



Weekly Messenger

January 9, 2026

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"Facing Our Giants"

A Four-Week Sermon Series, titled: **"Facing our Giants."**
Sunday, January 18–Sunday, February 8, 2026

Every one of us knows what it feels like to stand before something bigger than we are.

A challenge we didn't choose.

A fear we didn't expect.

A burden we don't know how to carry.

A "giant" that seems to tower over our faith, our confidence, and sometimes even our hope.

Scripture is full of people who faced giants—some literal, many figurative. And in every story, God shows us that the real battle is never won by human strength alone. It is won when ordinary people like you and me trust an extraordinary God.

This four-week series, Facing Our Giants, invites us to step into that story.

Not just David's story, or Israel's story, but your story as well.

You don't want to miss this series.



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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

Normalizing Next

By Olu Brown

What is your next? Churches have struggled to recover since post-covid-19 needing to create new innovative ideas for church growth. Normalizing Next is a resource for church leaders. Ole Brown illustrates a guide and process to operate in your "NEXT" in the post-covid world. Leadership and ministry must adapt to our changing world. To meet this challenge, recognizing and normalizing is paramount to the health and future of the Church. His ideas are in a two-part package set up for a home study, followed by guidebook of questions for classroom study.

Give it a read. Olu Brown is a retired pastor of an extremely successful church in Georgia. He states a church is 100% dependent on our ability to shift into our next. Call Numbers 268a and 268b in our church library.

Office News

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.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Save the date and plan to give blood at the Red Cross Blood Drive on Wednesday, January 28th from 11am-5pm. Please call 1-800-Red Cross (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org.

United Women in Faith

All women are invited to attend the UWIF meeting on Wednesday, January 14 in Fellowship Hall. We will begin with a potluck luncheon at noon. Please bring a dish to share and your place setting. Drinks will be provided.

Our program will begin at 1:00pm with Debra Ross from the Alzheimer's Association speaking on Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia. Questions contact Kathy Weaver (260-5935).

Faith Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 21st at 10:00 in the conference room.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Celebrate Recovery Changing Lives

As we step into a new year, we also celebrate a milestone: **Celebrate Recovery at Utica United Methodist Church is beginning its seventh year of ministry.**

From the very beginning, we've prayed a simple prayer before each Thursday gathering:

"Lord may tonight's meeting, and the words You put into our mouths, affect just one person. Amen."

And God has answered.

The numbers tell a story of quiet, steady impact. But it's not about the numbers. The numbers only hint at the deeper truth: when people show up, healing begins.

Over the past six years, an average of twelve people have gathered weekly. In total, seventy-seven individuals have walked through our doors—each one carrying hurts, habits, and hang-ups, seventy-seven lives touched. Seventy-seven life stories. Seventy-seven journeys toward hope, and each one finding that hope in Christ and in community.

Celebrate Recovery is often misunderstood. Some think it's only for "those people." But the truth is, we are all "one of those people." Every one of us has been hurt, and every one of us has hurt others. We all develop habits and coping mechanisms to avoid dealing with the pain, and sometimes those habits grow into hang-ups—fears, anxieties, or obsessions that weigh us down.

Celebrate Recovery is not about labels. It's about healing. It's about people helping people. It's about discovering that God's grace is big enough for all of us.

At Utica, our group seems to serve as an introductory, a safe place to begin the journey. Many move on to larger or more specialized groups, but every step matters. Every person matters.

If you've ever wondered what Celebrate Recovery is—or what it isn't—we invite you to join us. **Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM.** Come as you are. Bring your questions, your hurts, or simply your curiosity.

It just may change your life.

In Christ's love,

Bob & Patsy

Celebrate Recovery Ministry Leaders
Utica United Methodist Church

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>