

The Lamplighter

The United Church
11 Gibson Street



Canandaigua, NY
585-394-0503

Worship Services, 8:45 and 11:00 am

February 2025

Rev. Dr. Wade Allen

- Feb 3 – Trustees meeting, 7:00 pm
- Feb 4 – Stewards, 6:30 pm
- Feb 8 – All Church Game Night, 6:30 pm
- Feb 9 – Souper Bowl fundraiser
- Feb 17 – Church Office closed for holiday
- Feb 17 – Official Board, 7:00 pm



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The Teachings of Jesus



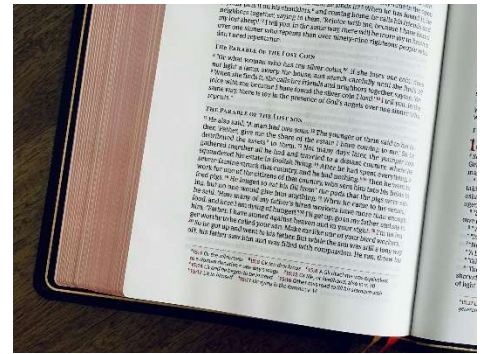
As a church family, we have established a tradition of celebrating the season of Epiphany, which commences on January 6 and continues until Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. This season invites us to reflect on the ministry of Jesus as the light that enters a dark world, guiding us through His baptism, teachings, and healings. In 2025, Ash Wednesday will occur on February 26, extending the Epiphany season and allowing for more Sundays, offering extra opportunities for reflection and celebration.

In February, we will focus significantly on Jesus' teachings, which, I must warn you, are challenging to embrace. Ultimately, we can only embody these teachings through the power of God. The early church also wrestled with Jesus' radical call to love others and to respond to persecution with love and grace, a theme echoed in the letters of Paul and Peter to the first-century churches. I encourage you to take the time to read the Scriptures each week and come to worship prepared to engage with God's Word.

Wade

Worship Schedule and Readings for February

- February 02 - Coming Home, Part 2: When Nazareth Turned on Jesus (Luke 4:21-30)
Additional Readings: Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- February 09 - Masters and Fishermen (Luke 5:1-11)
Additional Readings: Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- February 16 - Upside Down Blessings (Luke 6:17-26)
Additional Readings: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, Psalm 1
- February 23 - Unnatural Love: A Call to Love Our Enemies (Luke 6:27-36)
Additional Readings: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40, 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50



Exploring Membership at Our Church

Are you interested in learning more about our church community and what it means to be a member? We warmly invite you to join us for our upcoming Exploring Membership Class, where you'll have the opportunity to deepen your understanding of our church's mission, values, and community life.

February 16, from 9:45-10:45 am in the Fellowship Room

What to Expect

During this engaging session, you'll learn about:

- Our church's rich history and heritage
- Our governance structure and how decisions are made
- The meaning and significance of church membership
- Ways to get involved and serve in our community
- Our beliefs and theological perspectives

Why Attend?

Whether you're new to our church or have been attending for a while, this class provides valuable insights into who we are as a congregation. You'll have the chance to ask questions, meet church leaders, and connect with others who are also exploring membership.

Class Details

While the class is designed for those considering membership, there is no obligation to join. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn more about our church family and discern if this is where God is calling you to put down spiritual roots.

We look forward to getting to know you better and walking alongside you on your spiritual journey.

For questions or more information, please contact the church office.

Scan the code to register or follow this link
<https://uccdga.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2723914>



Care Ministry

Welcome New Stewards

"Guided by our love for the Lord and a deep commitment to serving others, the Board of Stewards seeks to extend God's love through acts of humility, kindness, compassion, and faithfulness. Our mission is to provide companionship, support, and care to our church family members aged 90 and above, as well as those in long-term care. Through personal visits and meaningful engagement, we strive to create a community of love and support where everyone feels valued and connected."



The Board of Stewards is a dedicated and well-equipped team, trained to care for the aging with sensitivity and grace. It is a privilege to work alongside this Christ-centered group as they serve the Lord by serving others.

I am delighted to introduce our 2025 Board of Stewards. Returning to continue their faithful service are Bev, Bill, Dan, Martha, Marion, Phil, Rachel, Sharyn and Wanda. We are also thrilled to welcome Beth, Gail, and Diane to our team. Their energy and commitment will be a blessing to this ministry.

Please join me in praying for this team as they build meaningful relationships and provide support to their Senior Companions. May God guide their efforts and bless their ministry abundantly.



February 25 Happy Birthday Bob Ledgerwood!

Bob has been a member of the United Church for many years. He regularly attended services until his health declined. He still attends a weekly Bible Study.

Bob has two daughters and eight Grand Children who visit often. He enjoys seeing them but admits it is tiring on holiday visits.

Bob enjoys watching football and TV westerns. He is an expert on anything to do with the Beatles and has an office wall of Beatles pictures and records. Bob's favorite lunch is Wendy's spicy chicken sandwich and is not a fan of Meals On Wheels liver.

Bob enjoys the fellowship of Stewards lunches and continues to be a cherished member of the United Church.

-Written by Steward Bill Fortunato

A Big Shout-Out!

To our incredible Transportation Team and Meal Train Team--thank you for the tremendous impact you've made on so many lives over the past few months. Your dedication and service are deeply appreciated, and you are truly making a difference!

Senior Luncheon: Finding Balance and Renewal

Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua is hosting its monthly **Senior Luncheon** on **February 21st**. These luncheons typically cover topics relevant to seniors, but this month's event will focus on caregivers and offer tools for finding balance and renewal.

The schedule is as follows:

- **11:30 AM:** Lunch
- **12:15 PM:** Presentation by **Susan Barber Skinner, PhD**, titled **"The Heart of Care: Finding Balance and Renewal."**
- **1:00 PM:** Departure

This free event provides a great opportunity for seniors and caregivers to gain valuable insights while enjoying fellowship. If you or someone you know could benefit from this topic, consider attending.

For more information or to RSVP, visit www.notredameretreat.org or email staff@notredameretreat.org.

Thank you! to everyone who has given to the Stewards Assistance Fund in 2024. Your generous donations have helped those with need among our church family - especially during the holiday season.

*"Beautiful young people are accidents of nature,
but beautiful old people are works of art."*

Eleanor Roosevelt





Faith and Action

Mexico LWW Mission Trip

March 8th – March 17th, 2025, our church Living Waters for the World (LWW) team (Linda Werts, Ray McMillen, and Ken Allen) and others will travel to the rural community of Cedralito in the southeast corner of the Mexican state of Quintana Roo on the Yucatán Peninsula. Cedralito is one of our LWW partners. Their plant has been operating for 13 years supplying the community and surrounding area with safe, clean water. The Water plant needs updating to continue to supply life-giving water to the people.

“Clean water transforms their future. Living Water transforms all.”

A GoFundMe account has been established to assist with the costs. If you are led to give to this mission, go to [GoFundMe.com](https://www.gofundme.com), search for keyword: **Cedralito. Thank You and God Bless You!**



North Carolina Hurricane Relief Mission Trip

The week of April 14th. Plans are underway for an **inter-generational work trip to Fairview, NC.** Seabees Outreach Ministry, a ministry of Navy veterans, is establishing a work camp there to help locals devastated by the hurricane. They have assured us that they will find appropriate work for any skill level. If you missed the informational meeting in January, feel free to reach out to Sonya Brooks (sonya.brooks99@yahoo.com).

2024 Financial Summary

We ended the 2024 financial year in significantly better shape than we had predicted during the fall. We had a \$5,374.04 loss for the year. Expenses were \$10,342.42 less than budgeted and income was \$15,716.46 less than budgeted. Thank you for your tithes and offerings.

Fellowship Events

Game Night

Looking for something fun to do? Join us for **Game Night** in the Fellowship Room on **Saturday, February 8**, from **6:30 to 8:30 PM**. This family-friendly event offers an opportunity for church members of all ages to come together and enjoy a variety of board games, card games, and friendly competition. **To add some extra fun, we’re planning a PAJAMA GAME NIGHT (Church and family friendly, please! Wear regular clothes if you prefer.)** Whether you're a seasoned game master or just looking to have fun, there's something for everyone. Snacks and refreshments will be available to enjoy as you engage in lighthearted fun and connect with others in the church community. Bring your friends, family, or come solo—*Game Night is a great way to meet new people and build lasting relationships.* Don’t miss out on this enjoyable evening! For more information, please contact the church office. We look forward to seeing you there!



Stampin’ Up! Feb 15 from 9:30-noon -Come join us to create some cards. No experience is needed. Cost is \$20 for 4 cards and envelopes. Please bring a tape runner or glue. I will have everything else needed. Please let me know if you are coming by Monday Feb 10th. Nancy Burt-Preece (email: nancyburtprece@gmail.com).

FAMILY MINISTRY

What's happened...

On **January 22nd**, the **Youth Club** kids were able to **invite one friend** to join them at Youth Club. We had many friends come and see all the fun we have each week ~ we had a snow festival! We invite these friends to continue coming to Youth Club for the rest of the year, and each year we usually have a few friends who decide to do that! We are so blessed to be able to continue to share this valuable ministry with so many children and their families.

Sunday school resumed on **January 5, 2025** with an **intergenerational** Sunday school class **focused on prayer**. We talked about prayer, different types of prayer, and discussed the Lord's prayer - the model Jesus gave his disciples for prayer (that's us!). We continued our focus on prayer throughout January. Table talkers were given to families and we encouraged families to borrow books from the Parent-Child Library in the upstairs chapel. There are even some books there that our church will purchase for a family if they are interested! We hope to continue to offer our families resources throughout 2025.

Each Sunday, we offer **Sunday school classes for all ages**. We have classes upstairs for 3-year-olds all the way through seniors in High School. We also offer a variety of classes for adults, including Parenting Coffee Hour and a Bible study (currently focused on Jesus in the Old Testament). In addition, nursery care is provided so that parents of young children can either teach a class or attend a class of their choice.

What's happening...

The season of **Lent** begins on **Ash Wednesday**, which is **March 5th** this year. All children who attend Sunday school will be given an age appropriate **Lent devotional** and older students will be encouraged to take one. We work hard at picking out Lent devotionals each year, and we hope these help children and families spend time **growing closer to God** and one another during this special church season.

On February 12, the Youth Club kids will be filling "**birthday bags**." These bags are filled with **cake mix, frosting, birthday candles, balloons, and birthday napkins**. The bags are decorated and filled by our Youth Club kids and then given to local food pantries for families who are celebrating a birthday. You can help by **donating** the aforementioned items **by Feb 9th**. There is a collection box in Deb Marshall's office.

Save the dates...

Make plans to navigate to **True North VBS!!**

July 14-18, 2025, 9am – 12noon

Kick-off: Sun., July 13, 2025 at 6:30pm

Registration will begin in March

All children, ages **4 years old** through those who **completed 5th grade**, are welcome to **participate!**

Children/teens who **completed 6th – 12th grade** are *encouraged to volunteer!*

Adults are needed as **volunteers** as well - how will YOU be involved in this memorable week???



YOUTH & ADULT MINISTRY

Youth

Youth Groups: Our weekly high school program (known as The Cause, an extension of our Youth Club ministry) continues with the curriculum titled “Can I Ask That? Hard Questions about God and Faith”. Our middle school program (part of our Youth Club ministry) continues with our Deep Discipleship curriculum.

Sunday School: Middle School and High School continue with Deep Discipleship as our curriculum.

Special Events: For February, we will be hosting our Souper Bowl of Caring fundraiser (February 9th). Funds raised will be donated to Canandaigua Christian Churches in Action (CCIA).

Monthly Connects: As always, our monthly school district connects (including Victor, Canandaigua, and Marcus Whitman) continue! Check the church calendar for dates.

Youth Ministry Team: This year’s team includes: Julie Zajac, Dale Zajac, Lauren Slomski, Kayleigh Sheppard, Ray McMillen, Sandi DiCicco, Jen Callard, and Jini Hildebrandt! Interested in joining our team? Let Pastor Mark or any team member know!

Young Adults & Adults

Small Groups: The women’s group (a 20/30-something ministry) continues to meet at our church. The Christian club at FLCC also continues, with Wendy Bacon supporting this club and keeping us informed as to how we can best support them. Other adults in our church are engaged in various small group ministries. To name a few, we have our Men’s breakfast, Women’s circles, Bible study groups, knitting group, and prayer shawl knitting. Some new small groups have already formed, and other potential facilitators are considering what they’d like to do. Would you like to facilitate a small group? Contact Pastor Mark or Jen Eveleigh.

Sunday School: The Adult Education Sunday School Hour continues! Our Bible Study class is starting a study titled: "Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament". We also continue to host the Parenting Coffee Hour. This casual group continues through a devotional titled "Upside Down Parenting".

Monthly Connects: Our monthly connect at Ferris Hills on the first Wednesday of the month continues. There is discernment for more monthly connects in 2025!

The Adult Ministry Team: Brenda and Bob Cunningham, Steve Simpson, Gary Preece, Gail Benjamin, Adam Thorman, Bev Fehrenbach, and Melissa Long. Wendy Bacon and Deb Marshall are serving as counsel for our young adult ministry.



Mark Slomski | Pastor of Youth & Adult Ministry | Mark.Slomski@uccdga.org | 585-455-7491

PASTORAL MINISTRY

This article is part three of a larger reflection on the mission of the Church in a post-Christian culture. In December, I wrote about the importance of publicly proclaiming the faith (A belief that is rooted biblically and historically). In January, I emphasized the importance of instruction (and done so through education and living in wisdom). This month, I wrap up this series on the importance of practice (Discipleship)...

Practice (Discipleship)

With belief and instruction in place, the post-Christian world would benefit from a missional commitment of *practice*. While a Christian's *belief* is rooted biblically and historically, and a Christian's *instruction* is found through catechesis and wisdom, a believer's *practice* is rooted in eschatology. As scholar Christopher Watkins explains, in "the church's vision... one "eye" sees through the culture of the day – in our case late modernity – and the other is shifted with respect to this perspective, looking to the future fulfillment of the kingdom through the lens of God's promises."

This double focus of *now* and *eschaton* (the "not yet") finds home inside the biblical description of the kingdom of God being "at hand". As Chesterton wrote, this *now and not yet* tension mirrors how the Bible "looks at the world through a hundred windows where the ancient stoic or the modern agnostic only looks through one." Looking through a "hundred windows" is a great metaphor that ties practice to the multifaceted biblical account of wisdom noted in my article last month.

Christian practice will find both fertile ground and challenges in a western society that has diverged from origins so deeply influenced by those same Christian practices. Dr. Christopher Watkins affirms, "yes, our society is shot through with Christian values, and yes, Christian must be an alien, revolutionary presence in late modernity."

Practice is best expressed when it is able to maintain a comprehensive approach. More specifically, Dr. Watkin coined the term "transperspectival cultural engagement," that is, "to indicate a way in which the same reality is experienced across and through... different perspectives." The church's practice can impersonate the multiple perspectives of sacred and secular wisdom intertwined in the Scriptures (e.g., Proverbs with Ecclesiastes). In a post-Christian context where modernity and postmodernity collide, the Christian community can place into practice the biblical approach of neither homogenizing or fragmenting the various voices contributing toward any topic of conversation.

One example of this practice can be found in NT Wright's and Michael Bird's recently published book titled "Jesus and the Powers." In his argument for liberal democracy, Michael Bird states "in order to love our 'neighbor', we must allow our neighbor to be beside us and yet be different from us. Our neighbor has permission to be 'other' than us". To put it simply, the church's practice is coated in a proclamation of persuasion – not in coerciveness.

This practice is biblically informed by *Imago Dei*. Bird states, "there would never be human rights as self-evident truths without scriptural notions of the 'image of god' and the command to 'love your neighbor as yourselves' as it was interpreted in Christian societies."

Conclusion

Our post-Christian society needs the church to put its mission into *practice*. We do so by living in the "now and not yet", and viewing the world biblically, which satisfies the true needs of the world, all while promoting healing in the same broken world.

"For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead." - James 2:26

The United Church
Presbyterian-American Baptist
11 Gibson Street
Canandaigua, NY 14424

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Or Current Resident

February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 1030am AFG District mtg
2 845am Worship Service 945am Communicants 2025: Class 945am Sunday school for all ages 11am Worship Service 430pm The Cause	3 10am Worship Team: Worship Planning Team Meeting 1130am AFG 7pm Trustees	4 10am Knitters 10am Staff meeting 630pm Stewards: Stewards Meeting 7pm NA	5 7am Men's Prayer Breakfast 1pm Adult Connect - Ferris Hills 330pm Youth Club 7pm Choir rehearsal	6 1pm Bible Study	7 No events today	8 9am FLSO YA auditions 630pm Game Night
9 All-day Souper Bowl of Sharing Fundraiser 845am Worship Service 945am Sunday school for all ages 945am Communicants 2025: Class 11am Worship Service 12pm Bell Choir	10 1130am AFG 3pm ARC 7pm Cheerful Service Circle	11 10am Knitters 10am Staff meeting 1130am Circle 7 7pm Committee Night 7pm NA	12 7am Men's Prayer Breakfast 1pm Adult Connect - Quail Summit 330pm Youth Club 7pm Choir rehearsal	13 645am Connect CA 1pm Bible Study	14 No events today	15 930am Stampin' Up
16 845am Worship Service 945am Exploring Membership Class 11am Worship Service	17 All-day Office Closed for holiday 1130am AFG 7pm Official Board: Meeting	18 10am Knitters 10am Staff meeting 7pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm NA	19 7am Men's Prayer Breakfast 7pm Choir rehearsal	20 1pm Bible Study	21 No events today	22 No events today
23 845am Worship Service 945am Sunday school for all ages 945am Communicants 2025: Class 11am Worship Service 430pm The Cause	24 1130am AFG 230pm Connect MW	25 10am Knitters 10am Staff meeting 7pm NA 7pm FLSO rehearsal	26 7am Men's Prayer Breakfast 330pm Youth Club 7pm Choir rehearsal	27 645am Connect Victor 1pm Bible Study 7pm Bell Choir	28 No events today	