



8651 Boston State Road, Boston, NY 14025 • 716-941-3529 • info@faithunitedchurchucc.com • faithunitedchurchucc.com

Newsletter for March 2026

Pastor's Ponderings

St. Francis of Assisi is said to have said “Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary, use words.” The depth of the saying goes beyond the simple truism that actions speak louder than words. It points out that the Gospel of Jesus in particular is best preached without words. Jesus himself proved the point profoundly by leaving behind no words. He wrote nothing down. He knew he could not adequately put into words the truth he was trying to convey. He did, of course, speak words. We all must use words. Words are our most elaborate and precise, even if inadequate, tools of communication. But the words Jesus spoke were used mostly not to explain but to illuminate, prompt, and suggest. He told parables—fictional stories he made up or borrowed from existing folk culture, which often ended in questions aimed at causing people to think in new ways about God, themselves, others, and their relationships with God and themselves and others:



Which of these do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among robbers?

What do you think—if a man has 100 sheep and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the 99 and go in search of the one?

Which of these two sons did as his father wanted?

“He taught all these things to the crowds in parables,” says the gospel of Matthew (13:34) “and without parables he taught them nothing.” Others—the gospel writers—wrote down some of Jesus’s parables, and they wrote down stories about what Jesus did. The true power of his message and of his life was in his actions—his healing, and feeding, and giving back life—his living actions of compassion and love and care. It may be that Jesus never wrote down his teachings (and never asked that his teachings be written down) because he knew words could not capture his meanings and pose the risk of giving the illusion of being fixed truths after they are fixed in place on a page, or a papyrus, or a stone.

And yet, we only know Jesus and his teachings now 2000 years later because of the words written about him and fixed in place in scripture and in other books. Or are there other ways to know Jesus? Might Jesus be experienced (and in this sense “known”) in the love and compassion of others? Might the Gospel be taught and learned by means other than words, as the St. Francis saying suggests?

Perhaps this is part of what the Apostle Paul meant in saying that we as the church are “the body of Christ” in the world. We are the presence of Christ in the world—in our embodied actions, much more so than in our words.

May we, in this Lenten season, keep silence more often, and live the Gospel beyond our words. Yet, let us also look forward to lifting our voices in great hallelujahs on Easter Sunday, which is the first Sunday of April this year, when we celebrate once again the eternal Word made flesh and the crucified flesh made everlasting Spirit.

I want to share also, in closing, that I have decided to defer my retirement until the end of May rather than leaving in April. My last Sunday, as well as the last day of Sunday school before the summer break, will be May 31. I look forward to celebrating both the gift of our children and the gift of our time together in this congregation.

Blessings to all,

Ted

News about our neighbors and friends

- Barb Fink is currently at Elderwood in Hamburg and appreciates your cards and prayers. Her address is: 5775 Maelou Drive, Hamburg, NY 14075.
- Janet Taber is at home. She appreciates our prayers and calls. Cards may be sent to her home address: 5845 Scherff Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127.
- Eleanor Kraft is at Elderwood Assisted Living. Her address: Elderwood Assisted Living, 76 Buffalo Street Apartment 124, Hamburg, NY 14075
- Sally Schutt is now living with her son D.J. and his wife at 6181 Rice Road, Boston, NY 14025.

CONCERNS & PRAYERS

For peace in our country and the world, for our military, for those whose needs we may not know. For those who have lost loved ones recently and are grieving.

For Vickie Bieger, Stephen Dearth, Barb Fink, Scot Kish, Eleanor Kraft, Carol Mueller, Claudia Renzi, Chuck & Sheila Recktenwalt, Tom & Marilyn Rucker, Joe Ryan, Sally Schutt, Janet Taber, and family & friends of Gary Cook.

Those in the Military: Jacob Braun, Zachary Braun, Justin Buczek, Teagan Partridge, Caydan Skinner, Justin Slighter, Jamie-Lynn Smerka, Mary Solak, Joe Solak, Justin Slighter, Aaron Wellman, and Mark Williams.

Prayer Concerns

Please email your prayer concerns to Pastor Ted (pastor@faithunitedchurchucc.com) or stop by the church office when it is open and write your concerns on the prayer request sheet in the narthex.

CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

- Linda Bishop – 1st term – Deacon - 2026 – 2029
- Cathy Kobel – 1st term – Trustee – 2026 – 2029
- Ken Ottaway – 1st term – Trustee – 2026 – 2029

CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU TO OUR NEW ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Carl Berger – 1st term – Endowment Committee – 2026 – 2029
- Kevin Biddle – 1st term – Endowment Committee – 2026 – 2029

Update on Sunday school activities... - Cris Palczak, Sunday School Superintendent



We had a small Mardi Gras, party on February 15th. The children had some king's cake and Ivy found the baby in her cake. We also read Isaiah 58: 6-12 and talked about the verses. The bulletin board represents what we talked about. It's good to Give to the poor and those in need. We should spend time in Prayer. The purpose of lent is to engage in almsgiving, prayer and fasting, reflecting on one's relationship with God.

No Sunday school on Easter, April 5th.

ANY WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS will be posted on TV Channel 2 WGRZ, and WIVB News 4, and on our website and Facebook. If there is ever a question of unsafe conditions on roads near you, please do stay home and safe. If we choose not to cancel the service, you can always watch it on YouTube or Facebook.

FELLOWSHIP

Men's Group – In January/February the Men's Group was busy: The church building was getting extra warm. Checked out boiler system and found that the air compressor that controls the thermostats was not operating. Replaced fuse in circuit breaker box. Had broken storm window glass repaired at Rucker lumber for parsonage cellar window. Chandelier glass in front



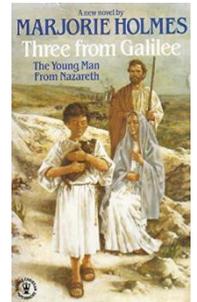
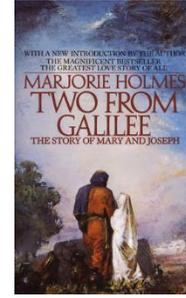
entrance washed. A special thanks to our ladder man Tim. Removed broken door stop at front entrance door. Will pickup replacement for it. Set up for candlelight service. Light bulb replaced in downstairs ladies bathroom. Manger scene blew over from the high winds -emergency take down was needed and it will need some extra work next year. We also met and successfully removed large icicle from sanctuary window. As always we will talk about the small tasks at hand and then proceed to complete the tasks if possible! Then we gather back in the Fellowship Hall for coffee, pastries and conversation. If you have any questions, feel free to speak to Bruce Lounsbury on a Sunday morning or call him at 716-662-7357.



Women's Support – The Women's support group thanks you for donations to Plymouth Crossroads.

Library - Did you ever wonder what Jesus life was like when he was a boy? In this work of fiction from Marjorie Holmes, Three from Galilee shares the story of Jesus early life. Marjorie is also the author of Two From Galilee, which tells the story of Joseph and Mary up until the time of Jesus birth.

Both of these selections can be found in the Church library, located in the Gathering Room.



Events

Pastor Ted is leading a **Lenten Bible study on Wednesday evenings, 7:00 – 8:00 in the Gathering Room, February 25th – April 1st**, focusing on selected scripture readings relevant to Lent. If you are interested, please speak with Pastor Ted.

Sunday, March 1st – **Communion.**

Saturday, March 7th – **Men's Group** meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, March 15th – **One Great Hour of Sharing offering.** Coffee hour sponsored by **Invitation & Welcome Group.**

Tuesday, March 17th – **Board Meeting** at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 19th – Last day to order **Easter Flowers.**

Sunday, March 22nd – **Christian Ed. Meeting** following worship.



NEWS

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd 7:00 p.m. communion service.

Sunday, April 5th – **Easter Communion** service. No Sunday school.

Saturday, April 11th – **Men's Group** meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 12th – **Christian Ed Meeting** following worship.

Tuesday, April 14th – **Board Meeting** at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 18th – **Chicken BBQ**

Sunday, April 26th – **Senior Recognition Sunday, Stewardship Committee** will sponsor coffee hour following worship.

BOARD MEETING Recap

February 17, 2026

Consent Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes from the January 20th meeting as distributed. All in favor. Minutes approved.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the 2-1-2026 Congregational Meeting as distributed. All in favor – motion passed.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Church Board Organizational meeting minutes on 2-1-2026 as distributed. All in favor- motion passed.

Discussion Agenda

Reports: Financial Secretary's Report– January income \$9185.82

Note: No church service on January 25 due to weather.

Treasurer's Report– January expenses \$16,538.84

Note: still catching up on pastor's 2025 deferred salary.

Discussion was held about Microsoft billing and administration. Ted will discuss it further with Zach and Mark.

New Board Member Orientation - new board member packets. Folders handed out to all incoming board members that included:

- Acknowledgement of Safe Conduct Policy and Procedures (**sign & return to pastor**)
- Code of Conduct with youth and vulnerable adults
- Policy & Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Sexual Misconduct
- Volunteer Information and Disclosure Form (**sign and return to pastor**)
- Faith UCC Organizational Chart – created and reviewed September 2021

Other documents distributed to all board members via email:

- Faith UCC Constitution
- Faith UCC Bylaws
- Faith UCC Policies
- Faith UCC Ways of Work

Ginny brought up the Fellowship Hall use and application form should be added to “Policies” – and changing the hall rental fee to non-members to \$200 as voted on by the board. Ted will add.

Old Business:

- **Search Committee Update** – Corky reported that Kevin Biddle is the chairman of the group along with members Linda Bishop, Sandy Jordan, Priscilla Granville, Corky Forney, Zach Munger and Ginny Taber. The group met this past Sunday, February 15, after worship with Rev. Lynn Morgan. Rev. Lynn was able to give the group more insight into the interim and search process. He also expressed that if he were interim, he would have to go away for a few months once a settled pastor was called, in efforts to be ethical. We all agreed we would rather have him be a part of the congregation! Filling in as a supply pastor here and there is a possibility and gave us his fee. Rev. Lynn also explained that compassionate care or home visitations can be done separately from preaching on Sundays. It can be someone other than the interim pastor - a separate wage is set for the position. Rev. Lynn emailed Kevin a UCC 2026 Compensation Guide that he forwarded to all committee members. We are still waiting to hear directions from Rev. Gary Ferner. No response to emails, phone calls, texts.

The next meeting is Sunday, March 1st at 9:30.

- **Parsonage repair committee** – Our new Chair of the Trustees Ken Ottaway reported that he and his group had a walk through at the parsonage. They identified some smaller things that could be undertaken right away and some bigger projects that will need some planning and budgeting for. The biggest project would be kitchen cabinets and flooring. Ken has already got some estimates, and the board will be looking at these projects in the future
- **Church Refreshing Committee** – Gail reports that although the committee hasn't met yet, she has been making a list of some projects, large and small, to be done. Tim commented that the areas of the church that people see the most should be the areas to start – mainly the Sanctuary. There are also some things that are safety concerns that need to be taken care of soon. The biggest one is the lighting in the Sanctuary.
- **Chicken BBQ** – The date for the chicken barbeque will be Saturday, April 18th. Kevin Biddle will be in charge, as Karen will be away, with help from Bob Bishop and others who have helped before. 350 tickets have been printed with 300 dinners have been ordered. If presale does well, we can up the dinner count. Tickets are \$15.00
- **Senior Recognition** – Sunday, April 19th – Gail has agreed to take care of the coffee hour that will be held in the Gathering Room. (This date may change to April 26 if there is to be no luncheon on the 26th).

New Business:

- **Parsonage rental** – Cathy Kobel said she did have several people stop to speak with her about renting the parsonage to Ted and Leslie. After discussion, Linda Bishop made a motion to rent the parsonage to Ted and Leslie. Gail seconded the motion. All in favor – motion passed. Cathy introduced an idea that Ted might want to stay on as pastor for longer than had originally planned with several options for payment. Ted will discuss it with Leslie. Stayed tuned!
- **Planning of Pastor's retirement party** – Gail has offered to plan the party for Ted with a light lunch and celebratory cake. Originally planned for April 26 but that date might change.
- **Easter music** – Robin will be away for Easter, and we need to find a supply organist. Zach suggested that maybe Lydia and Cody could fill in. Zach will check with them. Ted also mentioned we probably should get another member on the music committee when he leaves.
- **Review board member responsibility – Deacons & Trustees** – all seemed comfortable with knowing what they need to do for their positions

Congregation feedback? Gail is encouraging folks to wear their name tags.

January 2026		TREASURER'S MONTHLY FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
Operating Fund	Start Balance	Receipts	Interest	Total Income	Expenses	End Balance	
Current Account	23,265.24	8,377.82		31,643.06	16,538.84	15,104.22	
Benevolent Account	59.44	206.00		265.44		265.44	
Operating Fund Total	23,324.68	8,583.82	0.00	31,908.50	16,538.84	15,369.66	
2027 Prepaid Pledges						0.00	
Other Funds (not included in Operating Fund or Budget)							
WACIC Grant (Griefshare, Grace for the Journey) \$2643	1,489.71			1,489.71		1,489.71	
Special Benevolent	0.00	500.00		500.00	500.00	0.00	
Major Repairs Long Term Fund	63,675.50	0.00		63,675.50		63,675.50	
Memorial Fund	7,329.79	100.00		7,429.79		7,429.79	
Other Funds Total	72,495.00	600.00		73,095.00	500.00	72,595.00	
Asset Accounts - NBT Bank - Checking, Savings, CDs	95,819.68	9,183.82	0.00	105,003.50	17,038.84	87,964.66	
Weekly Income							
	1/4/2026	1/11/2026	1/18/2026	1/25/2026		Total	
Current Account	4,385.00	2,102.82	1,890.00			8,377.82	
Benevolent Account	200.00	6.00				206.00	
Operating Fund Total	4,585.00	2,108.82	1,890.00	0.00	0.00	8,583.82	
2026 Prepaid Pledges						0.00	
PayPal fees						0.00	
WACIC Grant (Griefshare, Grace for the Journey) \$2643						0.00	
Special Benevolent	500.00					500.00	
Major Repairs Long Term Fund						0.00	
Memorial Fund	100.00					100.00	
Total Weekly Income	5,185.00	2,108.82	1,890.00	0.00	0.00	9,183.82	

	ITEMIZED BUDGET AND EXPENSE REPORT		2026							% Spent to Date	Remaining Budget Amount	Totals
	BUDGET AMOUNT	EXPENSES January	EXPENSES February	EXPENSES March	EXPENSES April	EXPENSES May	EXPENSES June	EXPENSES July				
CURRENT ACCOUNT												
1. Pastor's Salary	39,600.00	6,600.00								17%	33,000.00	6,600.00
2. Pastor's Medical	2,000.00	500.00								25%	1,500.00	500.00
3. Pastor's Travel	400.00	208.60								52%	191.40	208.60
4. Pastor's Professional Expenses and Continuing Education	500.00									0%	500.00	-
5. Pastor's Pension 14% of salary	3,000.00	631.17								21%	2,368.83	631.17
6. Pastor's Disability 1.5% of salary	150.00	67.63								45%	82.37	67.63
7. Parsonage Utilities - Electric, Gas, Water	2,700.00	365.37								14%	2,334.63	365.37
8. Supply Pastor	1,500.00									0%	1,500.00	-
9. Organist and Choir Director	9,600.00	800.00								8%	8,800.00	800.00
10. Church Office Secretary (18.00/hr.)	15,000.00	1,026.00								7%	13,974.00	1,026.00
11. Church Sexton (\$300 per month)	3,600.00	300.00								8%	3,300.00	300.00
12. Social Security and Medicare	2,600.00	736.70								28%	1,863.30	736.70
13. Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance	2,000.00									0%	2,000.00	-
14. Church & Office Supplies	2,000.00	580.35								29%	1,419.65	580.35
15. Church School Supplies and Program	500.00									0%	500.00	-
16. Music Supplies	200.00	-								0%	200.00	-
17. Sexton Supplies	400.00									0%	400.00	-
18. Church Fellowship/Invitation Team	200.00									0%	200.00	-
19. Church Utilities	9,000.00	1,552.66								17%	7,447.34	1,552.66
20. Insurance (Fire, Theft, Liability)	13,500.00	3,333.00								25%	10,167.00	3,333.00
21. Taxes - County and Town	2,500.00									0%	2,500.00	-
22. Maintenance and Repair	2,250.00									0%	2,250.00	-
23. Grounds Maintenance - Snowplowing and Yard Work	4,200.00									0%	4,200.00	-
24. Our Church's Wider Mission	1,500.00									0%	1,500.00	-
25. Churches in Covenant	750.00									0%	750.00	-
26. Dunkirk Conference Center	500.00									0%	500.00	-
27. Love INC	400.00									0%	400.00	-
28. Bread of Life Outreach	400.00									0%	400.00	-
29. Boston Valley School	400.00									0%	400.00	-
30. Colden Elementary	400.00									0%	400.00	-
31. Plymouth Crossroads	750.00									0%	750.00	-
TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET	122,500	16,701.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16%	105,799	16,701.48

MARCH GREETERS 2026

Date	Elevator Entrance	Main Entrance
March 1	Karen Winter Herb Berlin, Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Linda Bishop Linda Bishop
March 8	Carol & Ken Ottaway Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Leslie Brelsford Leslie Brelsford
March 15	Pat Minnick Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Sandy Jordan Sandy Jordan
March 22	Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop	Ginny Taber Ginny Taber
March 29	Pegge Cook Herb Berlin, Linda & Bobby Bishop, Kathy & Bruce Lounsbury	Pat Minnick Pat Minnick

Please call the church office, 716-941-3529, or Lois T., 716-941-3248, should you need to change the schedule. We appreciate you taking time to share your love of Christ with others by welcoming them to our worship service.



Missions

The mission team will be having the spring food drive from March 8 until the March 29. Donations will go to VALOR, an organization that helps veterans. Let us help those that once served us. Donations are gratefully accepted.

Christian Education

There will be a Christian Education meeting on March 22 following the worship service. Representatives from the Women's Group, Men's Group, Health Group, Library, Historian, Newspaper publicity, Dunkirk, and the Sunday School are asked to attend. See Gail Berger if you have any questions or concerns.

Publicity: Pictures taken at church events are often used for publicity, especially on the church's website. If you do not want you or your child's picture used, please contact the church office. It will be assumed that it is okay to use your picture if we do not hear from you.

Intro to Meditation: Compassion

Compassion is a mental movement that helps us actually feel younger and look younger. Cultivating mental compassion for ourselves and for others brings us into the essences of love and freedom from resentment and fear.

When we have our hearts full of compassion we are able to find our truth and face our fears without hesitation.

Please join us as we will come together on March 16th through April 20th, Mondays at 7 p.m. We will bring in self-love and love for all around us, a well as learn the basics of bringing our minds to a peaceful place.

**Quiet Your Mind,
Find Your Peace**
Intro to Meditation : Compassion

Join to learn different methods to be present & center yourself in peace with compassion .
Learn the joys of sitting with yourself, taking a pause from the outside world.
We will practice observing our body & mind, bringing in self-love & love for all around you.

FREE
Mondays 7pm-8pm
Starting March 16th - April 20th
With Katherine

Register anytime during the program.
To register or ask questions email Quietyourmind.Km@gmail.com

Follow on Instagram for updates!
[@QuietYourMindFindYourPeace](https://www.instagram.com/quietyourmindfindyourpeace)

Located at Faith United Church
8651 Boston State Rd. Boston NY

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday To:

1 – William Darnley
Sue Boulter
3 – Jeremy Werner
Matthew Lounsbury
5 – Betty Kotlarsz
7 – Avery Qi
11 – Pat Granville
DonnaLee Melberg
12 – Stacy Lehman

18 – Warren Rauch
19 – Warren Skinner
Erin Mueller
22 – Brayden Logel
26 – Jamie William Brown
27 – Toby Abrams
Jeff Biddle
28 – Alyssa & Conner Johnson
29 – Shelby Stisser
31 – Ken Partridge

Happy Anniversary To:

9 – Fred & Lois Thurnherr
14 – Bob & Linda Bishop
22 – Chuck & Helen Zittel

Congratulations to all!!!