

March 2026

Methodelma

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

Rev. Lisa D. Taylor, Pastor

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

Sunday Worship Service
In-Person Worship
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:



“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus is ever calling people to discipleship. Whether those who know Jesus and need to grow in their relationship with God, or those who have not yet come to Christ, by the Holy Spirit God's saving grace calls to us in many ways. This Lent, this time of self-examination, of seeking to grow deeper with God, let's take time to reflect on the words of this late 20th century song. Let's seek to become the people, by God's grace, that we wish we were:

Would I have answered when you called, “Come, follow, follow me!”?

Would I at once have left behind both work and family?

Or would the old, familiar round have held me by its claim
and kept the spark within my heart from bursting into flame?

Would I have followed where you led through ancient Galilee,

On roads unknown, by ways untried, beyond security?

Or would I soon have hurried back where home and comfort drew,
Where truth you taught would not disturb the ordered world I knew?

Would I have matched my step with yours when crowds cried, ““Crucify!””

When on a rocky hill I saw a cross against the sky?

Or would I too have slipped away and left you there alone,
A dying king with crown of thorns upon a terrible throne?

O Christ, I cannot search my heart through all its tangled ways,

Nor can I with a certain mind my steadfastness appraise.

I only pray that when you call, “Come, follow, follow me!”

You'll give me strength beyond my own to follow faithfully.

*Would I Have Answered When You Called, Words by Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr. (1997)
In The Faith We Sing, number 2137*

Pastor Lisa's 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.

MONTHLY PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES:

Wednesday, March 18 th , 10-10:30am and/or 7pm-8pm.

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.

CHURCH 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.

Beginning with submissions for the April Methodelma, all submissions are due to Jill by the 15 th of each month. So, please have all submissions for the April Methodelma in by March 15 th .

Thank you!

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! (read 4 chapters per day each week)

Week 9 - February 26 th -March 4 th : 1 Samuel chapters 6-31; 2 Samuel chapters 1-2

Week 10 – March 5 th -11 th : 2 Samuel chapters 3-24; 1 Kings chapters 1-6

Week 11 – March 12 th -18 th : 1 Kings chapters 7-22; 2 Kings chapters 1-12

Week 12 – March 19 th -25 th : 2 Kings chapters 13-25; Ezra chapters 1-10;
Luke chapters 1-5

Week 13 – March 26 th -April 1 st : Luke chapters 6-24; Acts chapters 1-9

Week 14 – April 2 nd -8 th : Acts chapters 10-28; Isaiah chapters 1-9

DANNY'S HELPING HANDS:

Danny's Helping Hands
(Satellite Church)
FOOD MINISTRY



Saturday, March 7st

EUMC will be open the first Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Donations of non-perishable items or monetary gifts are needed. Jesus reminds us that one of the fundamental measures of our lives will be how we cared for people in need:

“For I was hungry and you gave me food” Matthew 25:35

If you would like to serve (volunteer) contact Brittany Wojnar

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. Items for consideration for the LTeam agenda must be submitted by the 10th of each month. There are forms on the table outside the office. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board.

Here is your Team for 2026:

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

Class of 2027 – Sue Brunner, 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 first Town Hall of 2026 will be held Sunday, March 1st at 11am in the Fellowship Hall. Our next LT meeting will be Monday, March 23rd at 7pm.

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.

Elma UMC's **Board of Trustees** – Peter Buechi – Chair, Steve DeNies, Randi Dressel, Greg Fuer, Dan Sank, Bruce Stockton, James Trombley, and Dave Wainwright

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE:

There is help needed from those gifted and interested in serving our young people and adults in this very important ministry area. Please reach out to Sue Brunner, Cheryl Buechi, Jill Kochmanski, or Pastor Lisa if you are sensing God nudging you to be part of it all!

Rebuilding this ministry is a work in progress and many hands make light work. So please prayerfully consider what your role in Christian Education at EUMC could be.

UPCOMING DISTRICT LAY LEADERSHIP TRAINING:

Elma UMC has been asked to host the Niagara Frontier District Leadership Training Saturday, March 28th from 9am-1pm.

We will provide a light breakfast and coffee/beverages. Please let Pastor Lisa know if you are willing to help with this.

There will be worship offered with our Niagara Frontier siblings in Christ, a session on Shared Ministries, and two sessions covering SPPRC Training and Trustee Training. Pastor Lisa strongly encourages all LTeam, LD&N, and Trustees to attend, and as many church members to attend as are able. She will send a clipboard around to ask for help with this.

DISTRICT LAY SERVANT TRAINING:



There will be a combined Cornerstone/Niagara Frontier District Lay Servant Training coming in April. Registrations are due March 27th.

There is a brochure available at the church, or it can be emailed to you if you request it.

Courses presented will be: *Introduction to Lay Ministry: The Basic Course*, *Mission Possible 3: Lay Servants Leading and Governing Congregations with Simplified Accountable Structure, For the Common Good: Discovering and Using Your Spiritual Gifts*, and *Transforming Evangelism*.

SAFE SANCTUARIES 2026 TRAINING:

2026 Safe Sanctuaries Training dates are out. All clergy, lay working with children, youth, vulnerable adults, our preschool, Christian Education, Up & About room and are not Safe Sanctuaries Trained please sign up with Jilliane in the Office or email her. All these trainings are online and 3 1/2 hours long, if you would like an in person training you can reach out to safesanctuaries@unyumc.org. Online training dates are below and hanging on the announcement board in the hallway



Saturday, May 2 9am-1230pm

Saturday, August 1 9am-1230pm

Saturday, November 7 9am-1230pm



CHURCH DIRECTORY:

Jill completed the updated church directory and we have been informed of a few typos that need correcting. Jill has reached out again for corrections and the request has been announced in worship. A correction sheet will be made available for people to add to their directory. Neither Pastor Lisa nor Jill nor I can accept changes, corrections, additions, or deletions from second party sources, however well-intentioned. If you know of someone whose information needs further updating, or there's a typo, please have that person contact the office directly.

Jill is also updating the church's email groups. If you have not responded to the email invitation for the group, please do so. Also, everyone needs to regularly check their spam or junk folders (or whatever your email account calls it). For reasons unknown sometimes emails from sources you regularly receive wind up in the spam folder. If you are expecting to hear from the church via email and do not, please contact Jill in the office so the problem can be corrected.

OUR WAY 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."

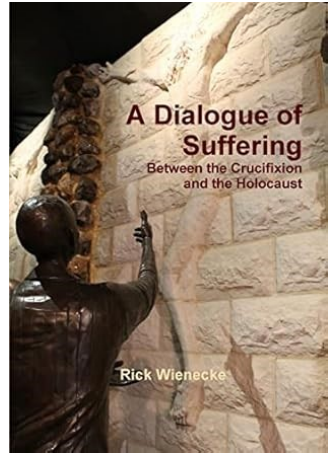
It is very important that everyone, members and constituents, participate in this process so to true position of the whole body is faithfully discerned. Please make participation in the process a priority as we move into it in 2026. Pastor Lisa is seeking 6 EUMC active members and constituents to be part of the organizational team. Please let her know ASAP if you are willing to serve.

ADULT LENT STUDY:

The Adult Lent Study will be: *A Dialogue of Suffering: Between the Crucifixion and the Holocaust* by artist Rick Wienecke.

This is an especially timely study given the sharp increase in anti-Semitism in this nation. Through Scripture and the sculpture "The Fountain of Tears" (on exhibition in Arad, Israel), the Seven Last Words of Jesus are juxtaposed with the images of Wienecke's work.

The author writes, "Don't expect to find clear-cut answers, but allow God the Father to share his tears, one layer at a time, in the questions."



The book accompanying this study is \$11.00. There will be a sign up.

PASSOVER SEDER:

When: April 4, 2026 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Where: Classics V, 2425 Niagara Falls Blvd Amherst, NY

Cost: \$38 adults/\$20 children ages 4-12

Join us as we celebrate the Passover with Messianic Jewish Congregation B'rith Hadoshah!



Rabbi Frank Lowinger will lead us through the Messianic Haggadah as we remember the events of that first Passover when The L-rd lead Moses and the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt. The evening includes a full, delicious dinner.

Some of EUMC's congregation attended with Pastor Lisa and Romney last year and were truly blessed through the experience.

If you plan to attend, please let Pastor Lisa know, and provide her the names of those attending along with your check or cash by March 15 th . Pastor Lisa will arrange for your reservation. Make checks payable to Congregation B'rith Hadoshah.

SCHOLARSHIPS:



Elma UMC Undergraduate Scholarships



Each year Elma UMC awards Scholarships in the amount of \$4,000.00 each to undergraduate students whose applications are accepted by the Scholarship Committee. Applications must be complete, with all additional materials included, and submitted by the deadline date May 13, 2026. Check the EUMC website for complete information and to download the application. The members of Elma UMC are blessed to be able to provide scholarships for our young adult students!

More Scholarship Opportunities!!!

The United Methodist Church General Board of Higher Education Ministries (GBHEM) offers scholarships in many areas for students who are members of UM churches. This is the website address for information and instructions:

<https://www.gbhem.org/scholarships/>

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH:

Communion Breakfast

The District United Women in Faith Communion annual communion breakfast will be :
Saturday, March 28 at 9:30am,
at Baker Memorial UMC in East Aurora.
All women are invited.
Contact Cheryl Buechi if you would like to attend.



SPECIAL THANKS:

The trustees extend a big thank you to Gabe and Samantha Vidal for removing a large ice dam from the church roof to stop a leak into the sanctuary.

Thanks very much!

Thank you

LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT:



February 22nd – 1st Sunday of Lent (sermon series preaching thru the Gospel According to Mark)

February 22nd – Sunday's Adult Lent Study begins 11am

February 24th – Adult Lent Study begins Tuesdays 9:30am

March 29th – Combined Adult and Young People CE -
Journey to the Cross

Holy Week Services:



Palm Sunday – **March 29 at 9:15am**

(Remembering Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week) – Followed by a special Worship and Education Hour Journey through Holy Week for Everyone to Join In at 10:30am



Maundy Thursday — **April 2nd 7pm**

(Celebration Remembering Jesus' last Passover with his disciples: Jesus washing the disciples' feet and the institution of the Lord's Supper)



Good Friday — **April 3rd 7pm**

(Remembering how Jesus died for our sins)



Holy Saturday – **April 4th**

Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil 9:00am-3:00pm, come and pray for as long as you like

- There is a Passover Seder at Classics V in Amherst with Messianic Jewish Congregation B'rith Hadoshah 5-9pm (see article for details)



Easter Sunday – **April 5th 9:15am**

(Celebrating the Resurrection! He is Risen Indeed!)



Christian Education News

We hope you will join us as we learn and grow together as disciples of Jesus Christ. We are making disciples for the transformation of the world! Come grow with us!

March 1 Fellowship time for all following worship

March 8 **Children meet in Youth Room to learn about**

11:00 – 12:00 **Baptism/Communion**

Adults – Lenten Study *Dialogue of Suffering* in library

March 15 **Children – *Death and Heaven***

11:00 – 12:00 **Adults – Lenten Study *Dialogue of Suffering* in library**

March 22 **Children – *Best NEWS Ever!* (Led by older youth)**

11:00 – 12:00 **Adults – Lenten Study *Dialogue of Suffering* in library**

Tuesday Bible Study Join us in the library every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. **Lenten Study *Dialogue of Suffering***

Wednesday Online Devotion– 3:30pm on Facebook

*** Attention Youth – Best NEWS Ever Youth Sleepover – March 21 -22 Bring a friend – SIGN UP NOW! ***

We are always looking for help planning, prepping, and leading our education opportunities.

Please contact a CE Team member if you are interested in helping! Summer Planning will begin soon.

Christian Education Team



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

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



<u>Worship Volunteers</u>	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
<p>Ushers: Sue Brunner & Dave Wainwright Liturgists: C. Buechi Greeters: Pam/Hank Thauer Up & About: We need 2 more people Fellowship: Belle & Dan Sank</p>	<p>1 Communion Sunday 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15am - Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Town Hall Meeting</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Lenten Study <i>Dialogue of Suffering Study</i> 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: Ryan & Carrie Schmitz Liturgists: R. Piskothy Greeters: Wainwright Up & About: We need 2 more people Fellowship: Denies Family</p>	<p>8 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Christian Education 11am Choir Practice 11am Trustees Mtg</p>	<p>9 12:30 PM Lunch Bunch</p>	<p>10 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Lenten Study <i>Dialogue of Suffering Study</i> 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: Cheryl & Peter Buechi Liturgists: V. Trombley Greeters: L. Buechi Up & About: Amanda Nolan & Sue Brunner Fellowship: Nolan Family</p>	<p>15 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Christian Education 11am Choir Practice</p> <p>April Methodelma Articles due</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Lenten Study <i>Dialogue of Suffering Study</i> 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: Steve & Laura Buechi Liturgists: S. Brunner Greeters: Peter Buechi Up & About: We need 2 more people Fellowship: Youth</p>	<p>22 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Christian Education 11am Choir Practice</p>	<p>23 LT Meeting 7pm</p>	<p>24 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Lenten Study <i>Dialogue of Suffering Study</i> 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: Tara & Ryker Piskothy Liturgists: S. Buechi Greeters: M. Bessey Up & About: Amanda Nolan & We need 1 other person Fellowship: Pam & Hank Thauer</p>	<p>29 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Journey to the Cross 11am Choir Practice</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM <i>When Christians Get it Wrong Bible Study</i> 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>

ARCH

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>4 3:30 PM Online Devotional 6:30 PM Book Club</p>	<p>5 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>6 World Day of Prayer 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only 10am World day of Prayer Service at Elma UMC</p>	<p>7 Danny's Helping Hands 10am-12pm</p> 
<p>11 3:30 PM Online Devotional</p>	<p>12 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>13 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>18 10-10:30am Morning prayer 3:30 PM Online Devotional 7pm-8pm Prayer hour</p>	<p>19 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>20 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only</p>	<p>21 9am—Noon Church work day</p>  <p>Youth Sleepover</p>
<p>25 3:30 PM Online Devotional</p>	<p>26 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>27 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only</p>	<p>28 District Leadership Training Day 9am-1pm Communion Breakfast at Baker Memorial UMC 930am</p>

ASBURY RETREAT CENTER SUMMER CAMP 2026:

Registration is now open for summer camp at Asbury Retreat Center! Make your plans now.

Check out their website at Asburyuny.org/programs

Once again, our generous United Women of Faith will help fund camp fees.



Asbury Express by Day
ages 7-18
July 12-15, 2026



Asbury Express III
ages 13-18
July 12-15, 2026



Asbury Express II
ages 10-12
July 12-15, 2026



Asbury Express I
ages 7-9
July 12-15, 2026



Together Time:
A Family Retreat
July 24-26, 2026



Silver Lake Experience
July 30– August 1, 2026



Women's Retreat
August 16-18, 2026

Spend some time at camp, relaxing and having fun with engaging activities and worship while you learn and grow with God.

LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS:

Our new Leadership Team members attended a 4-hour training session on January 11, learning about the Leadership Team accountability model. Our first business meeting of the year was postponed until February 2 due to the cold wintery weather.

Your 2026 Leadership Team:

Annette DeNies Leadership Team Chairperson
Rose Shiesley Layleader
Andrew Hartley Lay Member to Annual Conference
Sue Brunner
Steve Buechi
Randi Dressel
Dan Sank
Wendie Stockton
James Wojnar
D'Lynn Zurek

Pastor Lisa Taylor works with and is accountable to the Leadership Team

Annette opened the meeting with prayer and “checking in”.

Pastor Lisa led our spiritual development portion of the meeting with a video sermon by Dr. Leonard Sweet, “Broken Bread and Poured Out Wine”. Our world is broken and there is only one hope – broken bread/body and blood of Jesus.

We reviewed the Pastor’s report with our church attendance that is reported in the Church Vital Signs Report. Attendance remains stable in all areas. We also reviewed the Pastor’s vital ministries report and the financial statements.

Sue Brunner was elected Secretary to record meeting minutes. Sue will provide a meeting summary in the MethodElma and post approved meeting minutes on the bulletin board outside the main office. Please note, minutes will be 1 month behind as they need to be approved before posting.

A sign-up sheet was circulated to share meeting tasks, helping members participate in the meeting and grow in their own discipleship.

Wendie Stockton developed a draft covenant based on our training session brainstorming input. She and Annette will transfer the information to a revised format. The final covenant will be posted in the library where our meetings are held.

Our next Town Hall will be Sunday, March 1 during Fellowship Hour at 11:00am. Please join us!

Our next Leadership Team Meeting will be Monday, February 23 at 7:00pm. ALL are welcome to attend.

TOWN HALL MEETING:

Town Hall meeting with the Leadership Team

Sunday, March 1 @ 11:00am (during Fellowship Hour)

Please join us for an open discussion with our Leadership Team. The Team will share their accomplishments since our last meeting, as well as any relevant budget information and future goals. We hope to continue our effective Christian communication, following the FAMILIA model introduced last year.

F – Fellowship will consist of showing respect and listening to one another

A – Accept the different style of communication present

M – Motivate one another to actively participate in all the conversations

I – Identities will be honored and celebrated

L – Loyalty will be considered in confidentiality

I – Inclusive of all the lived experiences by withholding judgement

A – Affirm that we are children of God

May our time together be informative and productive as we listen and share lovingly and respectfully.

See you there!

GARAGE SALE:

The Elma United Women in Faith and the Elma UMC Preschool are holding a garage sale

Saturday, May 2 from 9-12

Items for the sale may be brought to the church at any time. Please make sure that any boxes with books, any soft/cloth items are taped shut to keep mice out and if possible please wait till April to bring items over to the church.



CREATION CARE SUNDAY:

CREATION CARE SUNDAY

Sunday, May 1, 2026

Our Elma UMC congregation will celebrate Creation Care on Sunday, May 1, 2026. The entire morning will be a time of giving thanks to God for sustaining us through the natural world, and for gaining inspiration and knowledge so that we may care better for the planet.

Pastor Lisa will lead us in a Creation Care Worship Service at 9:15am.

Following worship, we will share a meatless “fellowship dinner”. Please bring a dish with no meat (though dairy products are acceptable). If you’re feeling unsure of what to prepare, we will provide suggestions for delicious, healthy and environmentally responsible meatless dishes.

Our Elma UMC Creation Care Team will provide a short program during our Fellowship time together. Stay tuned for our topic reveal.

A signup sheet will be circulated during Sunday morning worship services in April.

We hope you can join us for an enlightening and delicious Creation Care Fellowship Time.

LUNCH BUNCH:

Wendie Stockton

Join friends for lunch

Monday, March 9th at 12:30pm.

Olive Tree on Broadway in Lancaster.

Sign up on the bulletin board



Elma United Methodist Church

MUSIC

Best NEWS Ever!

FOOD

Youth sleepover

FUN

Grades 5th - 12th

Sat., March 21 - Sun., March 22

Sign-up by March 1

PRAISE

FRIENDS

WORSHIP

See Cheryl Buechi or Sue Brunner for info.

MUSIC NEWS:

Nearness That Reshapes Us

What's the most beautiful place you've ever been?



Maybe it was a quiet cathedral, stained glass filling the room with colors, or a forest alive with bird songs and dancing leaves. Wherever your place is, have you ever wished you could stay there forever—surrounded by so much beauty and safety that your soul can finally breathe? I have!! When I traveled to Ireland years ago, we visited an ancient monastery called Glendalough, in Co. Wicklow. It was one of the most beautiful, peaceful, holy places I've ever been- so much so, that I truly did not want to leave.

David prays that way in Psalm 27:4:

“I have asked the Lord for one thing,
this is what I desire:
to live in the Lord's house all my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord,
and to contemplate in his temple.” (NET)



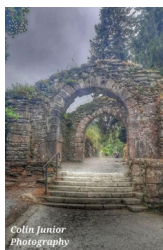
For ancient Israel, Jerusalem's temple marked the center of their world—the place where Heaven and Earth meet. That idea first appears in Genesis, in the garden of Eden, where God walked with humanity and provided everything necessary—a place with no suffering, no threats, no death.

David's longing isn't for a spectacular building but for closeness with God—the kind of nearness that reshapes a person and brings true peace.

When Jesus arrives, he moves that Heaven-and-Earth space from Jerusalem's temple into human hearts. People become the temple where God dwells.... That's you and me! Divine beauty and peace are no longer tied to one city or structure; they're found wherever God's will is done “on Earth as in Heaven.”

Today, ask: What do I want most? David's answer exposes humanity's deepest desire—to be safe, loved, and at peace with our creator.

Praying you know God's closeness today,
Nan Keller
Worship Music Minister



Colin Junior
Photography

BOOK CLUB:

Shirley Schildkamp

THE ELMA PAGE TUURNERS

The Elma Page Turners have selected the following books for the next months:

March 4th THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY by Matt Haig

April 1st THE FROZEN RIVER by Ariel Lawhon

May 6th THE BRIAR CLUB by Kate Quinn

June 3rd THINGS IN JARS by Jess Kidd.



Everyone is invited to attend the discussions held on the first Wednesday of every month. The discussion usually lasts an hour and is in the Church Youth Room at 6:30.

The next meeting is Wednesday, March 4, 6:30 to discuss THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY by Matt Haig

MISSIONS:

Brittany Wojnar



The FISH item for March is soup.

We, along with eleven other area churches, are assigned an item on a rotating basis so there is a constant supply of the most needed items. However, any food item is welcome at any time! Please put any non-perishable item in the bin under the Missions table.



MARCH Birthdays

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 3/03—Caleb Parete | 3/11— Kevin McCarthy | 3/25— Chloe Garbacz |
| 3/05—Brittany Wojnar | 3/12- Martha Horohoe | 3/28— Greg Fuer |
| 3/06—Bryan Green | 3/13—Michael Kowalski | 3/29— Belle Jacobs |
| 3/06—Cody Lombard | 3/17- Deborah Wilson | 3/30— Leah Schmitz |
| 3/11—Heather Kowalski | 3/22—Randi Dressel | |
| | 3/22—George Beyer | |

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:

Where: Elma UMC
When: Friday, March 6
Time: 10am

Elma UMC will be hosting the
Annual World Day of Prayer service for Elma-East Aurora area churches
Friday, March 6 at 10:00 AM

World Day of Prayer is a women-led ecumenical movement which has been celebrated in over 120 countries annually.

This years' service, which we will be sharing, was written by a group of Ecumenical Christian of Nigeria.

The theme is *"I will give you rest: come."* Matthew 11:28-30.

The program calls us to come closer to God and find rest in God.

Nigeria is a country of over 211 million people, the most populous country in Africa. It is located on the western coast.

The Service will include information about Nigeria, stories of Nigerian women, music and prayers.

Light refreshments, including some Nigerian snack food will be served following the service and we would be happy to have help from any Elma UMC women who are available that morning.

Notices will be going out to churches in Elma and East Aurora, and women will be invited to participate in the service.



GIVING GARDEN:

Susan Brunner

As we look forward to another growing season in our Giving Garden, I would like to invite and encourage you to participate in this ministry. I have been in charge of the Giving Garden for the past 5 years and have been abundantly blessed by this ministry. However, I find myself in a position where I don't feel I can give the garden the attention it needs/requires. If anyone is interested in taking over the Giving Garden, please see Sue Brunner or give me a call at 716-982-8924. I will be happy to help and share information about the garden. It is a wonderful ministry providing nutritious, fresh produce for local families served by FISH of East Aurora.

I invite you to read the following excerpt from "Why Every Church Should Plant a Garden" by Ginny Vrobesky. Ginny is the founding Director of A Rocha USA, a Christian non-profit organization dedicated to biodiversity conservation, habitat restoration, and environmental education.

"The Bible is strong on gardening. Whether in Genesis, Jeremiah or the Gospels, gardens play a prominent role in God's plans. It even starts in one. A garden is a wondrous place where we can "meet" with the Lord and marvel at His miracles. It's a place to love your neighbor, care for creation and grow veggies. No wonder churches everywhere are interested in them. They see them as a way to meet local needs. Some have planted food-pantry gardens, giving produce to food banks. Others rent plots on church grounds as a way to use the land productively and respond to a tight economy. Still others have reclaimed derelict inner city properties, transforming vacant lots. In the process, gardeners from these projects have enjoyed a greater sense of community, a joy in connecting with the natural world and a healthier diet. All of which is good. But church gardens can be much more. They can meet needs and at the same time celebrate the bounty of God's good earth. A way to grow both food and community. A way to honor and care for people and for the planet. "

"Figure 1 demonstrates the life history of a community garden. (I use "community garden" and "church garden" interchangeably for a reason—the church garden should be a garden with and for the community!) It involves managing and honoring both the human and the nonhuman. Its proper focus is both process and product. The fruit of the process is often intangible—greater connections between people, psychological health, improved race relations, better community ambience. The product—the quality and quantity of food produced and the health of the land and all the creatures—is concrete—an indicator of how the gardeners understand and interact with creation."

"A church garden can meet many needs—feeding the hungry, educating children, healing addicts, beautifying derelict property, overcoming racial divides, and more. And it can be more—a blessing, even long after the immediate needs are met."

I hope you will prayerfully consider how you can support the Elma UMC Giving Garden and the needs of our local community.

Figure 1



CREATION CARE:

Andrew Hartley

<https://www.umccreationcare.org>



Creation Care: Environmental Stewardship through a Faith-based Lens

Want to know more about the links between Christian faith and caring for Earth, God's masterpiece and the means by which God meets most of our material needs?

Here <https://www.wnccumc.org/newsdetail/means-of-grace-environmental-stewardship-18682553> is a convenient, entertaining podcast about the theological foundations and practical applications of creation care. It's hosted by the Western North Carolina Annual Conference. I hope you enjoy it.

Creation Care Tip



If you've been reading our monthly creation care articles, then by now, you know that one of the quickest ways to care better for God's Earth is to replace meat in our diets with plants: Grains, green vegetables, legumes, squashes, etc. Yummm! Growing meat requires enormous amounts of water and petroleum (not so yummm) and causes massive deforestation. In 2024, deforestation across the Amazon basin, for example, reached over 4.3 million acres (29,000 square miles)! Much of that forest loss was driven by clearing lands for cattle pasture.

If you didn't have a chance last year to participate on our church's vegetarian luncheon, you can still see how attractive, inexpensive and delicious a plant-based meal plan can be: Use "Dr. Greger's Daily Dozen" app on your mobile phone. The app is a simple and efficient way to keep track of the foods recommended by Dr. Greger. It displays a comprehensive list of the healthiest foods and how many servings of each food are recommended per day.

It's worth noting that, according to advertisements, all proceeds from Dr. Greger's books, DVDs, and speaking engagements are donated to charity.

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