



Pastor's Page



The Stepping Stone September 2025

“Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.” -Ephesians 4:25

Grace and peace to you from God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Communion of Saints who witness your life of love and faith.

There is a story of a monk who lived during the bubonic plague, which ravaged Western Europe during the Dark Ages. He was deeply concerned about the possibility of the world coming to an end. In his anxiety and fear, he sought counsel from his fellow monks, who reassured him that such an event was unlikely to occur within his lifetime. Determined to find clarity, he journeyed from monastery to monastery, seeking further wisdom on the subject. Upon his return, the head of his order inquired about his findings. The monk responded, “I have discovered that the world is not destined to end soon; however, undertaking this journey was personally significant.” When asked for further explanation, he replied, “The experience alleviated my fears of isolation. I found that every monk I encountered shared similar concerns, but through studying the scriptures and engaging in prayer, we came to understand that the world only truly ends if we allow it to do so within our hearts.”

The August newsletter provided updates regarding various projects supported by multiple donors and memorial funds. These contributions enable ongoing improvements to the church. The numerous projects undertaken were done out of necessity and with the intention of caring for our property, which, as a congregation, we have been entrusted to manage. Physical changes to the church have been ongoing for the past decade, to transform the interior and exterior of the building into a beautiful, inclusive space with a fresh look. All of this has been accomplished without the use of budgetary funds.

As we journey into our tenth year as Faith Journey United Methodist Church, our congregation continues to adapt to the growing needs in our community. At present, we are renting the café area to Circle of Friends, an organization serving individuals with special needs and their caregivers. In addition, Great Northern Artist Collaborative, a local theatre group, rents our fellowship hall, which engages adults and children in the theatrical arts. Both groups contribute meaningfully to the ongoing use of our church facilities, which were previously used only on Sunday mornings for worship and church events.

Weekly contributions (tithes and offerings) primarily fund Faith Journey United Methodist Church’s operational costs. In the past, the church has addressed financial gaps through investments and their dividends. Although investments are still held, circumstances suggest it is not advisable to rely on them to support the church’s operational costs currently. In recent years, individual giving has declined, influenced by factors such as the passing of longtime members and the relocation of others for career or family reasons. However, as a congregation, we weathered many financial storms and the COVID-19 pandemic, when other churches closed permanently. We came out as a stronger congregation, unified in a common mission and ministry.

Despite the challenges we have faced together, I am grateful for your unwavering dedication and commitment, which is reflected in every worship service, community event—including chicken barbecues, community breakfasts—and mission work. We have much to be proud of as a vital congregation in the Upper New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The impact of our mission efforts is particularly evident through Cradle and Beyond 2.0, where the contributions of our dedicated volunteers have established a significant presence and provided valuable opportunities for extending spiritual support to the customers and the community of North Syracuse, NY. Cradle and Beyond 2.0 is fully self-sufficient with the income that comes in from its sales. It is not part of the operating budget.

Financial contributions from Cradle & Beyond 2.0 have regularly funded utility bills for the church and provided additional support to the operating budget for the employment of a full-time pastor.

This support includes disability insurance, health insurance, and pension costs; these are contractual obligations that the church must fulfil, and without the contributions from Cradle and Beyond 2.0, it would be almost impossible to meet these costs. Cradle and Beyond 2.0 also provides for a portion of shared ministry expenses allocated to Faith Journey as a United Methodist Church in the Upper New York Annual Conference.

Each Sunday we gather to worship, pray, offer tithes and offerings, confess our sins, and receive the sacraments. The sanctuary is a place where we come to connect with God and one another. Many weddings and funerals have been held in the sanctuary; I am conscious that you and your families have participated in these sacred rites over the years.

The sanctuary has also served as a meaningful setting for me in which I can share the gospel message each Sunday. Additionally, it was here that my daughter, Kiah, publicly affirmed her faith during her confirmation as a member of Faith Journey United Methodist Church. Over the years, numerous other young adults have also professed their faith during their own confirmations—many of whom may be your sons, daughters, grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren. Many of you and your families professed your faith in the sanctuary as you made your membership vows.

To promote financial transparency, a quarterly report on the church's economic status will be included in the newsletter. For more comprehensive information, please don't hesitate to contact Linda Rauli, Treasurer. Additionally, copies of the annual audit are available upon request.

I encourage you to reflect on your connection to the Faith Journey United Methodist Church community and consider your relationship with God, as well as your current giving practices. Suppose you have not attended the church recently. In that case, I encourage you to reconnect, remain informed about our ongoing activities, and actively participate in our continuing mission to "Seek, Serve, & Share God with others."

Faith Journey United Methodist Church is dedicated to nurturing lives strengthened by faith and a connection to God. The church provides opportunities for spiritual development through its services and historic congregations. The community engages collectively with one another and with God through grace, and in the understanding that God gave his only begotten son, Jesus. In response to this gift of grace, the church seeks to guide others toward a deeper communion with God.

As the monk learned, fear and anxiety are alleviated through being with one another, studying the scriptures, prayer, and being in communion with God. This is a spiritual matter—what we do in this time will determine the course of ministry for future generations.

I pray daily for the blessing of you and your family, with the hope that you may positively impact those around you for the work of the kingdom of God. Thank you for being part of the Faith Journey family—it is with great pride and honor that I serve as pastor of this amazing congregation.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT



Church finances are always such a touchy subject—we're supposed to be about Faith, not dollars and cents. And criticism soon follows any preacher that asks for money too often. Passing the collection plate used to be such an ordeal—did anyone notice if I put in a donation? You can't thank COVID for much, but that changed the tradition of passing a plate. I feel like the donation box by the door is less intimidating.

And, of course, where does all that money go?

I do not wish to dwell on the money aspect of church, but we all know there are bills to pay to keep the Pastor in the pulpit, music, lights, etc. And I want everybody to know how we're doing. So at the end of each quarter I'll do a report to keep you up to date. Please do not hesitate to ask questions if something doesn't make sense. Here are details from the first two quarters of 2025.

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
Offering, rentals, interest	\$34,344	\$33,807
Support from C&B 2.0	1,500	6,573
Miscellaneous	1,412	1,174
Missions	<u>1,400</u>	<u>2,004</u>
Total Income	\$38,656	\$43,558
Payroll	\$26,834	\$27,430
Upper New York Conference	6,814	6,814
Facilities Expense (Utilities, etc)	3,792	8,524
Insurance	229	1,910
Missions	500	2,333
Miscellaneous	<u>181</u>	<u>1,007</u>
Total Expenses	\$38,350	\$48,018

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Rauli

What's Happening

SEPTEMBER:

September 13th—Chicken BBQ Drive-Thru, 11am @ FJUMC

September 13th—United Women in Faith Annual Meeting, 9am-2pm, Reservations due by 9/10 at (315) 637-4413, lunch is \$10 per person @ Fayetteville UMC

September 14th—Buffalo Bills Football Sundays, 1pm @ C&B Building

September 20th—Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC

September 20th—Clay Historical Association Fall Festival, 11am-3pm @ Clay Historical Park (4939 NY Rt. 31, Clay, NY)

September 27th—October 4th—PLINKO Sale @ C&B

September 28th—Buffalo Bills Football Sundays, 1pm @ C&B Building

October 4th—3rd Annual Craft Fair, 9am-2pm @ Luther Memorial Lutheran Church (435 S. Main St. N. Syracuse)

October 24th, 25th & 30th—GNAC, Rocky Horror Show



WE STRUCK OUT!

Unfortunately, we did not meet the ticket limit needed to reserve the seats for the Syracuse Mets Baseball game on 9/12. We needed at least 35 tickets/people to cover our reservations and we only got to 15. Those who already paid and gave money for their tickets, will be promptly refunded and the payment will be returned to you. We apologize for any inconvenience or disappointment this may cause. We hope to continue this event, but it may be something we need to reconsider in the future.

CHICKEN BBQ DRIVE-THRU



Saturday, September 13, 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, September 20, 2025
9:00 a.m. in the upper Café area

ALL ARE WELCOME!

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

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



Come join us for Buffalo Bills Sundays, snacks and laughter at C&B building (1:00 p.m.)

(7778 Brewerton Rd. Syracuse, NY 13212)

Below are the opponents that the Bills will play and the menu for 9/14 is: **Tacos and Nachos**

LET'S GO



BUFFALO

9/14—Jets
9/28—Saints
10/26—Panthers
11/16—Buccaneers
12/14—Patriots

CLAY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS:



Fall Festival

Saturday, September 20, 2025
11:00—3:00 p.m.

FREE PARKING & ADMISSION

Apple fritters, face painting, demos, vendors, live music & more!

Clay Historical Park
4939 NY-31, Clay NY

3RD ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR

Saturday, October 4, 2025 | 9am-2pm

Luther Memorial Church will host 40 local vendors offering their artistry for gifting and home décor



Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
Main Street, N. Syracuse, NY 13212



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



September Update:

Wow, what a month! Here are some exciting updates from CB:

- 80 Bags Filled with School Supplies given to youth
- C&B assisted FJUMC with satisfying energy bills.
- We've secured a building permit and builder for the new donation center addition!

Next step: finalizing an excavator. Big things are coming!

As you've seen, some of our spaces have been reorganized and tidied up; Our jewelry supply is low, but we have many accessories.

What's Coming Up:

Seasonal Changeover: Sorters will begin switching merchandise to winter wear. Please be on the lookout for winter items to put out. Summer wear will begin to be stored.

Upcoming Book Study – details coming soon!



PLINKO Sale! – Our next sale will be a brand-new event! The PLINKO Sale runs Saturday, 9/27 – Saturday, 10/4. Mark your calendars – it's going to be fun! Busy Season Ahead as we're entering our busiest time of year.

Reminders for Volunteers:



Volunteer Applications – If you know someone who wants to join our team, please have them fill out an application first.
No Walk-In Volunteers – To maintain excellence in our shop, everyone must go through proper channels. This ensures that we all work together and uphold CB's mission.

A big thanks to everyone who joined our appreciation picnic this past weekend – what a blast! We're already brainstorming for the next event.

We couldn't do this without you so thank you for all you do!

– The CB Team

SEPTEMBER

SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - SEPTEMBER - "STRONGER TOGETHER"

"Live in harmony with one another . . . So that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." - Romans 15:5-6



SEPTEMBER

I can't believe fall is right around the corner, I knew August would fly by, the end of the summer always does. It's been a great end to a beautiful season with Labor Day celebrations and family BBQ's. I hope the warmth and sunshine sticks around for a little longer so we get some more nice days. With the fall season upon us, I'm sure everybody is enjoying the return of pumpkin items while they plan for the holidays!

"Change for Change" Mission For September



Ronald
McDonald
House
New York

In September we want to acknowledge all that *Ronald McDonald House Charities* does for families across the nation as well as here in Syracuse. Their annual fundraiser, "Many Hearts One Home Celebration" will be held at the SRC Arena Friday, September 26th. Our September contribution will go toward that event.

August Change for Change is \$ 70.00, which will go toward school supplies. And there was an additional \$100 that was received toward the food pantry at Brown Memorial. Thank you to all!

Southern Sudan Health Projects

We have received reports from the 8 health care workers, who work in teams of 2 in four different regions of South Sudan. In July each region administered care to more than 100 patients. Salaries are sent to health care promoters every 3 months and they report back to us monthly. Most recently we were also able to send additional funds for our liaison in South Sudan to purchase a new computer to enable him to communicate with us. In addition to monetary donations, we are still collecting "Cans for Sudan" to recycle. To date in 2025 SSHP has received more than \$12,000 to keep this project going. Thank you for your support!

SEPTEMBER SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN



Fruits of the Spirit

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 - Galatians 5:22-23

Day 2 - Zephaniah 3:17

Day 3 - John 3:16-17

Day 4 - John 15:9-10

Day 5 - John 15:12-13

Day 6 - Habakkuk 3:17-18

Day 7 - 1 Peter 1:8-9

Day 8 - Luke 15:7

Day 9 - Psalm 30:5

Day 10 - 1 Peter 3:11

Day 11 - James 3:18

Day 12 - Psalm 29:11

Day 13 - Romans 12:18

Day 14 - Exodus 34:6-7

Day 15 - James 1:2-4

Day 16 - Romans 5:1-2

Day 17 - Romans 5:3-4

Day 18 - Proverbs 31:20

Day 19 - Colossians 3:12

Day 20 - Titus 3:1-2

Day 21 - Ephesians 4:1-2

Day 22 - 2 Peter 1:5-6

Day 23 - 2 Peter 1:7-8

Day 24 - Hebrews 11:1-2

Day 25 - Hebrews 12:1-2

Day 26 - Romans 14:19

Day 27 - Proverbs 25:28

Day 28 - Proverbs 16:32

Day 29 - Titus 2:11-14

Day 30 - Philippians 4:8

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.





Cinnamon Honey Bun Cake

"This cake tastes just like a classic honeybun! Made with cake mix, this simple, light, and buttery cake features a cinnamon spiced swirl and a sticky sweet glaze!"

Recipe by: Jocelyn Delk Adams, Grandbaby Cakes
www.grandbaby-cakes.com/honeybun-cake/

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CAKE

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 cup sour cream
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup light brown sugar, *packed*
- 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

FOR THE ICING

- 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 4 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Prep Time: 15 mins.

Cook Time: 30 mins.

Total Time: 45 mins.

DIRECTIONS

FOR THE CAKE:

1. Whisk together cake mix, oil, eggs, sour cream and vanilla extract and mix until well combined.
2. Spray a 9x13 inch baking pan and pour in half of the batter and level in the pan.
3. Next combine brown sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg and pour on top of the batter. Pour remaining cake batter on top then use knife and swirl through the batter.
4. Bake for 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

FOR THE ICING:

1. Mix together all ingredients then pour over cake and let set.

RECIPE NOTES:

- Make sure the eggs and milk are room temperature so the cake batter ends up smooth and well mixed.
- To really let the glaze seep into the cake, poke holes on top of the cake so it soaks in.
- Let the iconic glaze really harden on the honey bun before you cut it.

STORAGE TIPS: This cake keeps for at least 3-4 days at room temperature.

FRIDGE/FREEZER: It will last in the fridge for up to 3 days. Just keep it wrapped well and it will last for up to 2 months in the freezer.


SERVING AGAIN: Thaw overnight in the fridge before serving, try warming up your leftovers in the microwave for a few seconds and serve with a glass of milk!

RECIPE



SEPTEMBER 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Labor Day</i>	2	3	4	5 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	6 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building.</i>
7	8 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	9	10	11 <i>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	12 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	13 <i>CHICKEN BBQ DRIVE-THRU, 11am-sold out @ FJUMC</i> <i>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</i>
14 <i>Buffalo Bills Football Sunday, 1pm @ C&B</i>	15 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	16	17	18 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	19 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	20 <i>Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC</i> <i>Clay Historical Fall Festival, 11am-3pm</i> <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday</i>
21	22 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	23	24	25 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	26 <i>PSC Group, 1:30-4</i>	27 <i>PLINKO SALE @ C&B, 10am-2pm</i> <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>
28 <i>Buffalo Bills Football Sunday, 1pm @ C&B</i>	29 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	30	 <p><u>Crossroads District Charge Conference</u> Saturday, November 8, 2025 FAITH JOURNEY UMC: GROUP 3 TIME: 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM HOST CHURCH: Liverpool First UMC LOCATION: 604 Oswego St. Liverpool, NY 13088</p>			



For **SEPTEMBER**, FJUMC will be collecting **pasta, canned fruits & vegetables and other non-perishable foods** for **The Blessing Box at Cradle & Beyond**. We are also collecting **Youth/Child Size Socks** for **Erin's Angels** for their Winter Survival Kits.

Thank you 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 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