



Hudson United Methodist Church

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

January G.I.F.T.

Great Inspiration for Thought

To view online and access links: <https://conta.cc/4j1BqvU>



A message from the Pastor

Thoughts Along the Way...

Greetings to you as the page is turned on a new year. 2026 is soon to greet the world, the United States and Hudson UMC. No one holds the crystal ball foretelling what will be, but we place our trust in the God of Creation.

You have been reading about the initial steps into the new administrative structure leading Hudson UMC. It was decided in December, when the team met to title the team **The Leadership Board**. The Board collectively determined they would gather on the third Saturday of each month from 9:30am to 11:00am. In a previous issue of the GIFT the names and contact information was provided. If you have questions, contact a Board member.

Before moving on, it is important to share gratitude to those who have been faithful to the former Church Council. Many have sacrificed time away from family to tend to the business of the church. These include:

Fred Bailey – SPRC Curt Newill – SPRC Kathy Sanberg – SPRC
Gordon Mann- SPRC Len Stusek – SPRC Steve Hannah- Finance
Linda Brown- Trustees Bill Richards-Trustees Bob Johnsom - Trustees
Paul Brown – Lay Leader (which includes him on the committees noted above.)
I hope you will take an opportunity to thank those listed. Many on the various committees extended beyond the three-year term they originally agreed to.
One more thought, the church is establishing “Ministry Teams” to address needs in the church. Currently, Elizabeth Goodin, Director of Family Ministries, is resourcing Fellowship Team, Hospitality Team, Discipleship Team. Mission Team is resourced by the able leadership of Paul Brown. If you desire to learn more about the teams identified, contact Elizabeth or Rev. Bruce. More details will be shared in the coming month. Keep your heart open to serving Christ through his Church.

Living in Hope,

Rev. Bruce



Hudson Food Pantry

Hudson UMC supports the Hudson Food Pantry by supplying one roll of paper towels every month for 60+ families. The rolls do not need to be individually wrapped. Items requested: **Paper towels!!! Canned Great Northern Beans, Canned Kidney Beans, Tea, Vegetable Oil.** Donations may be dropped off at the church in the gathering area.

Contact Nancy Kralik, nskralik@gmail.com



Feed My Sheep

Gently Used Winter Clothing for Men & Women

Coats, Boots, Hats, Gloves & Blankets

Small Household Items

Feed My Sheep is a church-based hot lunch program Fridays from 11:30a to 12:30p at Redeemer UMC (265 Cuyahoga Falls Ave.) in Akron's North Hill

neighborhood. A clothing room with household items is open on Fridays. HUMC also supplies toilet paper, and a roll is offered every week with 125+ carry-out lunches.

Blue collection bins are located in the narthex closet, near the hand bell cabinet.

Contact: Nancy Kralik 330 212-7581 nskralik@gmail.com



Acme Community Cash Back

Hudson UMC is participating in the Acme Community Cash Back Program. Just save your receipts and either place them in the green bin by the pastor's office or email the cash back amount on the bottom to s1bernert@aol.com. The money we get back will go toward missions. Thank you!



Mountain of Food

OPEN M's monthly "Mountain of Food" takes place on Friday January 16th beginning at 7:45am. A Direct Distribution program of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank hosted by OPEN M open to Summit County and beyond. It is a one-day, bulk distribution of foods

such as produce, meat, breads and more. For more information or to rsvp for carpool, contact Linda Brown at flashknit@gmail.com.

Future distribution dates: January 16th, February 20th, March 20th.

From Elizabeth Goodin, Director of Family Ministries

contact: familyministries@hudsonumc.com



Happy Anniversary!

This January 20, 2026 marks the two-year anniversary for a group of Hudson UMC members who committed to reading the entire Bible over the course of two years. This group participated in the *Bible Study Together* plan that combined readings from both the Old and New Testaments grouped to provide context, lay out a clear timeline, and tell a chronological history by cross-referencing Bible passages together. The readings were further enriched through videos that illustrated various themes encountered within the readings.

Whether members of this group are celebrating their giant accomplishment with their final readings this month or are still “catching up” (I’m in that group!), I know that taking part in this exercise has been both a rewarding and enlightening faith experience.

I am drawn to share insights of my own from years ago when I first accepted this awesome challenge within a Bethel Bible Class taught by my friend Peggy Jo, at a previous church. My hope is that these words will help to inspire others to join a **new Hudson UMC *Bible Study Together* reading group beginning on February 1, 2026.**

When we were asked on our first day of Bethel why we were making this commitment to read and study the Bible, I wasn’t sure of my answer, only that I’d always wanted to. Now, nineteen months later, as Peggy Jo predicted, I have a much deeper understanding of God’s message to us, but many more questions. And I am sure of only one thing: I need to read it again.

But it seems to me that Bethel (and all) Bible students are seeking something that all humanity has sought, and that is a meaning to life and an answer to those questions with which we struggle: “Why are we here?” “Why do we suffer?” “Is there an order to life?” “Can we trust in a higher power at work in our lives?” “What is this longing in our hearts?” And, “Am I significant?”

The Bible is evidence of this struggle, and also God’s response. The Bible story is our story. It chronicles our own journey of faith, a path that leads from death to life, many times over.

When does this death occur? It happens whenever we choose to trust only in what we can see and create alone, when we forget that we are a child of God and become a child of the world. This is our forbidden fruit, our golden calf, and our distant country.

The good news is that God is actively leading us back. God has chosen a path for us that will lead us out of the darkness of spiritual death and into the light. Through the stories of Creation, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and many others, God teaches us what we need to know about his nature and about ours.

We learn that there is a way to be saved if we put our faith and trust in him. We are called to put our life in God’s hands and that even when evil seems to prevail, we learn that God can work for ultimate good. At times, God’s voice speaks directly to us: “I am with you.” “I am strong.” “I am in control.” “Follow me.” “Depend on me.” “I will provide for you.” “I will help you overcome.” “I will work extraordinary deeds through you.” “Serve only me.”

When we forget, we suffer consequences, but the message remains the same. God is patient with us, and we begin again the cycle of restoration: New life breathed into dry bones.

*Experiencing this restoration gives us hope and helps us to remember that we are a spirit first, and a child of God, and so we have grace. A child of the world would have died in the flood or drowned in the Red Sea, but because we are **God’s** children, God made a provision. In a world filled with temptation and free will, there is also mercy, forgiveness, and second chances. How could we survive otherwise?*

This provision came in the form of a man on a cross, who by his example taught us to forgive, to turn our judgment inward, and love our enemies. He demonstrated the power of God to transform us, to cleanse us, to make the weak strong and to enable the blind. Through our faith and trust, we are given a new life with a choice. Will we choose to follow our true intended nature and live this life in fellowship with God? Will we use our gifts in servanthood and love? In our response lies our salvation.

HERE is a link to indicate your interest in taking part in **the 2026 challenge to read the Bible in two years along with a dedicated group of Hudson UMC friends**. I will contact those who sign up with more details on getting started. For more information on the *Bible Study Together* reading plan, **CLICK BELOW**.

[**Bible Study Together Reading Plan**](#)

God Bless,

Elizabeth

Upcoming Children and Youth Sunday School Series:

Preschool through Grade 5:

Series: *Hanging Out with Jesus*

January 4 – January 25

During this four-week series, we'll see how Jesus displayed love and care to those around Him. We'll learn about some people Jesus interacted with and the ways He pursued those who need a Savior. Jesus seeks us out, and we can follow Him!



Grades 6 through 12:

Series: *First Things First*

January 4 – January 18

In this 3-week series, we're pointing students toward putting the first things first in their faith: loving God, loving others, and loving themselves. It's the Greatest Commandment. When students put that first, faith can be a lot simpler than they may have ever thought.



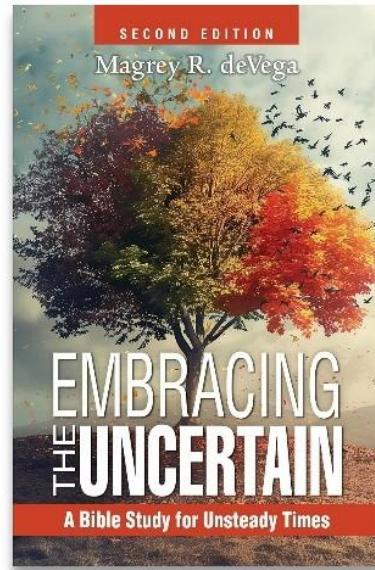
Upcoming Adult Sunday School Studies:

Family Ties (Room 116/118):

Study: Continuing *Embracing the Uncertain*

January 4 – January 18

Author and Pastor Magrey deVega invites readers to engage and wrestle with life's uncertainties, not ignore them. Each chapter of *Embracing the Uncertain* focuses on a post-transfiguration, pre-Passion story from the Gospels. Each of these stories is a signpost in the Gospel narrative, pointing down at a world filled with uncertainty but pointing us forward to a cross that can show us how to follow Jesus with courage, hope, and obedience.

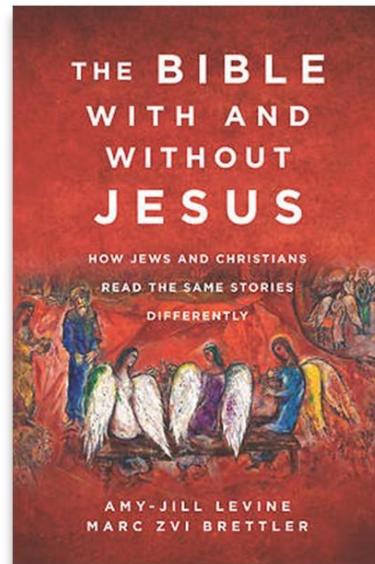


[Preview Embracing the Uncertain](#)

Study: *The Bible With and Without Jesus*

January 25 – March 1

In this Bible study based on their book, *The Bible With and Without Jesus*, esteemed Bible scholars and teachers Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler take readers on a guided tour of the most popular Hebrew Bible passages quoted in the New Testament to show what the texts meant in their original contexts and then how Jews and Christians, over time, understood those same texts.



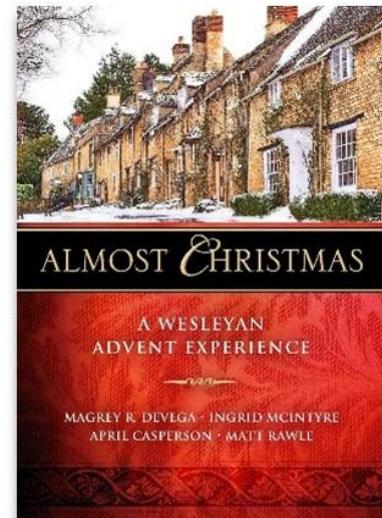
[Preview The Bible With and Without Jesus](#)

Men's Sunday School Class and Amazing Graces (Room 109):

Study: *Continuing Almost Christmas*

January 4 – January 11

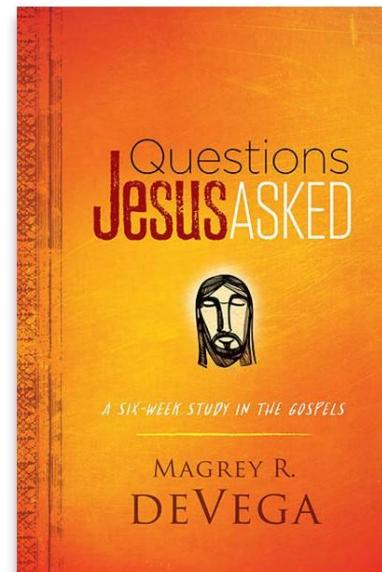
In *Almost Christmas: A Wesleyan Advent Experience*, author Magrey deVega leads a group in exploring how we can make the same commitment to Christ during Advent, and connect our Wesleyan heritage with the Advent themes of Love, Hope, Joy, and Peace.



Study: *Questions Jesus Asked*

January 18 – February 22

Jesus was fond of asking questions, many of which cut right to the heart of what it means to be human. Why are you terrified? What do you live for? Who do you say that I am? In *Questions Jesus Asked*, author Magrey deVega explores six of the most provocative questions Jesus posed to others and guides us in answering them for ourselves.



[Preview Questions Jesus Asked](#)

Coming in January (Let us know your best days/times):

Eight-Week Bible Study on The Story of Joseph

Led by Dave and Marcia Rais

Joseph's story is about **God's guidance, faithfulness, and forgiveness**. It shows how God can use difficult situations—like betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment—to bring about a greater purpose. Joseph stays faithful to God despite hardship, and in the end, he forgives his brothers, teaching lessons about trust in God, perseverance, and mercy.

Join us for an eight-week study to uncover, together, lessons within this epic story that allow us to be brave and bold in our faith.

To register for the class and to indicate your preferred days and times, CLICK BELOW or look for the registration link on HUMC's website. There will also be a sign-up sheet in HUMC's main hallway.

[**Register for Study**](#)



Dinners for Eight Continue!

Dinner for Eight is a great way to meet new people at church and to get to know your church family better.

A group of eight people (couples will be kept together) will meet for dinner and fellowship. You do not need to be a couple to join a Dinner for Eight. A group will be available for everyone to join.

If you're interested in **hosting** a Dinner for Eight in your home in **January/February/March**, please email Amy Pendergrass at amy.j.pendergrass@gmail.com.



Coming in 2026! Watch for details.



Hudson UMC is getting Messy on March 15, 2026!

Messy Church is a way of being church that welcomes all ages, celebrates God's creativity and joy, and centers us in Christ's transforming love.

At a Messy Church gathering, people of every generation experience God's love through hands-on creativity, joyful worship, and the gift of shared meals. It's church—but not what you're used to!

Stay tuned for more details and mark your calendars for Hudson UMC's **first Messy Church gathering on March 15, 2026**. To learn more about Messy Church, **CLICK BELOW**.

[Watch Introducing Messy Church](#)



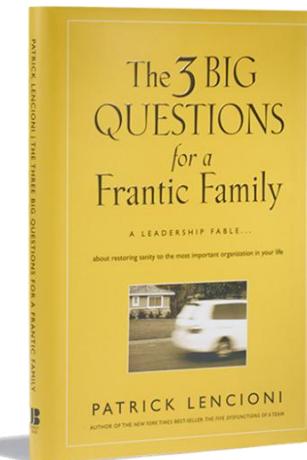
Frantic Family Workshop

Led by Elizabeth Goodin

Based on the book, [The 3 Big Questions for a Frantic Family by Patrick Lencioni](#)

Would you like help in aligning the everyday busyness of your life with what's most important to you? This workshop is for families of all ages and sizes: singles, empty nesters, retired couples, as well as parents with children at home.

Elizabeth will guide participants through a process for gaining clarity on God's unique call for their family and arranging their life to reflect their highest priorities. The workshop will be free and open to the public.



United Women in Faith

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS:

Hudson United Women in Faith board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, January 5, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the church.**

Mary Martha Circle will join in fellowship with the Christian Unity Prayer Service (CUPS) at Laurel Lake on **Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.**

Mary Martha usually meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Questions/Information contact Cheryl Maimona at ctm2949@roaddrunner.com

Priscilla Circle will not be having a regular meeting in January but encourage all women to attend the Christian Unity Prayer Service (CUPS) at Laurel Lake on **Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.**

Priscilla Circle meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Questions/Information contact Ann Ingling at anningling@gmail.com, Marty Hannah marty2uin@windstream.net

Books for Breakfast will meet on **Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Cynthia Field.** The book for discussion is *The Glass Maker* by Tracy Chevalier.(Please note the change in schedule).

Books for Breakfast usually meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. Questions/Information contact Michelle Novosel at novandkoz@yahoo.com

We are on **Facebook** - check us out at Hudson United Methodist Church **Women**- be sure to "Like" us to get current updates.



CHRISTIAN UNITY PRAYER SERVICE AND LUNCHEON - JANUARY 22, 2026

The annual Christian Unity Prayer Service and Luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, January 22, 2026 at Laurel Lake Retirement Center in Hudson, located at 200 Laurel Lake Drive. The ecumenical service, led by local clergy, begins at 10:00 AM. It is followed by a luncheon and guest speaker. The service, traditionally held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, has the theme, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling" (*Ephesians 4:4*)

After the service, ticket holders will enjoy a buffet lunch in the Laurel Lake dining room.

Our featured speaker after the luncheon is Phil Herman, The Impact Group, co-author of *Appreciology: The Art & Science of Appreciation*.

Tickets for the luncheon and speaker are \$20.00 per person and will be available to purchase on January 4 and 11, 2026, in the Gathering Area. Make checks for tickets payable to HUMC and note CUPS on the memo line. **Reservation deadline is January 18, 2025.**

The prayer service is free and open to all; it does not require a ticket to attend.

Questions: contact: Cheryl Gamble – cgamble1114@yahoo.com or Cheryl Maimona – ctm2949@roadrunner.com

SAVE THE DATE:

Watch for more information coming in the bulletins and the February GIFT

Gifts From the Heart (Mission to Heart 4 the City & Center of Hope) -Sunday, February 15, 2026

Pancake Breakfast – Sunday, March 15, 2026



HUMC IS GETTING MESSY!!

Sunday, March 15, 2026, Hudson

United Methodist Church is getting

MESSY!! **Please save the date** and plan to join us for an introduction to a new worship concept “MESSY” Church @ 9:30 am and plan to stay for the Pancake Breakfast (provided by United Women in Faith) to follow at 10:45 am!! Watch for more information and details in the coming months.



From our Nursery School

Dear Church Family,

As the Christmas season arrives, we want to thank you for your continued support of our preschool. This time of year has been filled with excitement as the children enjoy holiday songs, festive activities, and special moments with friends and teachers.

We are grateful to be part of a caring church community that helps make our preschool a welcoming and nurturing place for children to learn and grow. Your encouragement and support mean so much to our staff and families.

We wish you a joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. Thank you for being an important part of our preschool family.

Warm holiday wishes,

Amy Piel

Join Us for the Stripping of the Greens – and Donuts!

The Christmas season has been full of joy and celebration here at Hudson UMC, and now it's time to gently close the chapter on our festive decorations. You're warmly invited to join us for the Stripping of the Greens—our traditional time to take down Christmas decorations and prepare the church for the new year.

This is a wonderful opportunity to lend a hand, enjoy some fellowship, and share in a little post-holiday cheer. George's Donuts will be provided to keep our energy up and spirits bright!

When: Saturday, January 10th at 9:00am

Where: Hudson United Methodist Church

No prior experience is needed—just come with a cheerful heart, and maybe a pair of comfy shoes. Together, we can make quick work of this fun tradition and enjoy some good conversation and treats along the way.

Sign up here: [Stripping of the Greens](#)