

# Methodelma

## January 2026



***“We are loving, Spirit-led disciples of Jesus Christ growing in God through Nurture, Education, Worship, and Service.”***

**Elma United Methodist Church**  
2991 Bowen Rd. Elma, NY 14059

Rev. Lisa D. Taylor, Pastor

**Sunday Worship Service**  
**In-Person Worship at starts at 9:15am**

**Church Office Phone Number: 716-652-5427**  
**Pastor's Cell Phone Number: 716-341-1896**  
**Church Office E-mail: ElmaUMOffice@gmail.com**



## Pastor's Message

“...when the people offer themselves willingly – bless the LORD! ... My heart is with Israel’s leaders, with the willing volunteers among the people. Praise the LORD!” (Judges 5:2, 9)

Here we are at the beginning of 2026; a new calendar year full of possibilities, new beginnings for Elma UMC as we grow into the church God is calling us to be in this time and place. We are entering into the second quarter of the 21 st century! I’m going to be 65 years old this month, and am officially all signed up for Medicare, because that’s one of the things required as time goes on. There are some things we have no choice about, and others that we choose. When we choose to follow Jesus, we begin a journey of willing obedience to God’s call on each of our lives. It’s the only way; the Way that reveals to us the Truth so we become able to enter into the Life of God in Jesus Christ.

All God is looking for in disciples of Jesus are those who are willing to offer themselves to serving God first; to look to God’s wisdom and the Holy Spirit’s leading to know how to live our best lives in covenant with Jesus. John Wesley knew this well, as he and his Methodist followers of Jesus devoted their lives to spiritual practices that caused them to grow in personal piety and in acts of mercy that impacted their communities. These two aspects of Christian discipleship work together to make us into the people God intends us to be. And as we grow in Christ, we become increasingly more willing to remember, live, and tell the story of our Christian faith.

At the beginning of each new year, John Wesley led his Methodist Christians in re-affirming their covenant with God. As United Methodists, we continue that practice on each Epiphany Sunday as we pray Wesley’s Covenant Prayer and remember who we are and Whose we are. The Bible says that we are not our own, but we were bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The price God paid to redeem us from sin was the suffering and death of his Son, who was then raised to life so that we also may be raised to eternal life with God. And this covenant God has made calls us to be faithful to God in this life. May we, with God’s help, live into this covenant of grace with God and each other, as Wesley’s prayer affirms:

*I am no longer my own by yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.*

May we once again seek to discern and respond to God's call to Elma UMC.

## MONTHLY PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES:

Wednesday, January 14th , 10-10:30am and/or 6:30-7:30pm.

Please join Pastor Lisa in a time of gathering for informal prayer for our church, our community, and personal needs. Prayer for healing with laying on of hands and anointing with oil will be available for those desiring this form of prayer ministry. You are welcome to come and pray silently with those praying aloud and to pray aloud if you are so led by the Holy Spirit. You are also welcome if you have never tried a prayer group before and want to learn, or just want to try this one.

## PASTOR'S TYPICAL WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

**Pastor Lisa is typically in Elma Sundays, late afternoon Mondays through Wednesday evenings, works from home on Thursdays, takes her Sabbath on Fridays, and has her day off on Saturdays.** The schedule for Thursday through Saturday sometimes changes depending upon the needs of the church. In general, she prefers not to work past 9:30pm, although this is sometimes unavoidable. As the church is a pretty busy place, it may be best to make an appointment if you want to have time to talk with Pastor Lisa. But you are always welcome to stop by. In emergencies please use the Pastor's cell phone 716-341-1896; especially during hours when no one is scheduled to be in the office.





## BIBLE CHALLENGE:

Read Through the Bible in a Year by Reading 4 Chapters Each Day! This year's sequence of readings will take us back and forth between the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and the New Testament. John Wesley believed and taught that the Bible is the most important book for Christians to read to help us know Jesus and understand Christian faith. So please make it a priority to read your Bible this year! If you are unsure about which version to use or would like to know about study helps for your reading, ask Pastor Lisa.

Paper copies of the entire year's readings are available on the table outside Pastor Lisa's office, in half and full-page sizes for you to tuck into your Bible. If you prefer to follow the chronological reading schedule, copies are also available to pick up, or Pastor Lisa can email it to you. Enjoy a blessed year in God's Holy Word!

### January

(read 4 chapters per day each week)

Week 1 - January 1st-7th: Genesis chapters 1-28

Week 2 - January 8th-14th: Genesis chapters 29-50; Mark chapters 1-6

Week 3 - January 15th-21st: Mark chapters 7-16; Exodus chapters 1-18

Week 4 - January 22nd-28th: Exodus chapters 19-40; Matthew chapters 1-6

Week 5 - January 29th-February 4th: Matthew chapters 7-28; Leviticus chapters 1-6

## Church News and Announcements:

Typically everything you need to know about what's happening at Elma UMC can be found in the Methodelma via hard copy that's mailed to those on the Methodelma mailing list, emailed copy that's emailed to those on that list, or the copy posted on the website. There is always hard copy available at the church to pick up as well.

For Current Announcements, check out the Announcement Board positioned near the coatroom.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS:

Elma UMC's Leadership Team is seeking strong communication between itself and the members and friends of Elma UMC. Everyone is welcome to reach out to Team members about the church and to find out more about the new ways we get to do the administrative and visioning work.

Here is your Team for 2026:

Class of 2026 – Steve Buechi, Annette DeNies (team chair for 2026),  
Wendie Stockton

Class of 2027 – Sue Brunner, Shirley Schildkamp, D'Lynn Zurek

Class of 2028 – Randi Dressel, Dan Sank, Jim Wojnar

Lay Leader - Rose Shiesley, and Lay Member to AC - Andrew Hartley also serve

Pastor Lisa works with and is accountable to the Leadership Team for all program, ministry, and mission areas, and to the UNY Annual Conference for oversight of all administrative functions.

**Our next meeting will be Monday, January 26 th at 7pm.**

**Many thanks to the LTeam Class of 2025 – Peter Buechi, Martha Horohoe, and Pam Thauer!** Your faithfulness to the ministry of church lay leadership has been greatly appreciated. You have blessed the LTeam with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness in this very important work. We shall miss you as you move on to other ministry areas at Elma UMC!

In addition, your **Leadership Development and Nominations Team** (Pastor Lisa-chair, Rose Shiesley, Steve DeNies, Martha Horohoe, and Pam Thauer) will be working on creating new ways to help our members and friends grow in Christian discipleship, as we all discover the ministries we get to do through sharing the Good NEWS of Jesus through Nurture, Education, Worship, and Service. You can let any of these team members know what you're interested in.

On January 11 th , both Teams will be participating in a training and orientation session from 12noon-4:30pm so everyone will have a firm foundation for our work together as Intentional Disciples in Service to the Church in the coming year.

Newly elected to Elma UMC's **Board of Trustees** – Steve DeNies, Greg Fuer, Dan Sank, James Trombley (They join Peter Buechi, Randi Dressel, Bruce Stockton, and Dave Wainwright

## Sunday Mornings:

(coffee/tea/juice and conversation available every Sunday at 8:45am before worship)

### **January 4 th – Celebration of Ministry!**

9:15am - Wesleyan Covenant Renewal with Remembrance of Baptism and Holy Communion

10:30am – Fellowship Time with Celebration of EUMC's Leadership Team, Trustees, and

Leadership Development and Nominations Team! Join us for cake and conversation!

### **January 11 th -25 th – Education Hour Resumes**

9:15am – Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship Time

11:00am – Education Hour

## ELMA PAGE TURNERS:

Shirley Schildkamp

On Wednesday, January 7, at 6:30 PM the Elma Page Turners will meet in the church Youth Room to discuss THE KITCHEN HOUSE, by Kathleen Grissome. This novel concerns the treatment of slaves prior to the Civil War. Everyone is welcome. Books will be selected for the coming months.



## Social Principles and Our Way Forward:

Thank you to all who faithfully participated in the series of discussions concerning the UMC's Social Principles in 2025. Sue Brunner and Andrew Hartley did an excellent job facilitating conversations about some challenging subjects and participants heard a variety of points of view concerning each topic that was explored. If you did not participate, there are booklets available for each of the four topic areas our Book of Discipline covers on the table outside the pastor's office. Keep in mind that the Social Principles are not "church law" and, therefore are not binding upon anyone or any local church, but express the affirmed points of view of the General Conference of the UMC about various social issues in the world today. All UMC members should be aware of these and form prayerfully considered opinions about how you and your local church should respond.



Moving forward, Elma UMC will be exploring Our Way Forward, Upper New York's Graceful Conversations and Covenanting Process for Navigating the 2020/24 General Conference Changes about Human Sexuality. Our conference leadership has provided a process and resources for prayerful discernment that will ultimately lead to establishing a covenant that authentically reflects Elma UMC's position and practices. The Leadership Team has already affirmed the need to engage in this process, and the process for forming the team to plan the conversation sessions and covenant writing process has begun. This process involves collaboration among the pastor, Leadership Team, Our Way Forward Team, and the District Superintendent. It will take time and patience to accomplish, but the time will be well worth it to collaboratively process the Book of Discipline changes and "move forward in a manner that honors [our] members' beliefs and diversity within the United Methodist Church."

It is very important that everyone, members and constituents, participate in this process so to true position of the whole body is faithfully discerned. Please make participation in the process a priority as we move into it in 2026. Pastor Lisa will be reaching out to EUMC active members and constituents to be part of the organizational team beginning January 4 th with the hope of holding an initial organizational meeting later this month.

# JANUARY

<u>Worship</u>	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
<u>Volunteers</u>			
<p><b>Ushers:</b> Dave Wainwright and Randi Dressel</p> <p><b>Liturgists:</b> Steve Buechi</p> <p><b>Greeters:</b> Mark Bessey</p> <p><b>Up &amp; About:</b> We need 2 more people</p>	<p><b>4 Epiphany Sunday</b></p> <p>8:45am Fellowship Time</p> <p>9:15am - Worship Service</p> <p>10:30am Fellowship Time</p> <p>11am Choir Practice</p> <p>11am- Trustees Mtg</p>	5	<p>6</p> <p>8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 &amp; 4 yr olds</p> <p>9:30 AM Bible Study</p> <p>10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p><b>Ushers:</b> C &amp; R Schmitz</p> <p><b>Liturgists:</b> Sue Brunner</p> <p><b>Greeters:</b> Jane Beyer</p> <p><b>Up &amp; About:</b> We need 2 more people</p>	<p>11</p> <p>8:45am Fellowship Time</p> <p>9:15 am Worship Service</p> <p>11am Choir Practice</p> <p>12-430pm— LT Meeting</p>	<p>12</p> <p>12:30PM—Lunch Bunch</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 &amp; 4 yr olds</p> <p>9:30 AM Bible Study</p> <p>10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p><b>Ushers:</b> Cheryl and Peter Buechi</p> <p><b>Liturgists:</b> Ella Vidal</p> <p><b>Greeters:</b> Sue Brunner</p> <p><b>Up &amp; About:</b> We need 2 more people</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>8:45am Fellowship Time</p> <p>9:15 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:30am Fellowship Time</p> <p>11am Christian Education</p> <p>11am Choir Practice</p> <p>Gloves/Hats/Gift Cards Due today</p>	19	<p>20</p> <p>8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 &amp; 4 yr olds</p> <p>9:30 AM Bible Study</p> <p>10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p><b>Ushers:</b> Steven and Laura Buechi</p> <p><b>Liturgists:</b> Tara Doster-Piskothy</p> <p><b>Greeters:</b> Cheryl Buechi</p> <p><b>Up &amp; About:</b> We need 2 more people</p>	<p>25</p> <p>8:45am Fellowship Time</p> <p>9:15 am Worship Service</p> <p>10:30am Fellowship Time</p> <p>11am Christian Education</p> <p>11am Choir Practice</p>	26	<p>27</p> <p>8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 &amp; 4 yr olds</p> <p>9:30 AM Bible Study</p> <p>10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>



Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 No Pre School	3
7 3:30 PM Online Devotional 6:30PM Book Club	8 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds	9 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only	10
14 10-10:30am Morning prayer 3:30 PM Online Devotional 6:30-7:30pm Prayer hour	15 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds	16 9AM Preschool - 4yr. olds	17 9am—Noon Church work day 
21 3:30 PM Online Devotional  Methodelma submissions due	22 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds	23 9AM Preschool - 4yr. olds	24
28 3:30 PM Online Devotional	29 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds	30 9AM Preschool - 4yr. olds	31

## Leadership Team News for January 2026:

Greetings and Happy New Year to all as we begin a new year, here, at Elma United Methodist Church! Let us each prayerfully approach the New Year full of care, hope, love and the desire to live according to God's will for us!

As the Leadership Team had its final meeting of 2025, we acknowledge our accomplishments and also realize there is still much to be done. The Class of 2025 (Peter Buechi, Martha Horohoe and Pam Thauer) rolls off and the Class of 2026 (Annette DeNies - 2025 LT Chair, Seven Buechi and Wendie Stockton) along with Rose Shiesley - Lay Leader, and Andrew Hartley - Lay Member to AC, and Pastor Lisa Taylor - Ex Officio, will be welcoming the new Leadership Team (LT) members: Sue B, Randi D, Dan S, Shirley S, James W, D'Lynn Z. Well wishes for these folks as the work continues on behalf of EUMC!

During the meeting in December our Spiritual Formation segment was offered by Pam T. Through the 'busyness' of the Christmas Season, with our list making, decorating, baking, shopping, entertaining, etc, etc, we need to take a deep breath, and focus on the ONE TRUE, PERFECT GIFT - GOD'S gift to us - Jesus Christ our Savior. What would we have offered the Baby Jesus so long ago? What can we offer him today? I invite you to watch "The Priceless Gift of Christmas" by Helen Steiner Rice.

Much time was devoted to discussions about the proposals that have been submitted to the LT regarding Christian Education as we go forward. It is noted that CE is a cradle to grave focus of the church and engagement by all is sought after. As this effort is ongoing, full and open communication is of most importance and the intent is to have healthy interactions with shared proposals, concerns, positions, understanding of roles etc. while finding a workable, Spirit lead solution. It is with sincere apologies in areas that we have fallen short of this. We all share in the love for our families, our church, our relationships with each other and our own spiritual growth.

Also in process, is the creation of an 'organizational team' to assist the Pastor in the "Our Way Forward" program that is part of the United Methodist Church, created by the Council of Bishops within the General Conference. Important efforts for our own faith journey and the faith community. Please see Pastor Lisa if you are called to serve in this way.

January 11, 2026 will be training and orientation for current and new members of the Leadership Team, and the first Leadership Team Meeting for 2026 will be January 28 at 7:00PM.

It has been a growing and positive experience to serve on this team. Trust that everyone that I have had the pleasure to work with within this group, loves you and cares deeply for our church. We are so very fortunate to have the talented, compassionate, supportive, dedicated, loving, giving, willing, Christian souls in leadership roles, committee support, volunteers and folks sitting in our pews. Thank you for each doing your part.

'God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.'

~ submitted by Pamela Thauer



## Christian Education News

Happy New Year! May this year be a season of spiritual renewal, deepening your walk with Christ and multiplying your impact for His kingdom. Come grow with us!

- January 4 Fellowship time for all following worship
- January 11 **Children meet in Youth Room to learn about Epiphany and Jesus the Child**  
**Adults - Advent Study in the library – final week**
- January 16-18 **District wide Youth Retreat at Asbury Retreat Center**
- January 18 **Children – Jesus' Baptism**  
**Adults – new study TBA**
- January 25 **Children - Who is Jesus? Teacher/Prophet**  
**Adults – new study TBA**

Tuesday Bible Study Join us in the library every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.  
January topic TBA

Wednesday Prayer Time – January 14<sup>th</sup>, 10-10:30am and/or 6:30-7:30pm

Wednesday Online Devotion – 3:30pm on Facebook

We are always looking for help with Christian Education activities. Please see a CE team member if you would like to help in any way. Summer planning will begin soon.

### Christian Education Team

Cheryl Buechi	D'Lynn Zurek	Jennifer Fuer
Carrie Schmitz	Samantha Vidal	Sue Brunner

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH:

All Women are invited:



We will be packing cookies for college students and military service people on Monday, February 2 at 11:00am, in the Fellowship Hall. There will be a soup and sandwich lunch following the packaging. Please bring a sandwich to share. Soups, dessert, and beverages will be provided. Donations of cookies are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off 1/30- between hours of 8am-1pm, brought to service on 2/1 or the morning of 2/2 before 11am. Please give addresses of college students or military service people to Jilliane in the office, or to Cheryl Buechi by Thursday, January 29. Any questions contact Cheryl Buechi or Rose Shiesley or Wendie Stockton

## LUNCH BUNCH:

Wendie Stockton

Join friends for lunch  
Monday, January 12th at 12:30pm.  
Olive Tree on Broadway in Lancaster.  
Sign up on the bulletin board



## Friends of the Night People:



As the cold winter months are upon us, we are planning on putting together hygiene kits to help those at Friends of Night.



We will be collecting **warm socks and gloves** for both men and women.



We are also asking for donations of **\$5 gift cards to Tim Hortons or McDonalds**. The gift cards not only provide them with warm food to eat, but also provides them a place to get out of the cold for a short period of time.



Please place **donations of socks and gloves in a bin** below the Missions' table.

**Gift cards can be handed in at the office.**

**Deadline for donations is January 28th.**

## MUSIC:



Dear Elma UMC Family,

I pray you had a blessed Christmas and New Year! Life tends to get a bit crazier around the holidays with our "to do" lists in preparing for Christmas, doesn't it?

As life gets busier on the outside, it can start to feel busier on the inside. But the busier we start feeling on the inside, the easier it can be to miss Jesus in it all....Which means that it's time to slow down inside.

As soon as I finished typing that last line, the next thought was "and slowing down inside is easy to talk about, but actually really hard to do". Why? Because it's not like the external circumstances are changing. It's not like all the craziness and chaos magically goes away. It's still there.

So how do we realistically slow down internally when externally nothing is changing? I think me being able to slow down inside and not miss Jesus has to do with the position of my heart. It can be crazy and chaotic in my circumstances- but I can still have eyes to see and experience Jesus because my heart is sensitive to Him.

So how do I get, or maybe keep is the better word keep, my heart sensitive? It's me feeling exhausted- and instead of whipping out my phone to scroll and distract myself, I choose to pause instead, close my eyes, and remember that He's with me in my fatigue. It's me having that 5-minute window of quiet in the car as I'm preparing to walk into work and choosing to sit there in silence and simply aim to be present to Jesus.

It's these little moments that show up suddenly, when we turn our eyes upwards- these moments build up and start to move our hearts into a less hurried, more peaceful space. A space where we're more able to see Jesus. In the daily hustle and bustle of life, especially during the holidays, it's easy to get worn down. But at the exact same time we still have eyes to see and ears to hear the age-old Christmas message that our hearts actually really need to experience right now...the reality of Emmanuel, God with us, and the reality of His deep and never-failing love for us.

Walking this out might not be easy- but it is possible. As long as I'm on this side of heaven, I will be practicing what God wants from each of us... to slow down and move our hearts into that less hurried and peaceful space with Him. And it's worth it for our hearts to be able to not miss Jesus every day He blesses us with.

Peace, Love and Joy,

Nan Keller, Worship Music Minister



*Rom 8:19-21* For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

*2 Cor 13:5a* Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith.

Christmas is behind us and winter is upon us. The short days and cold weather remind us of something we already know, especially if we have recently lost loved ones: Life is fleeting and—at best—we are but small parts of God’s great plan of salvation—meaning, “healing”—for all creation (Romans 8:19-21). Will we perpetuate the “frustration” and “bondage” of creation or, as God’s children, will we promote that healing? What kind of Earth will we leave behind? How will we be remembered by those who continue God’s work after us?

But how do you even know whether you are a “frustrator” or a “healer?” That need not be a mystery, because you can visit an internet site like <https://tabcom.org/creation-care/>, to calculate your “carbon footprint,” which correlates closely with your overall environmental footprint<sup>1</sup>. If your annual carbon footprint is less than 5,200 pounds (mine is not...yet), congratulations, because you are probably taking only your “share” of Earth’s resources.

If that footprint is greater, though, don’t be discouraged, because another benefit of calculating your footprint is that it shows the major sources of your carbon pollution, and gives hints on how to reduce that pollution. Surveys have found that many people view recycling as a very important step for caring for the environment. However, you will probably see that your footprint is driven mainly by the kinds of food you eat (especially the quantity of meat), your transportation choices, how much you travel, and how you heat and cool your home. Equipped with this information, you can better see how to “frustrate” God’s creation less and “heal” it more.

Lastly, please keep in mind that, to some extent, our environmental impacts are not in our direct control; they depend also on the choices we make as a state and as a nation. Maintaining a carbon footprint less than that 5,200 pounds here is very difficult because our energy systems are built around dirty petroleum and gas, our roads are built around dangerous automobiles, and our governments subsidize animal agriculture. As Elma UMC recently learned while studying the Social Principles, prayerful participation in politics is an important element in fulfilling our mission to transform the world for Christ.

<sup>1</sup>Second Corinthians 13:5 calls us to “examine [our]selves, to see whether [we] are in the faith,” and what evidence of faith could be more important than how well we are tending and keeping God’s Earth (our first responsibility, according to Genesis 2:15)? So, I hope many of us will visit that site.

**FISH:**



January's FISH item is Canned Vegetables. Any non-perishable item is accepted and appreciated

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:**

- 01/02—Bob Pierce
- 01/06—Hans Brunner
- 01/07—Ann Marie McCarthy
- 01/08—Edwin Hartman
- 01/08—Nan Keller
- 01/12—Annette Denies
- 01/13—Peter Beuchi
- 01/13—Gabriel Vidal
- 01/28—Stephen Green
- 01/15—Morgan Jozwiak
- 01/15—Kristen Rosenburg
- 01/20—Gregory Schuetz
- 01/21—Judy Smith
- 01/22—Hailey Sugrue
- 01/23—Evan Schmitz
- 01/23—Rev. Lisa Taylor
- 01/25—Billy Nolan



**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:**

- 01/12—Mike and Sue Brunner
- 01/20—Jack and Sue Lawrence

If you would like your birthday or Anniversary announced in the Methodelma please email Jilliane at [ElmaUMOffice@gmail.com](mailto:ElmaUMOffice@gmail.com) and let her know. Thank you.



*Elma United Methodist Church*

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Elma, NY 14059

