



Utica United
Methodist Church

Weekly Messenger

January 2, 2026

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Happy New Year!

My Beloved Church Family,

As we come to the end of this year, my heart is filled with gratitude to God for leading us through 2025. My deep appreciation also goes out to you for the many ways you supported the work and ministries of the Utica United Methodist Church, primarily through your prayers, gifts, and service.

We are particularly grateful to the members of TIM (Together-in-Missions) for sharing the love of Christ as a mission team, on our behalf, in the Upper Peninsula and in our community. We want to applaud our director, interns, the kitchen and driving volunteers for their support of our STARS and XCEL program. We are thankful to the organizers, volunteers, and supporters of the Oil Change Ministry, Trunk of Treat, Christmas Tea, Cookie Walk, Mini Pantry suppliers and volunteers, Bible Study and Sunday School Teachers, the leadership and members of our Men and Women Ministries, Ushers, members of the choir, chairs, and members of committees and all the silent and hidden hands who served faithfully even when no one was looking, and all members of UUMC. I am deeply grateful to you for all the ways you have shared the love of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond.

Last but very importantly, I want to thank our staff: Mer, David, and Rachelle, for their dedication to the various ministries they carry out so faithfully to the glory of God.

In the words of the Apostle Paul, drawn from 1 Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always giving yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

May the Lord crown this New Year with his goodness, steady our hearts in every uncertainty, and use our church family for his glory in 2026.

Blessings and peace!

Pastor Albert

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Methodist Church
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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Warming Center News

Utica United Methodist Church will be teaming up with Christ Church Fraser to help feed and shelter the homeless this winter as part of the Macomb County Winter Shelter run by the WAVE Project organization.

We will be looking for volunteers to help with multiple tasks and will have in person and on-line sign-up sheets starting the first week in January.

The shelter will be available to the homeless for 12 weeks starting 12/21. We will be helping for a week, January 25-31st. This is the second year for this shelter and it is very well organized.

There will be 2 – WAVE Project employees and 2 - security guards at the shelter each day.

Both churches have helped feed and host homeless for years, and will team up with the WAVE Project team for this year's Winter Shelter.

For those of you familiar with the (pre-Covid) Warming Center, many of the people and churches were involved with that program for years.

Here are some details:

When – Sunday January 25th thru Saturday January 31st

Where – The homeless will be sheltered at Trinity Lutheran Church on 8150 Chapp Ave. in Warren (9 ½ & Van Dyke).

This is where the guests will come and where we will be volunteering.

What – We are looking for volunteers to help with

- **Intake.** Doors will open at 7pm and be open until 9pm. Many guests will line up by 7:00. A full time Security Guard will assist with the intake process. We will also need volunteers to help with "Line Management", organizing the people in line, getting them a number, and setting expectations.
- **Registration.** Log the guest, provide name tag, and verify return guests.
- **Bag check-in.** Bags and coats will be tagged with the guest's number and stored. Guests will not have access to their bags after this.
- **Dinner.** We will provide a dinner for the guests. This can be prepared off-site and brought to, or be prepared in the Trinity Lutheran Church kitchen. We will also put together a grab & go breakfast for the next morning. No lunches are required.
We will assist with serving the dinner.
Clean up. We will clean up after dinner.
- **Routine cleaning.** Garbage, sanitizing cots, sweeping, etc.

We will be meeting with representatives from Christ Church Fraser on January 5th to put some final plans together (like which nights we'll be in charge of dinner).

We will have the sign-ups available by Sunday, January 4th and will be actively recruiting volunteers.

Please contact Ron Borgacz if you have any questions @ rborgacz@gmail.com or call 586-243-5538. If you call please leave a message and phone number and I will call you back.

For additional info on the shelter go to the following website. <https://www.waveproject.org/macomb-county-winter-shelter.html>

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

We are now Live!

Every Sunday, the 11am service will be shown live on our YouTube channel. Links are also available on Facebook and on the church website.

Please click on the link or type in the following to view the live stream -
<https://www.youtube.com/@uticaumc5212/live>.

The 9:00am service will continue to be recorded and will be posted the following week on Youtube.

***Please remember that if you watch the 9:00am service it is a week behind and the 11am service will be the current week.

Mini Food Pantry Update

A very special thank you to the continued support for the Mini Food Pantry. The cash donations have allowed us to purchase items and utilize sales. The donations from the women who attended the Christmas Tea were such an added blessing. Our shelves are full...."Thanks be to GOD!!!!

As we approach the colder months of winter extra care is needed to make sure the food items placed in the pantry will not freeze and explode. As you continue to purchase items and support this "community outreach" please remember NO GLASS containers.

The best choices:

Cereal

Oatmeal

Soups, Rice and Potato Dishes (in boxes or packets)

Tuna Fish in Pouches

With Gratitude and Thanks,
The Mini Food Pantry Team

GCCM Mission Trip 2026

As we approach the end of 2025 and start to ponder our goals for the New Year, you may be wanting to put your spiritual growth as something to work on in 2026. Our church mission team has once again made plans to serve God's Country Community Ministries (GCCM) on a mission trip to the Upper Peninsula during the week of June 21 - 27, 2026. In the coming weeks our mission team will be soliciting the level of interest from our church in being part of a team participating in this third mission trip to God's Country.

The skill levels of the team will determine the type of work that the team performs. Many details are flexible at this time so our main objective is to share the information we have and discuss schedule and work scope with those who may feel a calling to support this ministry. More details and signup sheets will be available starting Sunday, January 11th after service. Be sure to stop by the table after service to pick up an information packet and let us know of your interest. We will hold our first meeting on Tuesday, January 20th at 7:00 PM in the Narthex behind the sanctuary. Please plan to attend.

2026 UUMC Mission Team
Barry & Colleen Croteau - Mission Trip Organizers

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Featured Library Book

Mary Of Jerusalem
By Gloria Howe Bremkamp

Once upon a time, a friend told me her favorite season of the year was winter, I was befuddled! How could that be? To most of us, we think of outdoor icy patches causing us to slip or we can hear the ambulance sirens screeching to the latest car crash where someone has slid through an intersection.

Turn the page on that and contemplate what winter gives you the opportunity to do for YOURSELF. I'm going to do just that; I can see myself snuggled up on the sofa, tucked in with a fuzzy blanket and my fireplace roaring. But wait, I am reading a fiction book, Mary of Jerusalem.

WHY! The book gives a colorful portrayal and background of the mother of John Mark, she is referred to in the Bible in Acts 12:12. Mary's circle included Barnabas, Manaen, Antipas and more. Why not relax with this book and learn of the era following the death of Jesus Christ?

Give it a read. Call Numbers. FIC BRE in our church library.

Happy New Year! – Office News

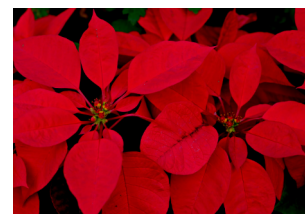
Thank you for your support in the final months of 2025. With your faithful giving we were able to pay our Ministry Shares in full, Together in Missions were able to fulfill their pledges to the EngageMI program and we have been able to pay our end of year bills while having money to carry forward into 2026 for beginning of year bills and payroll.

At the beginning of January, final giving statements will become available for 2025. Once you receive your end of the year giving statement, please verify the information with your records. If you notice any mistake, please bring it to the attention of the office and we can work to get it straightened out.

Along with the end of year giving statement, if you returned a pledge card for 2026, there will be a thank you for your commitment letter with the total annual pledge amount. The total amount was calculated by either a weekly pledge amount times 52 weeks or a monthly amount times 12 months, or if you just pledged an annual amount. Please use this letter as an acknowledgment of your pledge for the new year. If you feel this amount is incorrect, please have a conversation with me in the office.

Free Pointsettia's

The beautiful pointsettia's that were on the altar for Christmas Eve need a new home. If you missed out on getting a Christmas Pointsettia, please take one home with you. These are first come first serve until they are gone.



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES:

9:30AM

with Organ, Choir and Handbells
in the Sanctuary

11:00AM

with our Worship Band
in Fellowship Hall

Online Worship

A recorded service will be
available online on
Facebook, our church website and
on YouTube beginning at
9:00am each Sunday.

OFFICE HOURS:

**Monday - Friday
8:00am-2:00pm**

Mini Pantry

Food and Monetary
Donations are being
accepted.

Suggested foods: canned
meat, pancake mixes and
syrup, small peanut butter
and jelly, boxes of
crackers.

Keep Connected

If you are not signed up for our
Weekly Messenger email, you
can do so on our website by
clicking on the "More" tab, then
"Weekly Messenger"; on that
page you will find a place to
register for our weekly email!



*"Like" us
on
Facebook!*

Our Mission

Inviting people to rely
on Jesus to find
unexpected purpose,
peace and joy.

Ministry Team

Rev. J. Albert Barchue
pastor@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry

David Fox, Organist, Bell, & Chancel Choirs
Director
FoxDavidL@sbcglobal.net

Mer Renne, Contemporary
Worship Leader
mer@uticaumc.org

Communications Director/Bookkeeper Rachelle Heldt

rachelle@uticaumc.org
office@uticaumc.org

Deadline Information

Announcement Loop/Vertical TVs—

End of day on Tuesday each week
Messenger Articles and Prayer List by

Noon on Wednesday each week.

Announcement made during service
by 1pm Friday

E-mail rachelle@uticaumc.org or
office@uticaumc.org



Going on vacation; can't make it to church?

How about using E-giving so you can still give your offering for
those times when you can't be here **The E-giving tab is on our
church website: www.uticaumc.org**

If you need assistance, call the church office.

Celebrate Recovery, Thursday, 6:30pm



Watch the 11am service Live on our YouTube
Channel every Sunday morning

<https://www.youtube.com/@uticaumc5212/live>