

March 8, 2026



Moving on to Perfection

At each Annual Conference we Methodist clergy participate in an ordination ceremony in which our bishop asks the ordinands if they're going on to perfection. You can usually hear a snicker from among those in attendance. When Jesus told his followers to move on to perfection, he wasn't joking. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes the rather astounding claim that we *should be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect*. The word perfect here is the Greek word *teleioi*, which we may translate as the end, as in the sense of a goal, completion, perfection in the sense of maturity.

This perfection turns out to be about learning to love one's enemies. *You have heard it said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.* Matthew 5:43-45

Note that Jesus assumes that his followers will have enemies. Being a genuine Christian in this world involves no presumption that the world is a nice place or that we get along by going along. No, being a Christian means that you will have enemies you would not have had if you had not been Christian.

What makes those enemies is your being part of a community that lives not by violence and enmity but by forgiveness. Christians are first not forgivers, but forgiven. We seek to be reconciled to one another so that our lives make no sense unless they are tied together in one mighty prayer offered daily before God. Such reconciliation is possible because we have been

forgiven, made righteous, by being given a story for our lives that we didn't make up, that isn't cultural myth.

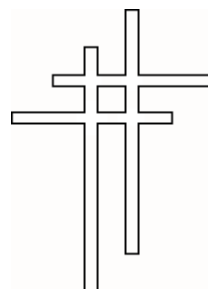
John Wesley got it right. We think of perfection as a way we talk about our being a people capable of being forgiven without regret. As a people so constituted we can offer our enemies who are real enemies that forgiveness through penance and reconciliation. Yet, we're under no illusion that such an offer will make our enemies less our enemies. In fact, it may enrage them. Jesus doesn't say that if we turn the other cheek, we won't get smacked. He just reassures us that if we live as he lived, we shall be living the way God rules the world.

Perhaps you've thought over the years that Christianity is mostly a matter of trying to do the right thing and to live a good life. But this way of viewing things gets the cart before the horse. Christianity is NOT mainly a matter of what we do and how we live but first a matter of what God in Christ has done. You and I have no idea of how to live until we first know who God is. So, when we say that God's name is holy, that tells us how we ought to live. Knowing the Creator through Jesus Christ tells us where the creation is meant to move.

*Shalom,
Jim*

Please Celebrate Sunday's Message

Huguenot United Methodist Church is inviting you to our Sunday Morning Worship Service. This in-person service begins at 11 a.m. Please join us and take part in our worship and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!



Pastor Jim Sprouse
will provide us with the
message

“Don't Judge Jesus by First Impressions”

We hope you will join us!

HUMC Nursery

Our nursery caregiver, Rosalie Koch, is at church every Sunday and ready to welcome children in the nursery during worship from 10:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. *A nursery assistant is needed this Sunday. Please consider volunteering.*



HOLY WEEK

Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

Our Adult Bible Study/Sunday School class begins at 10:00 a.m. Our class meets in the Fellowship Hall. The title of our lesson for Sunday, March 8, is "Navigating Depression." The focal passage is Lamentations 3: 1-20, 31-33, 42b-48; Psalm 103: 1-10. The background text is Lamentations 3; Psalm 103. The purpose statement is "to confront depression from a biblical perspective."

We hope you will join us! We look forward to your participation in our class. If you have time and wish to, please read the lesson in the Student Book before our class



meets on Sunday. If you have any questions, comments, feedback, or suggestions for improvements regarding our HUMC Adult Bible Study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Gerry Flinchbaugh

804.314.4817 gflinchb@gmail.com



United
Women
in Faith

The next two months will be busy for our **United Women in Faith** group. On March 10, we will be making UMCOR hygiene kits, which will provide essential health and dignity products to vulnerable communities across the U.S.

On April 14, our group will assemble care packages for infusion patients in the Richmond area.

Our meetings are held in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 a.m. on the second Tuesday of the month.

Please join us!

Palm Sunday
March 29

Maundy Thursday Service
April 2 at 7 p.m.

Good Friday
April 3

Easter Sunday
April 5

Sunrise Service
at 7 a.m.

Sanctuary Service
at 11 a.m.

Blessing Box

Kindly be mindful due to the extremely cold weather and to prevent the container from cracking, please abstain from putting the following into the Blessing Box:

- Any items that are in a pliable container, like applesauce.
- When pressing the container, it will make an indentation.

Instead, place them in the Bainbridge Pantry cabinet in the hallway next to the Fellowship Hall.

Note: Recently there was not much food in the Blessing Box. If possible, kindly pick up an extra can or two when shopping.

Thank you,
Rosalie Koch, Nursery Caregiver

BAGS NEEDED!

We are in need of plastic grocery bags for the church nursery as well as for the Blessing Box. The Blessing Box needs paper grocery bags, too. They seem to be



the most in demand to handle canned goods. If you can furnish either of these items, feel free to give them to me, and I'll disburse them.



Thank you,
Rosalie Koch

Joy of Crafts

The recent snow days have had a silver lining for sewists to get all those projects completed. Joy of Crafts, in league with From the Heart, has provided Valentine's Day pillowcases for Children's Hospital, scent hearts for newborns, sensory quilts for blind babies and port shirts and drain bags for chemo patients, among other comfort items.



During 2025, Joy of Crafts made and donated more than 1,000 wheelchair and walker bags, dialysis mitts, memory mats and quilts, port pillows and drain bags to local hospitals, nursing homes and shelters. We also sent dresses to needy girls in the U.S and around the world. This Christmas, we provided gifts for the children and nursing staff at Children's Hospital's long term care facility, as well as quilts and toys for blind babies. All are welcome to participate in this fulfilling ministry. For more information, contact Molly Sprouse at mollysprouse@gmail.com.

Future Host?



We have scheduled our Coffee Fellowships for the first Sunday of each month. There is a new sign-up sheet for 2026 on the bulletin board across from the Fellowship Hall to be a future Coffee Fellowship host.

The calls, notes, food and visits during my recent back surgery and recovery at home are greatly appreciated. Having a great church support group has been a comfort. Being confined to the house post surgery for two weeks was particularly troubling. The recovery has thankfully been very easy, physically.

thank you!

-Jim Anderson



Happy Birthday to
Derek Podolny (March 8)
Jane Grinnell (March 11)

Happy Anniversary to
Wayne and Marie Taney (March 11)

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please call, leave a note or send an email to Elaine so she can include you!



The Clatterbaugh Family
John S. Currie
Kaylynn Fatherlos and Family
Donna Gaskins and Family
Peggy Harris
Frank Joerg
Judy King
Jon Smith
Judith Westerhouse

In an effort to keep the prayer requests current, names posted will be removed after 30 days unless requested otherwise.

THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Where the World Meets to Pray

Copies of the **March and April** edition of The Upper Room are now available on the greeting table at the front entrance. Please consider making a donation in the labeled box.

Lent





Sunday, March 8 – Third Sunday in Lent

Daylight Savings Time starts

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study (FH)

11 a.m...Worship

Tuesday, March 10

10:30 a.m...United Women in Faith meeting (FH)

6:30 p.m...Church Council meeting (Zoom)

7 p.m...Handbell Practice (S)

Wednesday, March 11

10 a.m...Preschool Chapel Time with Pastor Jim

5:30 p.m...Preschool Parenting Program (FH/S/CR)

7 p.m...Choir Practice

Friday, March 13

10 a.m...Library Work Day

10 a.m...Feed the Homeless (K)

Sunday, March 15 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study (FH)

11 a.m...Worship

CR – Choir Room FH – Fellowship Hall
K – Kitchen L – Library PR – Puppet Room



- **EASTER WEEK:** March 29 - Palm Sunday, April 2 - Maundy Thursday (Service at 7 p.m.), April 3 - Good Friday, April 5-Easter Sunday (Sunrise Service at 7 a.m. and Sanctuary Service at 11 a.m.)
- Sun., April 12 – Coffee Fellowship following worship service (Please note: The monthly Coffee Fellowship hour has been moved one week to April 12 to allow families to enjoy Easter Sunday together after worship.)

Newsletter News

If you have an article for the next *pulse* newsletter, please email it to Elaine by **Wednesday at 10 a.m.**

Please know that submitted articles may be edited to provide clarity and increased inclusion. This newsletter and the Sunday Bulletin are posted on the church website by Friday evening.

Church Office Hours:

Pastor Jim is in the office on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Elaine is in the office every Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. These hours are subject to change on occasion.

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