



Pastor's Page



The Stepping Stone January 2026

"I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They're his people, he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good—tears gone, crying gone, pain gone—all the first order of things gone." The Enthroned continued, "Look! I'm making everything new. Write it all down—each word dependable and accurate." 1 Revelation 21:3-5



Where to begin? That is the question every New Year. Christmas has come, the New Year's Eve Party is over, and the Credit Card bills are about to hit the mailbox. I didn't mean to start this article on a down note; however, this is the reality we all find ourselves in, whether we like to admit it or not. I shared with you on Christmas Eve that "It's OK not to be OK." The purpose of Christmas is that Jesus was sent to set things right. We all need Jesus, now more than ever before.

Christmas is not the end, but the beginning of something new and fresh; a fresh start, if you will. We started the Advent season with Holy Communion. We closed the Advent season on Christmas Eve with Holy Communion, and on the first Sunday in January, we will begin the new year with the sacrament.

Every time we partake of the sacrament, we start over with God. We come to Christ's table having confessed our sins and receive the body and blood of Christ, which sustains us.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism in 18th-century England, describes [Holy Communion] as a "means of grace." The elements of bread and wine are outward signs, words, or actions ordained of God, and appointed for this end—to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men and women, the presence of God, which goes before (someone) with spiritual guidance and help. God's justifying grace in Christ and God's sanctifying grace are also what seal our fresh start every time we receive the sacrament.

Each one of us is blessed by God and should not take that blessing for granted. We should look at the New Year with hope and awe, knowing that God is making a fresh start. Let go of what has held you back—and look forward to the newness of life.

For many years, I have made New Year’s resolutions that I have never kept. I have had the gym membership, bought the piece of exercise equipment (for drying clothes), promised to pray more and be a better disciple of Jesus, but these resolutions lasted less than two weeks. My point is this: the only things that truly matter are our relationships with God, family, friends, and the individuals who are part of our communities—neighborhoods.

The New Year is the perfect time for a “fresh start.” It is a time to continue to give away what God has given to you, and I don’t mean the fruitcake that your Aunt Edna brought you on Christmas Day three years ago! I’m talking about Jesus! I dare you to do something different in this new year. Go beyond the norm and make a new friend.

Bring a family member or friend to church. Call up someone (don’t you dare text) you haven’t talked to in years. Enjoy the gift that God gives you every time you wake up and take air into your lungs. It’s all about a fresh start—a new beginning in hope and grace.

Take the joy of Christmas and carry it with you all your days. Believe it or not, God has already given the gift of Jesus; it’s in your heart and hands to give it away.

Give the world a reason to believe that there is a God who loves and affirms them just as they are, and if the world asks you why? Tell them what God has done for you!

I pray that you will have a fresh start in the New Year in the hope, grace, and salvation of Jesus!

God bless you and your family!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Daniel J. Bradley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "In Christ," text.

Rev. Daniel J. Bradley

What's Happening

JANUARY:

- January 1st**—New Years Day
- January 4th**—Faithful Meals: Make & Take Ministry, 12PM @ *FJUMC Kitchen*
- January 8th**—Trustees Meeting, 5:30PM @ *FJUMC*
- January 13th**—New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ *FJUMC*
- January 15th**—UMC Men's Club Annual Chili Cook-Off, 5:30PM @ *FJUMC*
- January 18th**—Serving Meal at Brown Memorial UMC, 2-4PM, @ *Brown Memorial UMC*
- January 18th**—Human Relations Day
- January 20th**—New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ *FJUMC*
- January 27th**—New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ *FJUMC*
- February 10th**—New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ *FJUMC*
- February 17th**—New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ *FJUMC*
- February 18th**—Ash Wednesday
- Holy Week 2026**—Palm Sunday (March 29th), Maundy Thursday (April 2nd), Good Friday (April 3rd), Easter Sunday (April 5th)

Join us for a spicy showdown!

UMC Men's Club Annual

CHILI

Cook-Off



BRING A POT OF YOUR FAVORITE CHILI OR CREATE SOMETHING NEW!

**Thursday, January 15, 2026
at 5:30 PM**

Chili Cook-off hosted at:
Faith Journey UMC
8396 Morgan Rd.
Clay, NY 13041

*Featuring guest speaker
Tina Nguyen from
'Harvest for Asia'*

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We have signed up to help serve meals at Brown Memorial UMC on **Sunday, January 18, 2026 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!



We will be offering classes for those who wish to become new members of Faith Journey UMC

New Member Class Schedule

- Tues. January 13th (6:30-7:30 pm)**
- Tues. January 20th (6:30-7:30 pm)**
- Tues. January 27th (6:30-7:30 pm)**
- Tues. February 10th (6:30-7:30 pm)**
- Tues. February 17th (6:30-7:30 pm)**

Classes will be held at Faith Journey UMC
8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041

New members will be received on Sunday, February 22nd, the first Sunday of Lent.



Faithful Meals: Make & Take Ministry



DATE: Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 12:00 PM (after worship) at Faith Journey United Methodist Church Kitchen (Downstairs) (8396 Morgan Rd. Clay, NY 13041)

MENU: Stone Soup, please bring 1-2 ingredients to add to the base.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!
NO COST - FREE EVENT - but donations are welcome!

Please **RSVP** to Beth (315) 657-5701 or FJOFFICE@FJUMC.ORG by 1/2/26 to ensure we have ingredients and supplies.



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



As we begin a new year, we give thanks for all that was accomplished together in 2025. Cradle & Beyond ended the year surpassing sales by more than \$710, over 2025 sales and even more importantly, deepening our impact across the community.

By the end of 2025, C&B had partnered or been in mission with 83 different organizations, many of them continuing relationships formed since our opening. We were open 950 hours in 2025 and are supported each week by 22–24 dedicated volunteers who stock merchandise, welcome customers, share unsold items with partners, maintain the space, and support store repairs and upkeep.

Significant improvements were made to our space this year, including a new metal roof on the 'house' and a 26 x 16 addition that will double our donation and sorting area. This expansion was fully funded through sales and savings since we opened. As of New Year's Day, the space is wired, insulated, and sheetrocked, with a ribbon-cutting announcement coming soon.

Cradle & Beyond continues to be a place of connection and belonging, hosting Buffalo Bills Sundays, weekly book studies, and community meetings that strengthen relationships and reinforce our role as a welcoming hub. We hope to utilize the community space even more in 2026.

Prayer remained an integral part of our mission. More than 100 prayer hearts were shared in 2025, many passed on to others, creating ripples of hope throughout the community.

We celebrated several record weekly sales, sold 4,496 gallons of merchandise through bucket sales, and introduced Plinko sales which quickly became a favorite fundraising activity. Monthly giving of \$1,173 supported conference shared giving and pastoral expenses, and over \$10,000 was contributed to FJUMC to support the church.

Thank you for being a part of this important ministry. We are honored that you choose to volunteer with C&B. Looking forward to 2026 with you :)



SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - JANUARY - "GREATEST CALLING"

"We all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." - 2 Corinthians 3:18



JANUARY

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026!

I am getting closer to my due date and almost have everything together for the little one's arrival. I'm getting more nervous now as the date approaches but know I have a lot of help and support as I transition into motherhood! I'm going to really miss everybody while I'm out on family leave for a month to bond and get adjusted to my new normal, but I will be back as soon as possible and try to make sure things are prepared in advance so my absence won't feel too obvious! I can't wait to get back to work and be apart of the Faith Journey church family again!

"Change for Change" Mission



December Change for Change collection was \$53 for 'Harvest for Asia' mission.



For January, we will be collecting for Bellevue Heights United Methodist Church's "Blessings in a Backpack" program, which bridges the weekend hunger gap for children facing food insecurity at Delaware Primary School in Syracuse (the school is across the street from Brown Memorial Church). While all students receive free breakfast and lunch at school, Blessings ensures each child has food to eat over the weekend.



HUMAN RELATIONS DAY ENCOURAGES...

DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

VOLUNTARY SERVICES

YOUTH OFFENDER REHABILITATION



United Methodist Church (UMC) Human Relations Day 2026 is scheduled for **Sunday, January 18, 2026**, the Sunday before Martin Luther King Jr. Day, focusing on building the "Beloved Community" through supporting vulnerable communities, youth, and social justice ministries, encouraging offerings to strengthen programs for equity, hope, and healing.

JANUARY SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN

New beginnings

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 - Genesis 1:1-2

Day 2 - Jeremiah 29:11

Day 3 - Job 8:7

Day 4 - Lamentations 3:22-23

Day 5 - Psalm 30:5

Day 6 - Psalm 40:3

Day 7 - Isaiah 43:18-19

Day 8 - Isaiah 40:31

Day 9 - Isaiah 58:12

Day 10 - Ecclesiastes 3:1

Day 11 - Ecclesiastes 3:11

Day 12 - Isaiah 65:17

Day 13 - Ezekiel 11:19

Day 14 - Jeremiah 31:31

Day 15 - Matthew 26:27-28

Day 16 - Hebrews 12:1-2

Day 17 - 1 Peter 1:3

Day 18 - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Day 19 - Galatians 6:14-15

Day 20 - Colossians 3:8-9

Day 21 - Colossians 3:10-11

Day 22 - Romans 6:4

Day 23 - 2 Peter 3:10-11

Day 24 - 2 Peter 3:12-13

Day 25 - Philippians 3:13-14

Day 26 - Ephesians 4:21-22

Day 27 - Ephesians 4:23-24

Day 28 - Romans 12:2

Day 29 - Revelations 21:1-2

Day 30 - Revelations 21:3-4

Day 31 - Revelations 21:5

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.





EASY SPAGHETTI PIE

"This baked spaghetti pie recipe is an easy pasta dish. It is great for potluck dinners and freezes well for up to three months!"

This recipe was made for our Faithful Meals: Make & Take Ministry in November

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon butter, *softened, for greasing*
- 6 ounces of cooked spaghetti
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 large eggs, *beaten*
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound lean ground beef, ground turkey or sausage (*or mixed together*)
- 1 cup Ricotta Cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 jar of spaghetti sauce, or make your own: 1/2 cup chopped onion, 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper, 1 clove garlic (minced), 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, 1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste, 1 teaspoon white sugar, 1 teaspoon dried oregano

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Grease a 10-inch pie plate with 1 tablespoon butter.
3. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook spaghetti in boiling water, stirring occasionally until tender, yet firm to the bite, about 10-12 minutes. Drain spaghetti through a colander.
4. In a medium size bowl, stir parmesan cheese, beaten eggs, and 2 tablespoons butter together—add hot spaghetti until well combined. Form spaghetti mixture into a crust in the prepared pie plate and set aside.
5. Spread Ricotta cheese over spaghetti crust, then pour in meat and sauce mixture.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. Sprinkle mozzarella cheese over the top of pie and continue baking until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes more.
7. Let cool down after removing from oven, pair with some garlic bread or side salad and enjoy!

Prep Time: 20 mins.

Cook Time: 50 mins.

Total Time: 1 hr. 10 mins.

Yields: 1 (10-inch) pie

RECIPE



JANUARY 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 NEW YEARS DAY	2	3 <small>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
4 Make & Take Ministry: Stone Soup, 12PM	5 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	6	7	8 Trustees Meeting, 5:30 PM <small>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	9 PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4	10 <small>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
11	12 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	13 New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ FJUMC	14	15 Chili Cook-off, 5:30 PM @ FJUMC <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	16 PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4	17 Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building.</small>
18 Serving Meal at Brown Memorial UMC, 2-4PM Human Relations Day	19 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	20 New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ FJUMC	21	22 <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>	23 PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4	24 Richard M. Townsend Funeral <small>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</small>
25	26 <small>PSC Group, 10-2</small>	27 New Member Class, 6:30-7:30pm @ FJUMC	28	29	30	31 <small>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</small>



FoodPantry

For the month of **JANUARY** Food Pantry, we will be collecting **cereal and other assorted non-perishable foods** for **Brewerton Community Food Pantry**.



Seek

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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

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

Share

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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