



Dear Friends,

It is my joy to greet you in the name of God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - as we enter the second month of 2025. Yes, it is February already. Welcome to this publication of Church Chat. I trust you find its contents interesting, informative and inspiring.

There are two days that stand out in February, Valentine's Day (14th) and Presidents' Day (17th). While these are not religious observances, there is something about both days that prompted me to mention them. On Valentine's Day we think about love. It's that day when individuals express their love for each other in a variety of ways. It is usually thought of as a romantic day. It is the theme of love that I emphasize here. In the Greek language, there are a few words for love that show its different shades of meaning from mere passion, feeling or emotion to that which is selfless and unconditional. In Christian teaching we are exhorted to love one another. This love transcends the barriers, feelings and all the distinctions we might apply when it comes to the ways we differentiate one another.

Presidents' Day is the popular name given to the holiday celebrating George Washington's life and achievements. In addition, the day is set aside to honor and celebrate all past United States presidents particularly Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson.

Here is the connection I want to make between these two days in February. Presidents' Day is a day when we remember the men who have served as President, a position of power, privilege and prestige. Whoever has served as the President of the United States of America has occupied one of the most powerful offices that any human being can hold in this nation. With such power comes great responsibility and those who do best are guided by the principles of love.

Jesus taught his disciples to love their enemies. This is what he said, "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27-28). I think Abraham Lincoln understood this when he remarked, "Have I not destroyed my enemy when I have made him into my friend?" Love is a powerful force and those with power must exercise it with love as God does.

Throughout the Bible we are reminded of God's omnipotence (all powerful). "Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God" (Psalm 62:11); "Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure" (Psalm 147:5). The Bible equally emphasizes God's benevolence (love or goodness). "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:7,8).

While not every person will be President, everyone can show love. The world needs it; our country needs it. The words of the song continue to echo through the years and call us to love:

"What the world needs now is love, sweet love  
It's the only thing that there's just too little of  
What the world needs now is love, sweet love  
No not just for some but for everyone"

God bless you,

Jefferson C. Niles, EdD, MAE, BA  
Pastor  
Email: [pastor@ciceroumchurch.org](mailto:pastor@ciceroumchurch.org)

## **Finance Corner: February 2025 - Bits & Pieces**

As we begin to settle into 2025, the Finance Team has been busy drafting and approving the budget for 2025. I thought I would share some of my insights and thoughts on this process.

First, I want to thank everyone that dug a little deeper into their pockets and helped us to finish out 2024 with all our bills paid and our Shared Ministries paid in full! What a blessing – thank you to everyone for your generosity. We couldn't have done it without you.

As we worked on the budget, I couldn't help but think of the analogy of doing a jigsaw puzzle. This is one of my favorite pastimes on a cold winter day!

The budget, like a puzzle, has four corners. The 4 cornerstones for Cicero UMC might be considered as follows:

- 1) The Upper New York Conference and the General Church
- 2) CUMC-the building, parsonage & property
- 3) CUMC- the people – staff, members, children and guests
- 4) CUMC- the missions & programs we support

The “pieces” of the budget are all the income and expense items that are required to draft the total budget. The actual size of the puzzle/budget is determined by these items.

The UNY Conference determines the amount of our Shared Ministries each year based on an annual calculation. Our ministry share helps to underwrite the cost of the mission and ministry of our Conference and the General Church. Our Shared Ministries amount for 2025 is \$58,884.

The Cicero UMC building, parsonage & property all incur various operations expenses that we must include in our budget. Items such as Utilities, Trash removal, Mowing, Plowing, Custodial supplies, Office supplies, Technology, plus general maintenance and repairs.

The people of CUMC include paid staff positions in addition to our many volunteers, members and guests. These positions include our Pastor, Deacon, Director of Education, Director of Music, Director of Praise and Worship, Admin Assistant, Tech Specialist and others.

The Missions & Programs of CUMC include many areas such as Education, Worship, Music, Evangelism, Discipleship, Community Outreach, Communications, God's Country, Older Adult Ministry. In addition, CUMC supports various other ministries such as Canteen, Brown Memorial, Scouting USA, Honor Flight and Safe Sanctuaries.

As you can see, we have a vibrant and active church! It's a large puzzle – with a variety of pieces that all need to fit together. The total budget is approximately \$400,000. Please note that we will be collecting for Fuel Sundays again during Jan/Feb/Mar to help offset our utility costs this winter.

We also have approximately 50 boxes of 2025 weekly Offering envelopes available for those that may want them. These can be useful reminders for those that give weekly. They are not assigned “numbers”. This allows us to order the quantity we need. We will have some boxes placed in the Welcome Center or you can stop by to see Mary in the office.

The 2024 Year End giving statements will be handed out after the church service sometime in the next few weeks. A copy can be emailed or mailed upon request.

I hope you enjoyed my puzzle analogy! And I hope this provided some insight into our budget. Thank you for your continued support of our church and may you have a blessed year ahead!

Barbara Forleo, Finance Chairperson

# February

## FACTS AT-A-GLANCE

**When:** Second month of the Gregorian calendar

**Days:** 28 (29 in leap years)

**Birthstone:** Amethyst

**Flower:** Violet and Iris

**Zodiac Signs:** Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18), Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

**Season:** Winter in Northern Hemisphere, Summer in Southern Hemisphere

**Notable Holidays:** Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day (US), Groundhog Day (US/Canada)

## Cultural Celebrations and Observances

**February** is home to numerous holidays and observances around the world, reflecting its rich cultural significance in various societies.

Valentine's Day, celebrated on February 14th, is named after Saint Valentine, a Roman priest who performed secret marriages for soldiers forbidden to wed.

In the United States, February is **Black History Month**, dedicated to recognizing the contribution of African Americans to the nation's history.

**Groundhog Day**, observed on February 2nd in the United States and Canada, is based on the Pennsylvania Dutch superstition that if a groundhog sees its shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter.

**Chinese New Year** often falls in February, though the exact date varies each year based on the lunar calendar.

In many countries, February 2nd is celebrated as **Candlemas**, a Christian holiday commemorating the presentation of Jesus at the Temple.

## Famous February Birthdays

Many notable figures throughout history were born in February. Here are some of the most famous February-born individuals who have left their mark on the world.

**Charles Darwin**, the father of evolutionary biology, was born on February 12, 1809.

**Abraham Lincoln**, the 16th President of the United States, shares a birthday with Darwin, also born on February 12, 1809.

**Rosa Parks**, the civil rights activist known for refusing to give up her bus seat, was born on February 4, 1913.

**George Washington**, the first President of the United States, was born on February 22, 1732.

**Galileo Galilei**, the renowned astronomer and physicist, was born on February 15, 1564.

# God's Country Jamboree

**Sunday February 16, 2025**  
**6:00 PM**

***Featuring***  
***God's Country Ramblers***



Cicero United Methodist Church  
8416 Brewerton Rd, Cicero, NY

**Fuel Sunday** is back for winter! On the 2nd Sunday of

February, and March, we will observe Fuel Sunday. You will find envelopes labeled "Fuel Sunday" in the pews. We would greatly appreciate any contributions you can make to help offset our utility costs this winter. You can mark your check as "Fuel Sunday" and place it in the collection plate. If you use online banking, you can select "Fuel Sunday" to make your contribution. Thank you for your support! The Finance Team



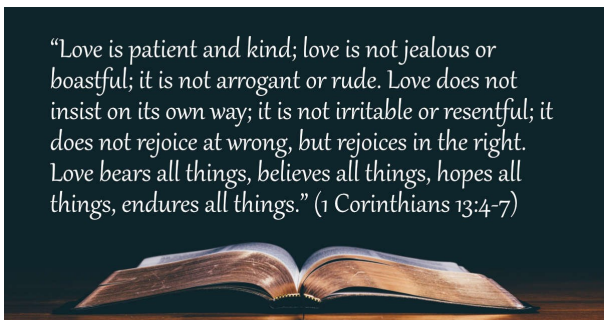
Save the Date:

Golden Christian Luncheon  
"Your Stories of Jesus"

You can share your favorite bible, worship,  
or Sunday school story.

May 18, 2025

"Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)



**LANCASTER, PA BUS TRIP  
SIGHT AND SOUND THEATER  
June 3-6, 2025**

The trip includes transportation and lodging, with three breakfasts, dinners, shows, driver gratuity, and more.

Cicero United Methodist Church Caring Support Group sponsors the trip.

For more information, contact Mary Alice Scheel at 315-699-7181.

The cost is \$875.00, double per person.  
\$950.00 Single  
A \$250.00 deposit  
needed ASAP.

Don't miss out on this fantastic trip!

### **Ash Wednesday Worship**

On March 5th two Worship Services will be at 1 PM and 7 PM, respectively.

### **Ash Wednesday Luncheon**

at Noon. Details to follow.

### **Bible Study**

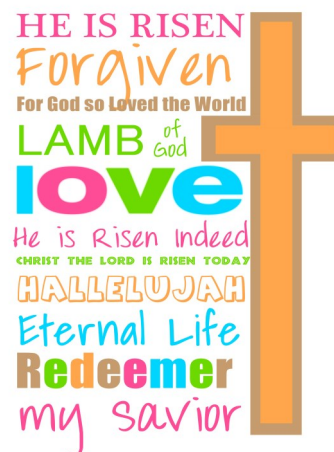
The Lenten Bible Study Series will occur from March 11 to April 15th at 11 AM and 6:30 PM—more information to come.

### **Lenten Offering**

We want to invite you to participate in our Lenten Sacrificial Offering. The idea is to set aside one dollar for each of the forty days of Lent. The total amount raised will be donated to a charitable organization, agency, or program that serves the needs of youth and less fortunate people in our community.

### **Easter Sunday Services**

6 AM Sunrise Worship  
9 AM Easter Worship  
11 AM Easter Worship







COUNT YOUR  
**BLESSINGS.**  
NAME THEM ONE BY ONE.  
COUNT YOUR  
**MANY BLESSINGS**  
SEE WHAT GOD HAS DONE.

### Pastor Niles Birthday

We celebrated a remarkable milestone—Pastor and his wife’s birthday! It is a joy to honor those who touched so many lives with love and wisdom. Our Pastors guidance, kindness, and unwavering support have uplifted our spirits and helped build a strong, vibrant community. On their special day, we want them to know how deeply we appreciate their dedication and the way their faith inspires us all. We are truly grateful for the love their shares. Here’s to many more years of health, happiness, and beautiful moments together! Blessings!







Sunday January 26th, we celebrated a truly momentous occasion—**Vivian's 98th birthday!** It is an honor to recognize a remarkable woman whose contributions to our church and congregation have been extraordinary. Over the years, Vivian has been a pillar of strength, infusing our community with her warmth, wisdom, and unwavering faith. Her selfless service and commitment to our church have touched countless lives, and her spirit inspires us all. From leading MYF programs to offering a listening ear to those in need, Vivian has always been there for us, embodying the values of love and kindness. As we mark her special day, let us express our heartfelt gratitude for the legacy she has built and the countless ways she has enriched our lives. Here's to celebrating Vivian and all the beautiful moments we've shared. Thank you to everyone who joined her and her family in celebrating! Be Blessed!

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS - 2025

### CONFIRMATION

On February 23th, our 2025 Confirmation class will begin their journey of faith with their mentors. Please keep them in your prayers as they undertake this incredible journey.

The Confirmation process starts in September, with Sunday School teachers Alyssa Dunsmoor and Stephanie Lotts guiding the students through the book of Luke. This process takes place from September to June.



With the help of several special adults and a few teen co-mentors, the confirmands will decide if joining the church in September is a decision they want to make. If you still need to make your Confirmation and wish to enter this adventure, you are welcome to join us.

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

If you're feeling down because of the snow and cold, think warm and happy thoughts about our upcoming Vacation Bible School planning! Our Vacation Bible School will run from July 21st to 25th, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. All children between the ages of 3 and 6th grade are invited. Yee-Haw, we will be headed out west ya'll! More information to follow.

Please sign up to help us have fun. Our first planned meeting will be on Tuesday, February 11, at 6:30 pm. If you have any questions or want to sign up, please see or call Sue Bonspille at 315- 420-2101. Look for more information about our fun and exciting VBS program coming soon.

### LENTEN SEASON

We invite everyone to participate in our Ash Wednesday service on March 5th at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm. All are welcome!

### ALL AROUND EASTER

Our classes will participate in Sunday school adventures weekly as they follow Jesus's adventures during his last days on earth. We will look forward to Palm Sunday, His last supper, and spend time with Him in the garden. We will learn that His sacrifice on the cross, although sad, was His Father's plan to set us free from our sins. And again, we look forward to His RESURRECTION! Thank you, Sunday school teachers, for making this program possible for our children! This program will run from March 9th to April 13th.

### SLEDDING FUN

Join us on February 23rd at CLAY Park South, located at 7200 Buckley Road Liverpool, N.Y., for some sledding fun from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Don't want to sled? Bring a chair and blanket and chat with other non-sledders while sipping hot chocolate. A snack of hot chocolate and muffins will be provided.

### MARCH 9TH - SPRING AHEAD

Remember to set your clocks an hour ahead on March 9th! Also, you can wear your PJs to church and put your cereal order in, too!

Play, pray, and grow with us in Sunday School, and make a joyful noise to the Lord too!

Your sister in Christ,

Sue B.



**Valentine's Day Coloring Contest:** Unleash your creativity and color the page below! Have your parents bring your completed masterpiece to the CUMC Church Office by February 21st. Remember, no pages will be accepted after the 21st. Participate in one of these exciting age groups: - Ages 0-5 - Ages 6-9 - Ages 10-13 Only those under 14 can enter, so let your imagination shine! One winner will be chosen from each age group, and their amazing artwork will be proudly displayed on the bulletin board. Each winner will receive a prize of up to \$5. Good luck, and embrace the joy of creation! We can't wait to see your unique expressions of creativity!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



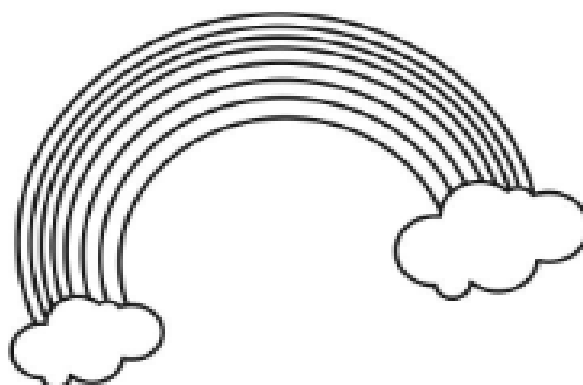
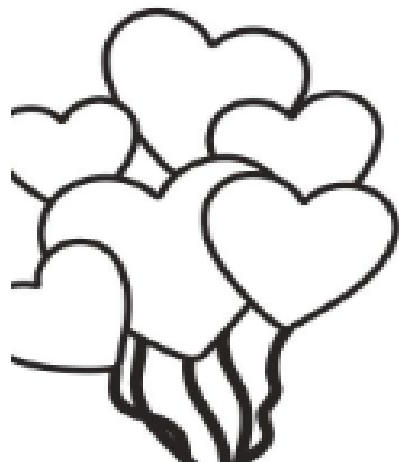
GOD



IS



LOVE





## Basic Lay Servant Course

March 1 to April 5, 2025

10 a.m.-noon

Cicero United Methodist Church

8416 Brewerton Rd. Cicero, NY 13039

Instructor: Rev. Diane E. Diluzio

\*\*\*\*\*

### WHO can apply?:

- Senior High School Students or older!
- No experience with leadership
- Some experience with leadership
- Interested and exploring
- ANYONE who has a heart for God!

### WHY?

- Renew your commitment to church leadership
- Discover your leadership gifts
- Employ personal spiritual gifts as God intended
- Become equipped to lead
- Remain rooted in consistent spiritual practices
- Become part of a group that supports others in their discipleship

### HOW?

- \* Complete the application; ask your pastor or lay leader to help with this
- \* Submit Course Application and payment (\$15.00 per class) due at registration.

Checks should be made out to UNYAC. Mail both to:

Robert Mueller, Co-Director Crossroads LSM

4432 Lathrop Dr, Marcellus NY, 13108

- \* Buy the course book: *Lay Servant Ministries: Basic Course Participant's Book* by Sandy Jackson/Brian Jackson, found at Amazon; UMC Discipleship Resources

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: February 12**

## Lay Servant Ministries Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Local Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*This is a universal application form for all Crossroads District LSM Classes*

**All needed course information found on Course Curriculum Sheet.**

*Please indicate the course you intend to take:*

*Last class taken/Date/Instructor*

*Select One:*

*I wish to develop skills needed in ministry*

*and do not wish to become a Certified Lay Speaker*

*I wish to be approved for courses in Certified Lay Speaking*

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Application and payment (\$15 per class) due at registration.

Payable to: **UNYAC.**

Send both to Robert Mueller, 4432 Lathrop Dr., Marcellus NY, 13108

# 2025 February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 AM Worship Scouting Sunday  Private Birthday 2 PM  4 PM MYF	3   6:30 PM Worship Team	4  10:30 AM Cicero Christian Sisters	5 10 AM Forever Young  7 PM Alzheimer's Care Givers Support Meeting (snow date next Wednesday)	6 2 PM Bereavement  6 Community Outreach	7	8
9  9:30 AM Worship  11 AM LRP	10  3:30 PM Missions Team	11	12  7 PM Education Team	13  11 AM Rummage Sale Planning Meeting	14 Valentine's Day	15
16  9:30 AM Worship  6 PM God's Country	17  President's Day  6:30 PM SPPRC	18	19 Quilt Guild Retreat  6 PM Finance	20 Quilt Guild Retreat  6:30 PM Trustees Meeting	21	22 9AM Faith Breakfast
23  9:30 AM Worship	24	25	26	27	28	



Cicero United Methodist Church  
8416 Brewerton Road  
Cicero, NY 13039  
Phone: 315-699-2731  
Website:  
[www.ciceroumchurch.org](http://www.ciceroumchurch.org)  
E-mail:  
[Admin\\_Asst@ciceroumchurch.org](mailto:Admin_Asst@ciceroumchurch.org)

Church Office Hours  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 am to 2 pm

Sunday Services:  
9:30 AM



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