



# Hudson United Methodist Church

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## March G.I.F.T.

Great Inspiration for Thought

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



### A message from the Pastor

Thoughts along the way... Part 1

DS Angela Lewis planted a seed in my soul during last November's Northern Waters District Charge Conference. DS Lewis spoke during her devotion of a Ted Talk, Podcast or NPR piece she listened to while driving. At the conclusion of the meditation DS Lewis challenged those present to pray for 12 minutes each day for 8 weeks. She gave no specific prayer topics but possibly made some suggestions.

This month as Christ-followers continue to the journey of Lent, the article and the challenge stirred in my heart. In turn I cast a challenge to Hudson UMC.

I found an article highlighting pioneering work by Dr. Caroline Leaf, a cognitive scientist focused on neurological changes to those who chose to pray for 12 minutes. (I am sharing a link to a video that expands on the article.) Click this link:

[How Neuroscience and Prayer Work Together to Change Your Brain](#)

If you want to know more, search "Joshua Becker" or "minimalist."

“Dr. Leaf has demonstrated that consistent prayer positively affects the brain’s structure and function. These changes are not superficial or temporary; prayer promotes emotional health, relationships and deepens one’s sense of connections to others.” (“Transform Your Brain in Twelve Minutes,” The Bridge Fellowship)

As followers of Christ, we understand “Prayer” is a “Key to Discipleship.” We mature as a Disciple through all six Keys to Discipleship. Prayer changes things – our hearts, our souls and now how we form our brains.

Without further details about the research, I wonder if we can alter how we think about material possessions in our lives. Research indicates that we can. Does our pursuit of things intrude our connection to God? This will be addressed in Part 2 or “Thoughts along the way...” But for now, I offer this challenge to Hudson UMC:

**Pray the prayers I am offering below throughout March until Easter.**

**Pray for 12 minutes at one time, four times for 3 minutes or twelve times for 1 minute.**

“Gracious God, shift my focus from accumulating earthly possessions to storing up eternal treasures in heaven. Let my heart be set on things that have lasting value. In the name of Jesus, Amen.”

“Generous Creator, simplify my desires and help me to avoid the constant pursuit of more. Let me desire the things that please You and that contribute to a life of peace and contentment. In the name of Jesus, Amen.” (Psalm 37:4)

**12 minutes every day, through Easter. Share the actions these prayers bring to your life.** If you want to know more, search “Joshua Becker” or “minimalist.”

**Living in Hope,**

**Rev. Bruce**

## **Maundy Thursday Experience & Easter Celebration**

Encouraged by the reaction to the Ash Wednesday Experience, Hudson UMC will offer a **Maundy Thursday Experience**.

This year Maundy Thursday will include a collection of participatory prayer stations following the steps Jesus took on the night before his crucifixion. Worshippers will gather for Holy Communion, followed by a Washing station(hands). Next, we will enter into the Garden of Gethsemane moment of agonizing prayer then carried off to the Trial of Jesus where those who gather to reflect on Jesus' suffering while confessing their own sin. Our purpose is to make the story of Jesus come alive.

Gather on Thursday **April 2nd from 7:00pm-8:00pm** as we sing, reflect, hear scripture, pray while experiencing God's blessing.

## **Easter Celebration**

**April 5, 9:30am**

Hudson UMC will celebrate the Risen Lord with as much pomp and circumstance as we are capable of. Death is conquered! Life is eternal!



### **PAPER TOWELS for the 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 Salmon, Canned Refried Beans.** Donations may be dropped off at the church in the gathering area. Upcoming distributions: **Saturday, February 28, Saturday, March 28. THANK YOU!** Nancy Kralik [nskralik@gmail.com](mailto:nskralik@gmail.com) 330-212-7581



### **Feed My Sheep - March Outreach**

**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](mailto:nskralik@gmail.com)



### **Mountain of Food**

**OPEN M's** monthly "Mountain of Food" takes place on **Friday March 20th 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](mailto:flashknit@gmail.com). Future distribution dates: March 20, April 17, May 15.

**From Elizabeth Goodin, Director of Family Ministries**

contact: [familyministries@hudsonumc.com](mailto:familyministries@hudsonumc.com)



What Are You Becoming?

Every life is being formed by something—our schedules, our habits, our screens, our worries. The question isn't *if* we're being formed. It's *by what*. What is forming you? What is forming Hudson UMC?

Over the past two weeks, Rev. Bruce and I have been sharing about the *Keys to Discipleship*. These are six intentional practices or disciplines that create space for God to form us. Over time, as we engage these practices, our lives begin to reflect the way Jesus lived and loved, shaping us into his disciples. It's not accidental but intentional.

At Hudson UMC, our intention, and our mission, is *to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. Our strategy is to create environments where members and friends will grow spiritually through attendance at worship, reading and reflecting on Scripture, participating in small groups, praying daily, giving to support the church's ministry, and serving the church and community.

**On February 15**, Rev. Bruce introduced **worship** as a way we orient ourselves toward God. During the post-worship presentation, concerning worship I asked, "Who is the audience?" Based on the orientation of the seating in most sanctuaries, one might be

drawn to answer, “the congregation.” In fact, God is the audience. We are not present as spectators or evaluators; we are there to praise and honor God, to abide in God’s presence, and to learn to recognize and respond to God’s voice.

God’s voice meets us most consistently in **Scripture**. It is through Scripture, where we come to know God’s character, understand God’s story, and see how our lives fit within that story. As a group, we engaged in an exercise designed to help us grasp this more fully through a reflection on the story of Jesus calming the sea. We asked four powerful questions that, when searching for understanding, may be applied to any Scripture: Where is *God* in the story? Where am *I* in the story? Where is God in *my* story? and Where am I in *God’s* story? The responses shared were both insightful and enlightening.

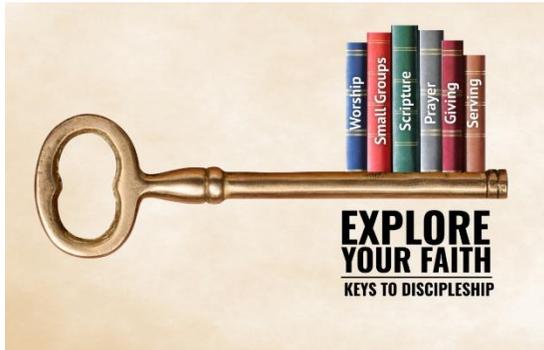
**On February 22**, Rev. Bruce talked about **small groups** being part of the DNA of followers of John Wesley, who introduced “Class Meetings.” Modern day Accountability or Covenant Groups model these gatherings, where members commit to spiritual growth and mutual support. At the post-worship presentation, I introduced the concept of circles being better than rows. Learning and even inspiration can happen within the anonymity of a large classroom seated in rows. But, the honest exchange, vulnerability, and relationships that form when sharing face to face with others in a circle is the environment best suited for transformational growth in faith.

We hope that these past two weeks, and the additional two weeks to come, provide you with the knowledge and inspiration to begin to seek out your own continued path of formation. We are here, not by accident, but with the intention of participating together in the life God intends for each of us and for our church. **Please join us as we continue this series on March 1 and March 8.**

God Bless,

Elizabeth

## The Keys to Discipleship: All-Church Sunday School Hour Gatherings Continue through March 8



March 1: Praying Daily

March 8: Giving & Serving

10:50 – 11:50am, Sanctuary

**Post-worship all-church gatherings** will continue during the Sunday school hour to accompany Rev. Bruce Hartley's continuing

sermon series on the Six Keys to Discipleship. These gatherings serve to provide further guidance on opportunities and pathways within Hudson UMC that support individual growth as a disciple in each of the six key areas. Learn which keys are most important for you in your own spiritual journey and how you may take part in this discipleship movement that is becoming a way of life among the growing disciples at Hudson UMC.

ALL members and friends of Hudson UMC are encouraged to join in these gatherings that, as Rev. Bruce has expressed, are aimed to bring everyone "on the same page" in their understanding of discipleship and a shared pathway of spiritual formation.

As we move forward beyond this season, we will encourage all newcomers to attend a newly developed and regularly offered class that will offer comparable information and serve as a starting point as they enter alongside others on their own faith journeys with Hudson UMC.

## Upcoming Children and Youth Sunday School Series:

### Preschool through Grade 5:

Series: *Created New*

March 8 – April 12

**No Sunday school on April 5, Easter Sunday**



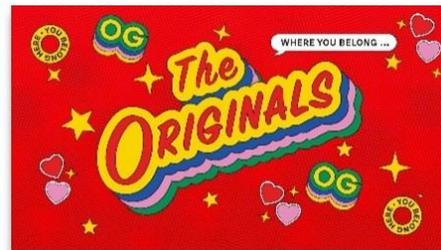
A rugged cross: the old is gone. An empty grave: the new has come. Because of Jesus, we are made new! During this series, we will lead kids through the story of redemption—a story that began at creation and the fall, climaxed at the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and continues through all who walk in new identities as God’s children! The story of Easter reaches into our lives and changes the very core of who we are!

### Grades 6 through 12:

Series: *The Originals*

March 22 – April 12

**No Sunday school on April 5, Easter Sunday**



God formed you, fearfully and wonderfully, as God’s own masterpiece.

The world will tell you that you’ve got to copy someone else to fit in – wear their armor, chase their standard, live their story. But God says you belong as you are, because God made you on purpose. And when you live as God’s original, you discover what God’s Word has always said: You are chosen, created, and never alone.

March 1 – March 8:

Students will participate in the *6 Keys to Discipleship* all-church groups.

March 15:

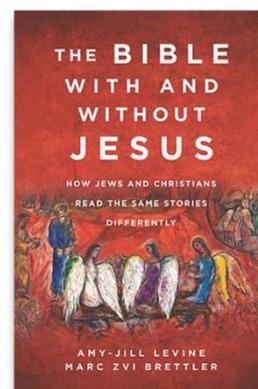
Students will attend the United Women in Faith Pancake Breakfast.

## Adult Sunday School Studies Resume March 22:

### Family Ties (Room 116/118):

Study: *The Bible With and Without Jesus*

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.

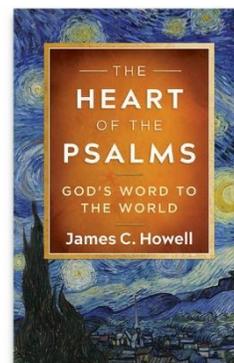


[Preview The Bible With and Without Jesus](#)

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

Study: *The Heart of the Psalms*

The Book of Psalms has been called a school of prayer, as these eloquent words to God become the Word of God for us and a road map to navigate life with God in this world. This study focuses on six psalms, each offering a unique glimpse into God's heart.



[Preview Heart of the Psalms](#)

To preview **AMPLIFY MEDIA** studies, use access code **KGCLFW**

## Bible Project Sunday School (Room 115):

Viewing and discussing videos produced by *The Bible Project*. Through creative videos and accompanying study guides, *The Bible Project* introduces books and key themes of the Bible in ways that are clear, approachable, and transformative.



Continuing with our weekly exploration of individual books of the Bible through overview videos and discussion:

March 22: Judges, March 29: Ruth

[Preview Judges Overview](#)

## Family Prayers for Lent



During Lent we remember Jesus and God's great love. We take special time to think about why we need Jesus, and we remember the sacrifice Jesus lovingly made when he died on a cross.

Here are **40 simple prayers** to help your family think about God's love during this season of Lent. Pray a prayer together each day leading up to Easter. Each prayer is based on a verse from the Bible. Sometimes you'll simply pray the words in the verse. Other times, your prayer will help you understand and apply the words of the verse to your everyday lives. May this daily practice help your family grow in faith, love, and gratitude as you walk together through Lent toward Easter morning.

[Download Lent Prayer Calendar](#)

## **HUMC is getting MESSY!**

Join us for a special all-church “Messy” Worship  
and Fellowship experience on

**Sunday, April 19, 2026**

**9:30 to 11:30am**



### **Messy Church: Yes, It's Play. Yes, It's Church.**

*Messy Church* isn't just for kids—it's church for all ages, together. Part of a global movement, it's a creative, hands-on, grace-filled way to experience worship in the middle of real life.

Each gathering centers on a Biblical theme explored through interactive activities, followed by celebration/worship, storytelling, prayer, and a shared meal around the table. It's joyful, welcoming, and meaningful—for everyone.

### **Volunteer to Help.**

Volunteer at the Welcome Table, help prepare crafts, lead an activity, tell a story, sing, cook, set up, or clean up. Serve on the Messy Church Ministry Team. Contact Elizabeth Goodin

*Invite a friend. Spread the word.*





## Nurturing Relationships



### 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 **March/April**, please email Amy Pendergrass at [amy.j.pendergrass@gmail.com](mailto:amy.j.pendergrass@gmail.com).



## United Women in Faith

### FELLOWSHIP EVENTS:

**Hudson United Women in Faith** board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, March 2, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. at the church. Bring your own brown bag dinner to enjoy.** (Please note the time change).

**Mary Martha Circle** will be volunteering at the Center of Hope in Ravenna on **Thursday, March 12, 2026.** Carpooling from HUMC at 9:30 a.m. Watch your email for more information.

Mary Martha meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month. Questions/Information contact Cheryl Maimona at [ctm2949@roadrunner.com](mailto:ctm2949@roadrunner.com)

**Priscilla Circle** will meet on **Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the church for a fun evening of fellowship while they organize and clean the cabinets and drawers in the kitchen.**

**Please bring your own brown bag dinner and drink.**

Priscilla Circle usually meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Questions/Information contact Ann Ingling at [anningling@gmail.com](mailto:anningling@gmail.com), Marty Hannah [marty2uin@windstream.net](mailto:marty2uin@windstream.net)

**Books for Breakfast** will meet on **Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Sharon McGregor.** The book for discussion is *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See.

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

## **MISSIONS:**

### **“Gifts from the Heart” -- UWF Mission Project**

The Hudson United Women in Faith is sponsoring their mission project, **Gifts from the Heart** (formerly Brown Bags) food program which began on **Sunday, February 15, 2026** and will be ending on **Sunday, March 1, 2026**.

We will be supporting the **Center of Hope** (Ravenna), and **Heart 4 the City** (NE Akron). Your monetary donation makes a difference. For every \$1 donation, the Foodbank can provide the equivalent of 4 meals to the **Center of Hope** and **Heart 4 the City**. *To make a donation by check, please make your check payable to Hudson UMC with “Gifts from the Heart” noted in the memo. You can also donate on Realm by using the drop down box UWF-Gifts from the Heart.* **The deadline is Sunday, March 1, 2026.** For more information: please contact Sandy Bernert: [s1bernert@aol.com](mailto:s1bernert@aol.com) or Carol Spinelli: [kspinelli55@yahoo.com](mailto:kspinelli55@yahoo.com).

Thank you for supporting this important mission outreach program sponsored by the Hudson United Women in Faith!

## **FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:**

### **PANCAKE BREAKFAST MARCH 15, 2026**

The United Women of Faith will be hosting the annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser on Sunday, March 15, 2026, from 10:30 am -12:30 pm in the CAC (Christian Activity Center). Treat yourself to a delicious breakfast of pancakes, lots of yummy toppings, sausage, juice, coffee, and tea. (Gluten free pancakes available on request.). We will do the dishes!

Freewill Offering will be available to support one of the UWF's Mission Projects.

Questions? Please contact Marcia Rais ( [MLTORCH@HOTMAIL](mailto:MLTORCH@HOTMAIL)) or Debbie King ([KINGS7565@GMAIL.COM](mailto:KINGS7565@GMAIL.COM))

## **Many Thanks for Your Pledge Donations**

All women of the Hudson United Methodist Church are members of our United Women in Faith chapter, and we encourage you to get involved with our many activities. The pancake breakfast is coming up on March 15, and UWF Sunday on April 12. Join us to lend a hand. The pledge drive to support our missions letters were sent out in January, and pledge donations can still be made. As of February 18th, **32** women have contributed a total of **\$5280**. Thank you so much.

## **SAVE THE DATE:**

### **Hudson United Women in Faith Sunday Worship**

**Sunday, April 12, 2026**

The Hudson United Women in Faith will be providing the 9:30 am Worship service on Sunday, April 12, 2026. The special guest speaker will be Rev. Joy Fenton Jones. Her message "I Doubt It" will be from the Gospel of John 20:19-31. All women are invited to participate in the worship service as a reader, greeter, usher, or as a member of the Hudson UWF Choir. Watch for more details in future issues of the GIFT and bulletins on how you can participate in the service. If you are interested in being a part of this special Sunday worship service, contact Cheryl Gamble, [cgamble1114@yahoo.com](mailto:cgamble1114@yahoo.com) or Marcia Rais, [mltorch@hotmail.com](mailto:mltorch@hotmail.com).

## **From Music Director, Sandy Simpson**

"Agnus Dei," or "Lamb of God," is a metaphor for Jesus and is an integral part of the rite of Holy Communion. It has been used in a great deal of sacred music. Betka Gudgel sang these words on Ash Wednesday to remind us of what the season of Lent is about.

The Gospel of John's first formal introduction to Jesus references Him as "The Lamb of God." This tells us much about Jesus and His Atonement.

May the music throughout this Lenten season help us to feel the transformative power of His sacrifice, individually and communally.

## **HUMC Missions Thanks You for Your Generosity Throughout 2025**

The HUMC church family is filled with generous givers which was made evident through the many donations made by our church to organizations throughout 2025. We are off to a great start in 2026 with our group now named the “Mission Ministry Team”. Here is a recap of 2025 donations from you and the important missions you supported through your generous giving:

### **Alternative Easter Giving (Chicks & Sheep)**

\$1,087 sent to Heifer International to help support small farms to sustainably address hunger and poverty in their communities. Heifer serves 19 countries around the world.



### **Appalachian Service Project**

\$10,163 was raised through the ASP Silent Auction that HUMC fully supported. Our church was able to send 2 teams of youth and adults to Shady Lake Tennessee to build relationships and make homes in Appalachia warmer, safer, and dryer. 2025 was our church’s 51<sup>st</sup> year of sending a team to Appalachia! A special thanks to Colleen Padgett for coordinating the ASP Silent Auction!

### **OPEN-M in Akron**

\$3,724 received in donations for the OPEN-M Mission facility in Akron. Our church now makes 90 “Grab-and-Go” lunches once a month which are distributed to the community where OPEN-M operates. We donate 200 cans of tuna fish every month to be distributed by the OPEN-M food pantry. At Christmas you donated cans of Sloppy Joe for Christmas Baskets. Several of you volunteered to help once a month at the “Mountain of Food” distribution at OPEN-M. Your donations also supported a contribution of \$2,000 toward the cost of a back-up generator for OPEN -M to protect



their food and medicine during a power outage. A special thanks to Linda Brown for coordinating this very important mission work in Akron.

**Feed My Sheep** \$1,475 received in donations with \$1,002 used to meet the ongoing toilet paper distribution provided by this organization. The balance will be used to continue supplying the weekly distribution of toilet paper for Feed My Sheep throughout 2026. In addition to supplying TP, many of you donated items that were distributed by members of this church that volunteer for the monthly distribution. Thanks to Nancy Kralik for coordinating this important mission.



### **Habitat for Humanity of Summit County**

\$2,475 received in donations for a Habitat House being built in Akron. HUMC also provided labor crews to work on the Habitat house three weekends this

past summer. Hat's off to John Kralik for leading this vital mission that supports critically needed affordable housing.

### **Christmas Alternative Giving**

\$3,360 received in total Alternative Giving donations this year for 7 organizations that do vital mission and ministry work. Here is a breakdown:

\$960 to OPEN-M in Akron

\$525 to Akron-Canton Food Bank

\$500 to ASP

\$410 to South Street Ministries in Akron

\$350 to UMCOR (for Disaster Response)

\$300 to United Methodist Global Ministries for Missionary support

\$315 to Mission Ministry Team – for needs to be identified by the ministry team

### **Hudson Food Pantry**

\$1,092 received in donations with \$475 used to purchase the paper towel supplies needed each month for distribution. The balance will be used to continue supplying the monthly paper towels needed for HFP throughout 2026. A special thank you to Linda Arnold and Nancy Kralik who regularly donate their time to this vital mission work.

Adding it all together, our church family donated \$23,376 that was used to support vital missions locally and around the world in 2025. Beyond these donations many of you donated your time in service to others. The Mission Ministry Team sincerely appreciates your generous hearts and actions! You've made God smile!

### **The HUMC Mission Committee**

Linda Arnold, Sandy Bernert, Linda Brown, Paul Brown, Marty Hannah, Ann Ingling, John Kralik, Nancy Kralik, Colleen Padgett