

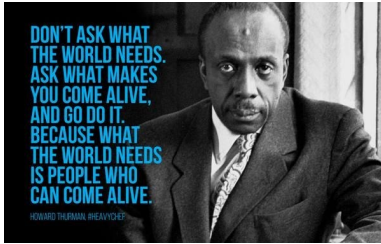


Pastor's
Page



The Stepping Stone
March 2026

As Christians, this time of year marks a season of new life. The snow has begun to melt, and flowers are springing forth, and trees are starting to bud. Creation is coming alive as the days get longer, and we rejoice that winter is coming to an end. However, as we live in a world so messed up where war, greed, and power seem



to rule absolute we need to pause and remember why we have been placed at in this moment and time. The great theologian Howard Thurman, who began his work alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, suggests, “what the world needs is more people who have come alive.” His prophetic voice, along with that of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., changed the world. They were prophetic voices for their time, and their legacy lives on even after their deaths.

A contemporary voice of the 21st century was Rachael Held Evans. She went home to glory at just the age of 35. Her work calls the church to action through her writing and public speaking events, which are available online. In her book, Searching For Sunday, she reminds us that, “Grace has been out of hand for more than two thousand years now. We best get used to it.” This stuck with me as I read the book for the third time. I followed up with the thought, “What distinguishes the Christian church from all other movements? It’s Grace.”



Grace is a free, unmerited gift that began the moment that God called into existence the universe. God’s grace works through all of their inhumane treatment of one to another and their sin whether they be of commission or omission. Grace continues today.

I wish I could tell you that Easter was all about the Cadbury Bunny and those wonderful cream-filled eggs, but the fact of the matter is this: bunnies don’t lay eggs, and they have nothing to do with easter. However, we are enticed to believe that this holy day is all about chocolate eggs, bunnies, and flowers that bloom. It is not. It is, as Rachel reminds us, that “Grace has been out of hand...” and that, my friends, is the true gift of God. That gift of God led God’s only begotten Son Jesus to be crucified, dead, and buried. But as Rachael would remark, “On the third day Grace got up.” Jesus resurrection is the reason that we are here today.

I have been asking God the question over the years, “Where have all the prophets gone?” Perhaps you have heard me ask this question from the pulpit many times. God finally responded, “The prophets are here, but their voices are silent.” Silent, I thought? “What do you mean, God?” There was no response. Often, when we receive a word from the Lord, it comes at a moment when faith is hard to come by, and our hope is dashed by what we can see rather than what God is doing in this world.

I am writing this article on January 22, 2026, and in these short weeks of the new year, it seems that the world, our nation in particular, needs the message that Rachel calls us to: “Grace has been out of hand... We’d best get used to it.” It also needs the words of Howard Thurman, whose voice continues to echo throughout the years, and reminds us, “Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because the world needs more people who have come alive.”

From the beginning of time, God has worked with imperfect people. The prophets of ancient Israel were imperfect. The disciples were imperfect, and even those who betrayed Jesus condemned, abused him crucified him; Yet Jesus does not call down fire wrath and legions of angels to destroy those who would do evil. He prays for them, “Father, forgive them they know not what they do.” In a sense that prayer is for us as well.

Holy week reminds us of the darkness of this world—the suffering that would accompany a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, with crowds waving palm branches and laying their cloaks on the road. It would end with shouts of: “crucify him!”

Peter, in the garden, would cut off the ear of one of the Roman soldiers who was there to arrest Jesus. Jesus even knew what was about to happen, took the ear that was cut off, and healed him. Earlier that evening, as Jesus celebrated the Passover meal, he began by washing his disciples’ feet, even Peter’s, who would deny him three times in the courtyard following his arrest. James and John, who continually fought over who would sit at Jesus’ right and left in the kingdom of God. And then there was Judas Iscariot, who was present, and his feet were not only washed, but he received the body and blood of Jesus right before he betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver and a kiss of betrayal in Gethsemane.

Grace has gotten out of hand and is given away in the darkest of times. While we are going through those times, we also remember that the stone was rolled away, giving us hope. Mary Magdalene and the other women brought spices to anoint the body of Jesus in the face of his murder, grief, pain, and suffering, they were asking, each other, “Who will roll the stone away?” They were looking for hope, bound by their faith in God. It was Mary Magdalene who first witnessed the resurrected Jesus and then ran to the disciples. She used her prophetic voice in a time of hopelessness.

In the gentlest prophetic voice, I ask that same question in this fallen world, “Who will roll the stone away?” The answer God gives is this: “All of you who bear the name of my Son Jesus, will roll the stones of this world away. You will use the prophetic voice I give you in the darkest of times and you will come alive; because my grace has gotten out of hand.”

We are that prophetic voice; it’s time we opened our mouths and shout it from the mountain tops with joy and thanksgiving. We are imperfect people, yet Jesus still prays for us in our darkest hours, when we have failed God through our sins and shortcomings: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”

And before I end this note, I love Cadbury cream eggs even if they aren’t laid by bunnies and are only trotted out at this time of year!

God bless you and your family as you celebrate Easter Sunday, that “Grace getting out of hand...” Thank you, Howard and Rachael, for reminding me that it’s not about me; it’s all about grace that got out of hand over 2000 years ago. It is my prayer that you and your family come alive with the resurrection power of Jesus.

In God’s presence of the resurrected Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Daniel J. Bradley". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Rev. Daniel J. Bradley



RMHC
Central New York

Dear Friends, Thank you for your support and generous gift of \$550 on 12/30/2025. Your gift allows Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central New York to provide comfort, hope and camaraderie to families of sick and hospitalized children seven days a week, 365 days a year. The demand for our services continues to grow as we serve even more families, better.

Central New York Ronald McDonald House Charities, Inc. was built on the simple idea that nothing else should matter when a family is focused on the health of their child. As an organization, we provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families and promote healing while children receive medical treatment at Syracuse-area hospitals and affiliated clinics. For more than forty years, the CNY Ronald McDonald House has offered families what they need to ensure the best health outcomes for their children.



Thanks to your generosity, these services will continue to come at no cost to our guest families. On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff, and the guest families who will benefit from your kindness, thank you for supporting our organization that allows us to make a difference for these families at one of the most difficult times in their lives. *The attached photo is of the Ward Sisters, who were Ronald McDonald House Guests in 2025.*



Dear Faith Journey United Methodist Congregation,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$500 to In My Father's Kitchen (IMFK). We are very honored to be the recipient of your kindness and support. Your gift will enable us to continue to provide needed essentials to those who live in campsites, under bridges, and places not meant for human habitation in Central New York. You can view what your gift will continue to do for our friends outdoors at www.inmyfatherskitchen.org.



Thank you again for investing in our friends. Together we are building hope and changing the lives of those who feel invisible! This is the body of Christ in action!

Many Blessings, John & Leigh-Ann Tumino, Founders of In My Father's Kitchen/Life House



On March 14th at 9:30AM Cradle and Beyond 2.0 will celebrate the opening of the new sorting room. All are invited to attend as this is a incredible achievement for Cradle and Beyond 2.0. The vision that was cast almost ten years ago is fully coming into it's own. A special thanks to all the volunteer staff that have been part of this project that came together faster than ever imagined. It's time to celebrate!

What's Happening

MARCH 2026: Holy Week

—Palm Sunday is March 29th, Maundy Thursday, April 2nd, 6:30 Service and Good Friday Time to be announced) (April 3rd), Easter Sunday (April 5th).

You are welcome and encouraged to bring family and friends. It will be a incredible time of reflection and celebration.

Faith Journey UMC will be participating in this program for the month of March. For more information please contact Lynn Hughes.



UNITED FOR MOMS MOTHER'S DAY DONATION DRIVE DONATE NOW THROUGH MAY 3RD

In honor of Mother's Day, United Way of CNY is collecting personal and self care items to be given to local women in need.

ITEMS TO DONATE (NEW ITEMS ONLY, PLEASE):

- Feminine Care
- Nail Care Items
- Socks
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush & Floss
- Shampoo
- Soap & Body Wash
- Tissues
- Deodorant
- Hair Accessories | Hand & Body Lotion | Lip Balm | Combs & Brushes



For more ways to get involved visit UnitedForMoms.com

PRESENTED BY



“Grace has been out of hand for more than two thousand years now. We best get used to it.”



Members Class

Find Out More About Our Church

Classes

Will be held on the following dates from 12:00-1:00 at FJUMC.

April 29th, May 6th, May 13th, May 20th.

Reception of new members will be on Sunday, May 24th (Pentecost)

—Even if you are transferring in from another church you must attend all the sessions.



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



A HUGE thank you to Mike, Butch, Gordon, Steven, and Duane for all the evenings spent transforming our new Donation/Storage Space — your dedication is amazing!

We're almost ready to "open for business" and are thrilled to invite everyone to our Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 9:30 AM on Saturday, 3/14. Donations can start going into the bins that day, but please ask customers to wait to shop until merchandise is on the store floor. After the opening, we'll begin reorganizing the current sorting room — thank you all for your flexibility and patience during the remodel!

Easter merchandise will be put out soon - our customers are ready for it :)

March Sale: Plinko!

Saturday, 3/28 – Saturday, 4/4
Always a fun one — don't miss it!

After the sale, we'll clear out winter wear and put out spring merchandise. It's been a long winter, and we're ready for some warmth and fresh colors!

Luncheon Update:

The suggested day last month didn't work for many, so we'll plan lunch later this spring.

Thanks for all you do - We have the BEST TEAM EVER

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MARCH SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN

Family Of God

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!

Adoption into God's Family

Day 1 - Ephesians 1:5

Day 2 - Galatians 3:26

Day 3 - Romans 8:15

Day 4 - John 1:12

Day 5 - 1 John 3:1

Day 6 - Romans 8:17

Day 7 - 2 Corinthians 6:18

Blessings in God's Family

Day 8 - Ephesians 2:19

Day 9 - Matthew 12:50

Day 10 - 1 Peter 2:9-10

Day 11 - Psalm 68:5-6

Day 12 - Galatians 4:7

Day 13 - Hebrews 2:11

Day 14 - 1 Corinthians 12:27

Responsibilities in God's Family

Day 15 - Romans 12:10

Day 16 - Ephesians 4:32

Day 17 - Colossians 3:13

Day 18 - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Day 19 - John 13:34-35

Day 20 - Hebrews 10:24-25

Day 21 - 1 John 4:20-21

Inheritance in God's Family

Day 22 - John 10:28-29

Day 23 - Revelation 21:7

Day 24 - 2 Timothy 2:19

Day 25 - Titus 3:7

Day 26 - Psalm 37:38

Day 27 - 1 Corinthians 15:58

Day 28 - Romans 14:8

Encouragement in God's Family

Day 29 - Philippians 1:6

Day 30 - Isaiah 41:10

Day 31 - 2 Corinthians 13:11

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

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



March 2026

SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH - MARCH - "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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>Make & Take Ministry: Last One of the Sun, 12PM</i>	2 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	3	4	5	6 <i>PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4</i>	7 <i>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New Building</i>
8	9 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	10	11	12 <i>Trustees Meeting, 5:30 PM</i> <i>9AM-12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	13 <i>PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4</i>	14 <i>9AM - 12 PM - Workday @ New</i>
15	16 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	17	18	19 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	20 <i>PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4</i>	21 <i>Pancake Breakfast, 9am @ FJUMC</i>
22 <i>Serving Meal at Brown Memorial UMC, 2-4PM</i>	23 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	24	25	26 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>	27 <i>PSC Karaoke, 1:30-4</i>	28 <i>9AM - 12PM - Workday @ New Building</i>
29 Palm Sunday	30 <i>PSC Group, 10-2</i>	31				



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

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



The United Methodist Church Unveils New Guiding Vision Statement—May 1, 2025

CHICAGO, IL – The Council of Bishops, in conjunction with the Connectional Table, is pleased to announce the unveiling of a new vision statement for The United Methodist Church. This vision reflects the Church's deep commitment to embodying God's dream for the world.

“The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.” This vision statement complements the Church's longstanding mission statement, inspired by Matthew 28:18-20: "The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

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