 - Psalm 103:4-5

Day 3 - Psalm 103:6-7

Day 4 - Psalm 103:8-9

Day 5 - Psalm 103:10-12

Day 6 - Psalm 103:13-14

Day 7 - Psalm 103:15-18

Day 8 - Exodus 15:11-13

Day 9 - Exodus 34:6-8

Day 10 - Psalm 86:1-3

Day 11 - Psalm 86:4-7

Day 12 - Psalm 86:11-13

Day 13 - Psalm 86:15-17

Day 14 - Psalm 89:1-3

Day 15 - Psalm 143:5-8

Day 16 - Ephesians 2:4-7

Day 17 - Nehemiah 1:4-6

Day 18 - Nehemiah 9:12-14

Day 19 - Nehemiah 9:15-17

Day 20 - Nehemiah 9:18-19

Day 21 - Nehemiah 9:20-21

Day 22 - Romans 8:35-39

Day 23 - Jeremiah 31:2-3

Day 24 - Deuteronomy 6:24-25

Day 25 - Ephesians 1:3-6

Day 26 - John 13:34-35

Day 27 - John 14:23-24

Day 28 - John 15:9-10

Day 29 - John 15:12-14

### 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 is 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.





## S'mores Campfire Cookies

*"Is there anything more nostalgic than a s'more? They're a messy, sticky and delicious crowd pleaser! S'mores cookies combine classic chewy chocolate chip cookies with ooey-goey campfire treat flavor, for the most ridiculously fun cookie that can be made for any occasion!"*

*Recipe by: Tessa Arias from Handle the Heat website blog*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (8 full crackers) graham cracker crumbs
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 sticks, unsalted butter, *at cool room temperature*
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs, *at cool room temperature*
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup miniature chocolate chips
- 1 1/2 cups mini marshmallows
- 2-3 milk chocolate candy bars, *broken into pieces*

**Prep Time: 15 mins.**

**Cook Time: 10 mins.**

**Total Time: 25 mins.**

**Yields: 40 medium-sized cookies**

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, graham cracker crumbs, baking soda, salt and cinnamon.
3. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment to beat the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar on a medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the vanilla, then slowly beat in the flour mixture. Stir in the chocolate chips with a rubber spatula.
5. Use a medium spring-loaded cookie scoop to drop 1 1/2-tablespoon sized balls onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing about 1 1/2 inches apart.
6. Bake for 6 to 7 minutes, or until they have spread and are just beginning to set at the edges. Remove from the oven.
7. Push 2 to 3 marshmallows and pieces of chocolate bar into each cookie. Return to the oven and bake an additional 3 to 4 minutes or until golden brown at the edges. Cool for about 5 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Cookies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

#### Tessa's Tips & Tricks:

- \* **Baking Sheets:** a light colored aluminum half-sheet pan is my favorite for baking cookies. Avoid dark, non-stick pans as they brown too much and may burn the bottom of your cookies before they have a chance to spread and bake evenly.
- \* **Avoid Dry Cookies:** Be sure to measure your flour correctly by weighting with a digital scale or by using the spoon and level method. If you don't measure correctly, you could end up with dry and crumbly dough and hard cookies that don't spread and lack flavor. Don't reduce the sugar—it does so much more in baking than beyond sweetening.
- \* **Mixers:** If you don't have an electric mixer, a hand mixer will work just fine for these s'mores cookies
- \* **Chocolate:** I prefer to use semisweet miniature chocolate chips inside the cookie dough so the toppings really take the center stage, this also helps to balance the sweetness of the milk chocolate chunks.
- \* **Double Batch:** Simply double all the ingredients to double this smores cookie recipe, you'll yield about 80 medium-sized cookies.

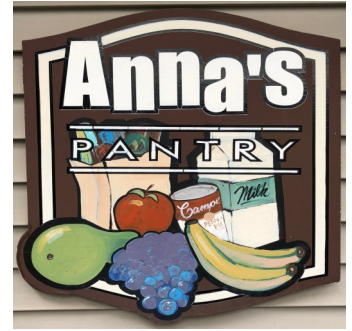


# FEBRUARY 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	4	5 <i>GNAC Workshop, 5:30-8pm</i>	6 <small>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	7 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	8 <i>Bucket Sale @ C&amp;B, 10-2pm</i>  <small>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
9	10 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	11 <i>Bucket Sale @ C&amp;B, 4-7pm</i>	12 <i>Bucket Sale @ C&amp;B, 10-4pm</i>  <i>GNAC Workshop, 5:30-8pm</i>	13 <i>Bucket Sale @ C&amp;B, 10-4pm</i>  <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	14 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	15 <i>Bucket Sale @ C&amp;B, 10-2pm</i>  <i>Monthly Pan- cake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC</i>
16	17 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	18 <i>SPPRC Meeting, 6:30 pm @ FJUMC</i>	19 <i>GNAC Workshop, 5:30-8pm</i>	20  <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	21 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	22  <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
23	24 <i>Ministries Council, 7 pm @ FJUMC</i>  <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	25	26 <i>GNAC Workshop, 5:30-8pm</i>	27  <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	28 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	  <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building.</small>

**Bible Trivia Answers:** 1. Jacob and Esau, 2. Joab, 3. Hosea (who was referring to calf idols), 4. David, 5. David, 6. Samuel, 7. Isaac (who kissed Jacob instead of Esau), 8. Jethro, his father-in-law, 9. Joseph, 10. Naomi, 11. Absalom, 12. Jonathan, 13. Aaron, 14. Joseph, 15. Jacob, 16. Laban (Jacob's uncle and future father-in-law), 17. Laban, 18. Song of Solomon, 19. Proverbs, 20. Paul, 21. 1 Peter, 22. An enemy's, 23. The home of Simon the Pharisee, 24. Romans 16:16 - 1 Corinthians 16:20 - 2 Corinthians 13:12 - and 1 Thessalonians 5:26, 25. Proverbs, 26. Judas, 27. His father, 28. Psalms, 29. Jacob, 30. Elijah, 31. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.



In February, FJUMC will be collecting boxed pasta, tomato sauce and rice/pasta sides for Anna's Food Pantry at Sacred Heart Church in Cicero, NY.

*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](mailto:fjoffice@fjumc.org)

**Website:** [www.fjumc.org](http://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