



Farmingdale United Methodist Church

407 Main Street, Farmingdale, NY 11735

516-694-3424



www.farmingdaleumc.org

Pastor Claire Wu

THE MESSENGER

December 2025

Volume: 9 Issue: 12

Dear Beloved Friends in Christ,

“But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” (Luke 2:10)

Winter seemed to arrive almost overnight this year, didn't it? As we gathered around Thanksgiving tables with family and friends, I pray that God's steadfast love was poured out upon you and those you hold

dear. I hope you found moments to pause, to notice God's blessings, and to give thanks for the many ways God continues to care for you and your loved ones.

And now, in what feels like the blink of an eye, we are making our Advent and Christmas plans. The church is bustling with beautiful services, meaningful gatherings, and preparations for this sacred season. I imagine your homes are also busy—unpacking decorations, planning celebrations, and embracing the rhythms of Christmas.

Yet during this wonderfully full time of year—when we're decorating our homes, humming along at concerts, searching for meaningful gifts, and juggling traditions we cherish—I wonder if you, like me, sometimes forget to leave room for pure, unhurried joy. I'll admit



that I do. Every year, in my eager rush to experience everything that “makes” Christmas, I find the true joy of the season quietly slipping to the edges. How ironic that the season meant to bring such joy can be the very thing that overwhelms it.

But what is “joy,” really? We might call it “happiness,” and happiness certainly plays a part. Yet joy is deeper. Joy surprises us. Joy sparks wonder. Joy meets us in unexpected places as we encounter the love of God in ways we could never plan.

And joy also invites us to loosen our grip—to let go of our need to control every detail and instead allow God's grace to move freely in and around us. No wonder the angel's first words to the shepherds, when announcing unimaginable joy, were “Do not be afraid.”

And as we look around our community, we are mindful that not all hearts feel light in this season. There are neighbors among us who are carrying heavy burdens—those grieving losses, navigating illness, facing financial hardship, or simply struggling to find hope amid the noise of



celebration. Some are longing for connection. Others are quietly trying to make it through the day.

To you, dear neighbors who find yourselves in distress this Christmas: ***you are seen, you are loved, and you do not walk alone.*** The God who came to dwell with us—as vulnerable as a newborn, as radiant as divine love—comes still. Not only for those whose lives feel joyful and bright, but especially for those whose nights feel long, cold, or uncertain. Emmanuel comes ***for you***, bringing a light no darkness can overcome. God loved us so much that God came to dwell with us. Nothing could be simpler, more profoundly mysterious, or more of a reason for us to rejoice. That is the essence of the Christ—the essence of Christmas.

I warmly invite each of you to join us for our December services:

ADVENT BEGINS —

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30 at 9:30 AM
“Hanging of the Greens” Service

Join us in the sanctuary for one of the most meaningful worship services of the year as we begin Advent together, decorating the church

and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT —

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 at 9:30 AM

Our Annual Christmas Pageant is a beloved tradition where children and adults share the Nativity story with joy and wonder. Please don’t miss this special celebration.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES —

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

- **7:00 PM – Family Service**
- **10:30 PM – Candlelight Service (In person only)**
- ***Invite and bring others to worship Christ!***

As we enter this holy season, may we hear again the words that echo across the ages—from the hillside to our homes, from weary shepherds to weary hearts: *Do not be afraid, for God is with us.* May the joy of Emmanuel—God with us—find its way into even the tender, complicated corners of your life. And may that joy, gentle as dawn and strong as hope, fill your days and restore your spirit this Christmas.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Claire Wu

Pastoral Change of Appointment

Most of you have heard by now that I have been appointed as the lead pastor of North Shore Villages Cooperative Parish, effective January 1, 2026, and that a new pastor will be appointed to Farmingdale. I wish I could have shared this news with each of you personally. As I sit to write this letter, my heart is filled with deep gratitude for every person at Farmingdale UMC. Serving as your pastor has been a profound privilege and joy—one that I will carry with me every day as I begin this new chapter of ministry.

Farmingdale UMC is a special place, and you are a truly special congregation. You work together in Christ to bless the community; we have praised and worshiped God together, dreamed and discerned new possibilities, and shared God’s joy and love wherever God called us. We have laughed together, supported one another, and through it all, you have helped my family and me grow in ways we will forever cherish. You have prepared us well for this next step—and I know that you, too, are ready to move



forward with fresh vision and renewed energy alongside your new pastor.

As we prepare to enter this new part of our journey, I am filled with hope and excitement for the future of Farmingdale UMC. Great things lie ahead for this church. I trust that new vision, new possibilities, and God's joy will continue to flourish as you support one another and care for your community.

Though I may be leaving, my heart will always hold a special place for each and every one of

you. Thank you for your friendship, your support, and your love. As we part ways, please know that you will remain in my prayers, and I will be cheering you on in all that you do together. This is a church that truly shines God's love into every life, and I cannot wait to see the new ways God will shine through you.

With love and gratitude,
Pastor Claire Wu



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A NEW PROGRAM

ADVENT: THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

ON SUNDAYS, NOVEMBER 30, DECEMBER 7, DECEMBER 21

11:00AM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL



Journey through Advent with a focused, three-week study on the coming of Jesus, centered on the opening chapters of Matthew, Luke, and John. Each session weaves together Scripture reading, historical insight, and prayerful questions that invite both personal reflection and shared conversation. All are welcome!



Sunday Church Service 9:30AM

Church will be open for in-person worship at 9:30am.

We will continue to hold our worship service on ZOOM as well.

ZOOM <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5166943424?pwd=TWtTVElWUHNXbjVNcnNMaG9wTVJrZz09>

(Meeting ID: 516 694 3424, Password 11735)



Alternate Giving may be done through [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly).

There are three methods of giving - pick what works best for you.



1 - Farmingdale UMC website: From the home page, go to the Donate tab, then Online & General Giving, then click on the "Donate" button. This will direct you to the giving page for our church.

2 - Or use the direct URL link to the giving page for our church. <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1697513>

3 - You can also download the App onto your mobile phone. Download the "[Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) Finance" app with green logo. It will next prompt you to look for our church - enter Farmingdale United Methodist Church. You will be directed to the giving page for our church.

FARMINGDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Mission Statement

Our mission is sharing God's unconditional love by serving our neighbors, connecting with all God's children in Christian fellowship and providing safe spaces for everyone to grow in faith and love.

FUMC Code of Conduct Statement

In alignment with our Mission Statement to provide safe spaces to grow in faith and love, Farmingdale United Methodist Church expects appropriate and respectful behavior at all church meetings and functions. Behavior that is hurtful, divisive and destructive will not be condoned.



Availability of Space and Rooms



Our Fellowship Hall is now available for ongoing programs, meetings, parties, etc., and we have several other rooms that can be used for smaller groups or private worship. If you know anyone who may be interested in utilizing space, please have them call the office at 516 694-3424.



Last Month's THANKSGIVING BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who was the first person in the Bible to offer thanks to God?
2. What kind of offering did Noah give after leaving the ark? (*Genesis 8:20*)
3. In Luke 17, how many lepers did Jesus heal—and how many returned to give thanks?
4. What does Paul tell us to do “in everything” according to 1 Thessalonians 5:18?
5. What kind of heart does Psalm 100:4 encourage us to have when we enter God’s presence?
6. Who said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior”?
7. In which book of the Bible do we find the phrase, “His mercy endures forever”?

Bonus Question:

What are three things you are most thankful to God for this year?

ANSWERS:

1. Noah. After the flood, Noah built an altar and gave thanks to God through burnt offerings. (*Genesis 8:20*)
2. A burnt offering. Noah took some of the clean animals and birds and offered them as burnt offerings to the Lord in gratitude. (*Genesis 8:20*)
3. Ten were healed, but only one returned to thank Jesus. The thankful man was a Samaritan, and Jesus praised his faith. (*Luke 17:11–19*)
4. “Give thanks in all circumstances.” Paul reminds us that gratitude should be a constant part of the Christian life—no matter what we face. (*1 Thessalonians 5:18*)
5. A thankful and praising heart. “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and bless His name.” (*Psalm 100:4*)
6. Mary, the mother of Jesus. These words are part of The Magnificat, Mary’s song of praise when she visited Elizabeth. (*Luke 1:46–47*)
7. Psalms. This phrase appears many times in the Book of Psalms, especially Psalm 136, where it repeats in every verse.

Bonus Question: There’s no wrong answer here! You can lift all gratitudes to God and share from the heart — family, faith, good health, answered prayers, or simply God’s love and grace.



DECEMBER'S BIBLE QUIZ

Which prophet foretold that “a virgin shall conceive and bear a son”?

- A) Isaiah B) Jeremiah C) Ezekiel D) Micah

? ?

According to Micah, the Messiah would be born in which town?

- A) Nazareth B) Jerusalem C) Bethlehem D) Hebron

? ?

Which Old Testament figure said, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light”?

? ?

Who was the Roman ruler who ordered the census that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem?

- A) Nero B) Augustus C) Tiberius D) Claudius

? ?

Which Gospel includes the angel’s announcement to Mary?

- A) Matthew B) Mark C) Luke D) John

? ?

What was Joseph’s initial plan when he learned Mary was pregnant?

- A) Divorce her quietly B) Send her to relatives C) Confront her publicly
D) Flee to Galilee

? ?

What sign did the angel give the shepherds?

? ?



November News

Thank you to Cathy Dinda
for our beautiful
Thanksgiving altar!



And to all who
made our annual
food drive a
success!

Please be an Angel and support our Giving Tree



*Each ornament
bears an item for
someone in need.
Gift cards to general
retailers are also
appreciated.*



*Please place your unwrapped gifts under the tree by
Sunday, December 14th. Should you have any questions,
please contact Karen Gierie Newman. Thank you!*



Notes From the Loft



Psalms 96:1-4, 11-13 reads, “O sing unto the LORD a new song. Sing unto the LORD, all the earth! Sing unto the LORD. Bless His name. Show forth His salvation from day to day.

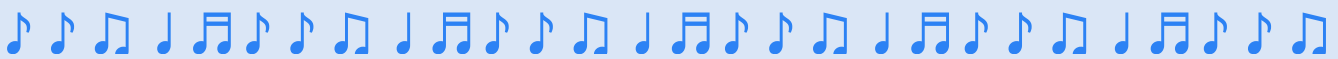
Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised! He is to be feared above all gods. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad. Let the sea roar and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the LORD, for He cometh! For He cometh to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with His truth.”

It was St. Augustine who wrote, “I never have any difficulty believing in miracles, since I experienced the miracle of a change in my own heart.”

We believe in the miracle of a baby conceived in the womb of a 90-year-old woman, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, when she bore Isaac. We believe in the miracle of a baby conceived in the womb of a virgin, Mary, the teenage girl who bore Jesus. We believe in the Resurrection of Jesus, when He came forth alive from the tomb, and we cry out, with His disciple, Thomas, “My Lord and my God!” And, like Augustine, we can sing carols celebrating the birth of our Savior, because we have experienced the reality of His salvation being born in our hearts.

All through Advent and the month of December, as we approach the new year (already!), we will sing so many of the songs we traditionally sang throughout our lives – and, hopefully, we may even learn a few new ones.

Come to church this month with a commitment to sing LOUDLY and WITH GREAT JOY our hymns of praise to our Savior-God, our Lord Jesus Christ.



DON'T MISS OUR ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
AT 9:30AM SERVICE ON
DECEMBER 14, 2025
THRILLS AND CHILLS!
SURPRISE ENDING!



Upcoming Events

Zoom Meetings

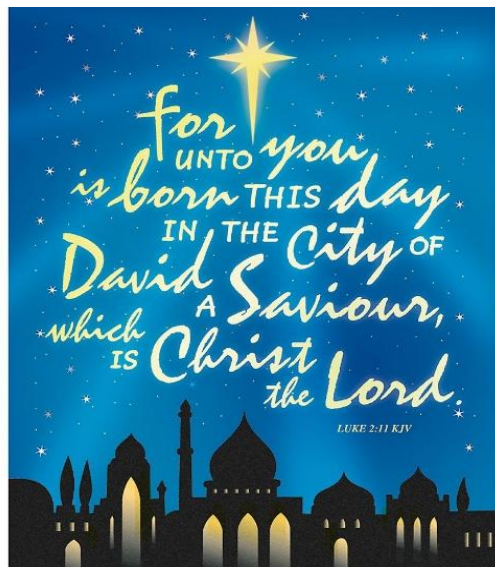
Saturdays weekly Men's Bible Study, 8 AM
 Wednesday weekly Bible Class 10:30AM
 Fridays weekly Ladies Small Group 7:30PM

Regular Meetings

Saturday 12/6 United Women in Faith luncheon, Tres Scalini, 12:30PM
 Sunday 12/7, 21 Advent program, Fellowship Hall, 11:00AM
 Sunday 12/14 Christmas Pageant, 9:30AM

Village Events

Tuesday	12/2	Tree Lighting Village Green, 6:00PM
Friday	12/5	Gerngras Tree Lighting, 7:00PM
Saturday	12/6	Gingerbread House Competition, Chocolate Duck, 12:00PM
Wednesday	12/31	New Year's Eve, Ball Drop, Village Green, TBA



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Wednesday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

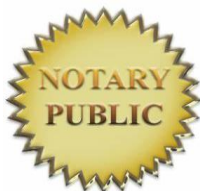
7:00 PM

Family Service (in person & Zoom)

10:30 PM

Candlelight Service (in person only)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5166943424?pwd=TWtTVElWUHNXbjVNcnNMaG9wTVJrZz09>



In need of a Notary Public?
 Contact Joan Ganz or Karen Gierie
 Newman.



Please note : Thrift Shop hours

Tuesday & Wednesday 10AM-1PM

Thursday 6PM-8PM

Fourth Saturday of month

10AM-1PM






FUMC's Calendar of the Month

DECEMBER 2025

Worship Service is available on Zoom.
Click the link below:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5166943424?pwd=TWtVTElWUHNXbjVNcnNMaG9wTVJrZz09>

Meeting ID: 366 885 6897 password 981708 OR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
NOV. 30 	Farmingdale United Methodist Church (516) 694-3424 Email: office@farmingdaleumc.org		3 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting	4	5 5:30 A.A.	6 UMW Christmas Luncheon 12:30 p.m.
7 9:30 Worship Service 2 nd Sunday of Advent	8	9	10	11	12 5:30 A.A.	13 L.I.E. District Family Christmas Fest for Children 3-5p.m. HicksvilleUMC
14 9:30 Worship Service & Christmas Pageant 9:30 a.m. 3 rd Sunday of Advent	15	16 Finance Committee 7:00pm	17 6:30 pm Cooking Ministry	18	19 5:30 A.A.	20
21 9:30 Worship Service 4 th Sunday of Advent	22 Church Council 7:00pm	23	24 Christmas Eve 7:00 PM - Family Service 10:30 PM - Candlelight Service (in person only)	25 Christmas Day 	26 5:30 A.A.	27
28 1 st Sunday after Christmas	29	30	31	JANUARY 2026 1	2 5:30 A.A.	3 



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407 Main Street

Farmingdale, NY 11735

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