



Pastor's
Page



The Stepping Stone
July 2025



May the mountains bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor.

May he endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

When I stop and consider the faithfulness of God it reminds me that I am not alone in this world. It can feel like that at times, however, the presence of the Lord in the morning sunlight, the beauty that is all around us bears witness to a God who is still painting a picture that is bright and beautiful.

Yet the paradox we live in is that humanity is hell bent on destroying one another for power, greed, and the enslavement of those who are the most in need of the grace of God. Throughout the work of the United Methodist Church and other denominations. Much has been done to address the issues of hunger, poverty, and displacement of people due to wars.

This summer I had to stop watching the news after witnessing the attempted assassination of a presidential candidate. I couldn't take the hate and the idea that we have divulged into political and domestic terror.

Then June 14th came, and I had to turn on the news to follow what had happened with the assassinations of Minnesota lawmakers and their spouses.

Below is a letter from Bishop Lanette Plambeck, Resident Bishop Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church. It brought me peace during this crisis. I pray that you will hear her words of grace for this moment.

Bishop's Pastoral Letter: A Call to Mourn, Pray, and Live with Love

June 14, 2025

Beloved in Christ,

This is a moment of unspeakable sorrow and sacred reckoning. Today, we mourn the deaths of Minnesota Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, taken from this world by targeted violence in their home. We hold vigil for Minnesota Senator John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, who remain in critical condition, wounded in the same cruel pattern.

We cry out with the prophets, with the psalmists, with all who have ever stood at the edge of injustice and asked: "How long, O Lord?" This was political violence. This was an assassination. This was terror clothed in false authority. This was evil that struck at the heart of public service and family love. And we do not look away. We lament: We lament, not as those who are powerless, but as those who know the power of naming what is broken. We lament the loss of two lives created in the image of God. We lament for children who will wake to absence. We lament the slow erosion of public trust, where leaders now lead at the risk of their lives.

And we confess: We confess the ways we have grown accustomed to violence. We confess the silence we've kept when political rhetoric turned to poison. We confess the times we have chosen safety over solidarity, and comfort over courage. We confess that, even in the Church, we have sometimes spoken more about loyalty to social and political ideologies than the life, teaching, and witness of Jesus, our Christ. We've leaned into worldly powers and authorities that distort Jesus, who alone is King of kings and Lord of lords.

There is fear among us—real and reasonable fear. Fear for those who lead and serve in public life. Fear for clergy, laity, and community leaders who stand visibly and speak up for justice. As your Bishop, I do not deny this fear. I feel it with you. And I also know this: fear, while human, must not have the final word. Even in the ache and the fear, we remember who we are: We are people of the gospel. We are people who still choose love. We are people who still proclaim truth. We are people who follow the One who says to every storm: "Peace be still."


We are people who live into what Jesus has taught us: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself." To love God is to resist every force that tells us to hate our neighbor. To love God is to resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. To follow Jesus is to stand, even now, in the valley of death and say: "This is not the way God intends it to be."

So, I call on every United Methodist congregation, every clergy leader, every follower of Christ in this episcopal area: Mourn what has been lost—honestly and fully. Name what is broken—clearly and bravely. And live what we profess—boldly and tenderly.

Let your pulpits and ministries speak of sorrow and of truth. Let your prayers rise from a place deeper than despair. Let your witness be a living sermon of peace, justice, and unrelenting grace. This moment aches with grief and fear; but it is not beyond redemption. For even now, the tomb is empty. Even now, love is stronger than hate. Even now, the Spirit is moving—through tears, through courage, through the gospel that still calls us to love God, and love our neighbor, with everything we are.

With you in the ache. With you in the gospel.

In Christ's unshakable love,



Bishop Lanette Plambeck
Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church

No matter how bad the outlook is in this world, God is working through human hands to set things right. The above Psalm reminds me that justice is God's business not ours to carry out because we feel the need to get vengeance or make a statement.

Hate begets hate and the only way to defeat hate is with love. That my friends can't take place until we are willing to surrender to the Love of God through Jesus his Son. Only then and then will we be able to stop the madness of this world.

There are times when I wonder what this world will look like for my daughter as she goes off to college, gets married, and has children of her own. What will it be like for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren? What will it look like for yours?

Every chance we get, we must face the fact that we are called to stand up for what is right. Our baptismal vows are deeply connected to the idea that faith requires action. The following are the questions of examinations that were asked when you had your children baptized or you were baptized or confirmed as an adult.

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin? Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves? Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?

The United Methodist Church (UMC) prioritizes the expression of these baptismal vows by actively pursuing "Peace with Justice" as a fundamental principle, advocating for both the absence of violence and the presence of fairness, equality, and justice.

"As disciples of Christ, we are called to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as reconcilers of conflict. We must insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to work together to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them."— United Methodist Social Principles, ¶165.C

This vision is frequently articulated through actions and advocacy in support of social justice, human rights, and a world free from conflict. You can make a difference in this world. June 15th was Peace with Justice Sunday, and it is one of our Sundays in which we receive a special offering for this work. I am asking with grace that you write a check specifically for this work that is taking place in the world through the United Methodist Church. Please mark your check with "Peace with Justice 2025."

I pray for a world in which we can be at peace with one another as we serve God and bring peace and an unending hope for the kingdom to come.

In grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Daniel J. Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Daniel J. Bradley

What's Happening

JULY:

- July 4th—Independence Day (*office closed*)
- July 9th—Christmas in July, 12pm, Customer/Volunteer Event @ C&B
- July 12th—Chicken BBQ Drive-Thru, 11am @ FJUMC
- July 12th—Howard Snow Funeral Service, 2pm @ FJUMC
- July 13th—Meal Service at Brown Memorial UMC
- July 15th—SPPRC Meeting, 6:30 pm @ FJUMC
- July 16th—Recycle/Reuse, 12pm, Customer/Volunteer Event @ C&B
- July 18th—Phantasmagoria's Theater Show, 7:30pm @ FJUMC
- July 19th—Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC
- July 19th—Phantasmagoria's Theater Show, 7:30pm @ FJUMC
- July 23rd—Book Marks, 12pm, Customer/Volunteer Event @ C&B
- July 30th—Back-to-School, 12pm, Customer/Volunteer Event @ C&B

CHICKEN BBQ DRIVE-THRU



Saturday, July 12, 2025
11:00 a.m. until sold out!



- \$8.00**—1/2 BBQ Chicken and roll with butter
- \$12.00**—1/2 BBQ Chicken, salt potatoes, baked beans and roll with butter

PANCAKE BREAKFAST



Saturday, July 19, 2025
9:00 a.m. in the upper Café area

ALL ARE WELCOME!

There is no cost to attend, but donations are appreciated!

Faith Journey United Methodist Church
8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041

"Change for Change" Mission

Change for Change for the month of JUNE brought in \$70 towards our Shared Ministries for the Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church.

For July, we will be collecting for Brown Memorial UMC to supplement their food pantry to ensure kids receive summer lunches.



SERVING MEALS

We also have plans to help with the Dinner at Brown Memorial UMC on **Sunday, July 13th at 2:00 PM until 4:00 PM**

(228 Davis Street, Syracuse, NY 13204) Please let Linda Raulli

know if you are available to help!

Thank you for your continuous support!
- Linda Raulli



BASEBALL NIGHT



WORCESTER RED SOX **VS** **SYRACUSE METS**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

GATE OPENS: 5:30 PM
GAME STARTS: 6:35 PM

Syracuse Mets will be hosting an Irish Night on 9/12. The game will feature Irish-themed promotions, concession food specials, and post-game fireworks display.

TICKETS: \$50 per person, includes food & drink
We have reserved first-base, patio-side seating

**PLEASE MAKE CHECKS OUT TO FAITH JOURNEY UMC OR LABEL CASH ENVELOPE WITH '9/12 BASEBALL GAME' AND YOUR NAME*

NBT BANK STADIUM
1 TEX SIMONE DRIVE, SYRACUSE, NY 13208



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

Big Sales • Community Fun • Exciting News

It's July, and we have so much to celebrate! Starting **July 8th**, we're bringing back our **Christmas in July Sale**—holiday items will be out on display and specially marked all month long. It's a great time to stock up and enjoy the festive spirit early!



This week only, we're running our **Pick-a-Star Sale!** Around the store, you'll find stars with hidden discounts on the back. You might score:

- **A \$5 Bucket Sale (fill it with as much as you want!)**
 - **50% off your entire purchase**
- **BOGO – Buy One, Get One Free on everything!**

And if you're not thrilled with your first star, feel free to trade it out for a different one. We're aiming to thin out merchandise, so dig in, explore, and save!



Throughout July, we're also showing extra love during our **Customer and Volunteer Appreciation Month**

Join us every **Wednesday from 12–1 PM** for a **free lunch** (hot dogs, chips, and water) and fun **crafts**. It's our way of saying thank you for being such a vital part of what we do.



LET'S GET
Crafty



CRAFT DATES & THEMES:

- 7/3: Patriotic
- 7/9: Christmas in July
- 7/16: Recycle/Reuse
- 7/23: Book Marks
- 7/30: Back-to-School



We're also thrilled to share that we've **received the architectural plans for our new storage addition**—which means we're one big step closer to breaking ground! Thank you for being part of this exciting journey with us.



Thanks for being part of our amazing community—here's to a joyful July!



SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - JULY - "GIVING FROM THE HEART"

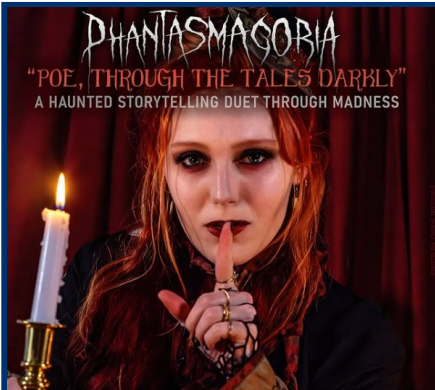
"Jesus said, "All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." - Luke 21:4



JULY



HAPPY FOURTH! I had a wonderful time with my family who visited from North Carolina in June. It was fun to spend time with them and I'll see them again come Christmas. I hope you all have a patriotic Independence Day celebration full of yummy food, beautiful weather and great memories with family and friends. I'll be at a BBQ in the pool with my dog—the best way to celebrate anything is with my furry best friend!



Phantasmagoria's Presents:

"Poe, Through The Tales Darkly"

Journey with the members of the critically acclaimed Victorian Horror Troupe PHANTASMAGORIA, as they bring to life the tales and poetry of Edgar Allan Poe and present a haunted story-telling duet through madness; Immerse yourself into haunting music, otherworldly projections and creepy tales.

Friday, July 18, 2025 (7:30 pm — 9:30 pm)

Saturday, July 19, 2025 (7:30 pm — 9:30 pm)

[Ticketor.com/GNAC](https://www.ticketor.com/GNAC)

General Admission \$20 | Senior \$15 | Student \$10

8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041



**Disclaimer: Phantasmagoria can be viewed by any age, but is most appropriate for age 8 and up due to elements of horror. Parents and guardians are advised to be aware of their own children's ability to watch "scary things."*

JULY SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN

Freedom in Christ

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 - 1 Corinthians 6:12
Day 2 - 1 Corinthians 7:22
Day 3 - 2 Corinthians 3:17
Day 4 - 2 Corinthians 5:17
Day 5 - 2 Corinthians 5:21
Day 6 - John 8:31-32
Day 7 - John 8:36
Day 8 - Galatians 2:20
Day 9 - Galatians 3:22
Day 10 - Galatians 5:1
Day 11 - Galatians 5:13-14
Day 12 - Romans 6:15
Day 13 - Romans 6:22
Day 14 - Romans 8:1-4
Day 15 - Romans 8:21
Day 16 - Romans 8:28

Day 17 - Psalm 34:19
Day 18 - Psalm 68:6
Day 19 - Psalm 79:9
Day 20 - Psalm 91:14-15
Day 21 - Psalm 119:45
Day 22 - 1 Peter 2:16
Day 23 - 2 Peter 2:18-22
Day 24 - Isaiah 61:1
Day 25 - Proverbs 1:33
Day 26 - Ephesians 2:8
Day 27 - Ephesians 3:12
Day 28 - Luke 4:18
Day 29 - 2 Timothy 1:7
Day 30 - Colossians 1:13-14
Day 31 - James 1:25

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.





RecipeCorner



Cowboy Pasta Salad

"Summer is the time for potlucks and picnics, so there's lots of seasonal sides to choose from. This cowboy pasta salad is creamy, tangy, smoky, boasts layers of textures, and flavors of Tex-Mex glory, and of course, bacon! Serve it alongside some cowboy favorites like Nashville hot chicken, oven-fried Chicken, Slow cooker barbecue ribs, or slow cooker beef brisket!"

Recipe by: Jennifer (carlsbadcravings.com/cowboy-pasta-salad/)

Pasta Salad

- 1 pound mini farfalle or other small pasta such as rigatoni or shells
- 1 pound lean ground beef or turkey see note
- 1 4 oz. can mild diced green chiles
- 1 tsp EACH chili powder, ground cumin
- 3/4 tsp EACH garlic powder, onion powder, salt (omit salt if using ground turkey and bouillon)
- 4-6 tablespoons diced canned/pickled jalapeno peppers (from 4 oz. can)
- 1 green bell pepper chopped
- 1 15 oz. can black beans rinsed and drained
- corn from 1 ear sweet corn
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes halved
- 1 cup cubed sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/4 small red onion chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/2 pound thick center cut bacon cooked and chopped

Dressing

- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup sour cream may sub plain Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup salsa medium if you like a kick
- 1 1/2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar, plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp EACH smoked paprika, salt, pepper
- Hot sauce/Tabasco to taste

1. Whisk together all of the Dressing ingredients in a medium bowl. Add plenty of Tabasco to taste. Set aside.
2. Cook pasta just until al dente according to package directions. Rinse with cold water and drain. Add to a large serving bowl and toss with half of the dressing.
3. Brown meat in a large skillet over medium heat. Drain off excess grease. Stir in green chiles and all spices. Set aside to cool while you chop your veggies.
4. Add beef and all remaining salad ingredients to pasta except bacon.
5. If serving immediately, add bacon and stir in desired amount of dressing. If not serving immediately, hold bacon and dressing and add when ready to serve. Add hot sauce for spicier, apple cider vinegar for tangier, brown sugar for less tangy if desired.
6. Cowboy Pasta Salad can be served slightly chilled, at room temperature, or heated through. Leftovers are equally delicious heated in the microwave.

HELPFUL TIPS TO MAKE PASTA SALAD:

- **Turkey Substitute.** You can substitute the lean ground beef with turkey in this Cowboy Pasta Salad. If you do this, I like to brown my turkey with a little olive oil and 2 teaspoons beef bouillon. If you add beef bouillon, omit the salt called for in the recipe.
- **Pasta Substitute.** I like to use mini farfalle in this Cowboy Pasta Salad recipe but any medium or small pasta will work great. Rigatoni as well as macaroni would work great.
- **Customize Veggies.** Feel free to add/substitute any other veggies your heart desires like avocado!
- **Canned Jalapenos.** I highly recommend canned jalapenos as opposed to fresh because they are pickled which adds a fabulous tang that compliments the richness of the dressing.
- **Customize Dressing.** You can also choose to make your dressing tangier by additional apple cider vinegar or sweeter by the addition of brown sugar. Make it spicier by adding hot sauce to taste, keeping in mind the salad will also have chopped canned jalapeno peppers.

**Prep Time: 15 mins. | Cook Time: 10 mins.
Total Time: 25 mins. | Yield: 10-12 servings**



JULY 2025



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small> | 4 Independence Day (office closed) | 5 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building.</small> |
| 6 | 7 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i> | 8 | 9 Customer/ Volunteer Arts & Crafts, 12pm— Christmas in July | 10 <small>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Building</small> | 11 PSC Group, 1:30-4 | 12 CHICKEN BBQ DRIVE-THRU, 11am-sold out @ FJUMC Howard Snow Funeral, 2pm <small>9AM - 12 PM - Workday</small> |
| 13 Meal Service @ Brown Memorial UMC, 2pm | 14 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i> | 15 SPPRC Meeting, 6:30pm @ FJUMC | 16 Customer/ Volunteer Arts & Crafts, 12pm— Recycle/Reuse | 17 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small> | 18 Phantasmagoria's Poe Darkly Show, 7:30pm @ FJUMC | 19 Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC Phantasmagoria's Show, 7:30pm @ FJUMC |
| 20 | 21 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i> | 22 | 23 Customer/ Volunteer Arts & Crafts, 12pm— Bookmarks | 24 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small> | 25 PSC Group, 1:30-4 | 26 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small> |
| 27 | 28 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i> | 29 | 30 Customer/ Volunteer Arts & Crafts, 12pm— Back-to-School | 31 | | |



For JULY, FJUMC will be collecting Back-to-School Supplies to support kids returning to school in the Fall, Thank you for your support!



Items include:

- ◆ Pencils, pens, crayons and markers
 - ◆ Notebooks, loose leaf paper
 - ◆ Folders, binders
- ◆ Rulers, erasers, sharpeners, scissors
- ◆ Calculators, glue sticks
- ◆ Backpacks, lunchboxes, pencil holders

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 Hours & Location:

Tuesday—Friday
9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
8396 Morgan Road
Clay NY 13041

Contact Information:

Phone: (315) 652-9186
E-Mail: fjoffice@fjumc.org
Website: www.fjumc.org

Faith Journey UMC Staff:

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