

March 2025

# BAKER NEWS

*Living God's will to love, welcome, and share Christ with all.*



## JOIN US IN WORSHIP

Worship Service on  
Sunday mornings at 10:00 am

Live-stream Sunday worship  
through [bakerchurch.org](http://bakerchurch.org) and  
YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/@bakerUMC/streams>

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### Church Office Hours


Mon, Wed, Thurs ~ 8 am - 2 pm  
Tues ~ 8 am - 1 pm  
Friday ~ CLOSED


*If you have a **pastoral emergency** outside of regular office hours and need to reach Pastor John, you may call the church office at 652-0500 and press 5*

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### Connect With Us

 345 Main St.  
East Aurora, NY 14052

 (716) 652-0500

 [admin@bakerchurch.org](mailto:admin@bakerchurch.org)

 [www.bakerchurch.org](http://www.bakerchurch.org)

Pastor ~ Rev. Dr. John Loeser  
Admin Asst. ~ Tammy Carroll  
Music Director ~ Jeffrey Thompson  
Family Life Director ~  
Judy Baumgartner

## Pastor's Column for March 2025 Baker News

Dear Baker Church. In February, several Baker members shared their concerns with me regarding the new immigration policies of the federal government. This continues to be a topic of controversy, concern, and even fear among some in our community. In a previous edition of Baker News, I shared an official United Methodist Church statement that addresses the Church's aspirational vision for the treatment of migrant people. In this column, I share a pastoral response to this issue from UNYAC Bishop Héctor A. Burgos Núñez. He wrote his letter to the clergy serving UNY conference churches. However, I believe his words may be helpful to those seeking pastoral guidance on this issue. Only portions of the bishop's letter appear here to fit Baker's newsletter format. The entire letter may be viewed at <https://www.unyumc.org/news/article/from-the-desk-of-bishop-hector-a-pastoral-response-to-the-current-immigrati>

Bishop Héctor writes, "As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to love, welcome, and walk alongside all of God's children, especially the most vulnerable among us. Today, I write as your episcopal leader with a heavy heart as we witness growing uncertainty and fear among migrants, immigrants, refugees, and BIPOC people in our communities. Families are being separated, individuals are being detained, BIPOC persons are being profiled, and the dignity of our neighbors is under threat. Yet, God's call to justice and compassion remains in the face of hardship. The scriptures remind us repeatedly that we are to extend radical hospitality to all peoples, for we, too, have been (could be) strangers in a foreign land (Leviticus 19:34)."

Bishop Héctor then speaks to pastors and congregations that directly serve immigrant populations, offering suggestions on how to respond to specific situations. He concludes his pastoral letter saying, "Let us be people of hope, not fear. Let us stand with our immigrant siblings in active love. May our collective witness reflect the heart of God, who calls us to embrace all with justice, mercy, and boundless grace. Thank you for all you do to live the gospel, and embody God's love with your neighbors in all places." (continued on page 2)

The bishop then lifts up the following prayer: "Gracious and loving God, you remind us that when we welcome the stranger, we welcome you. Open our hearts to see your image in every migrant, refugee, and immigrant. Help our churches prepare to be places of compassion and justice, equipping us to respond with wisdom and grace. May our words and actions reflect your love, comforting the fearful and offering hope to the weary. Guide us to stand boldly for the dignity of all people. In a world where fear often overshadows love, give us the courage to stand for justice. Empower us to speak boldly for the rights of migrants and refugees. When we witness oppression, help us respond with faithful action. Strengthen us to be your hands and feet, bringing light into the shadows. We lift those living in fear of raids and displacement. Strengthen our resolve to be faithful witnesses, standing with the vulnerable and showing your love through our presence. Help us to remain calm and wise, ready to document injustice and extend a hand of support. May our solidarity remind the world that no one is forgotten or forsaken. Equip us to bring healing and hope where there is pain and despair. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen."

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the church office or by email at [rev.jloeser@bakerchurch.org](mailto:rev.jloeser@bakerchurch.org). Pastor John.

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## FORUM: SUNDAY, MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> FOLLOWING SERVICE:

On Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup> following worship, Lay Pastor Bob Schooley from Centerville UMC will speak to the congregation about an urgent need Baker might support.

Since USAID has been shut down, people around the world are not getting their ARV medicines to combat HIV. This wonderful program is called PEPFAR and was started by President George W. Bush.

Mr. Bob Schooley, pastor of Centerville UMC, has journeyed to Uganda 20 times since 2006 with many different people. One of the groups they work with is the Mango Tree HIV Support Group, near Lugala. It's led by a wonderful couple named Gladys and her husband, Aggry. Thanks to the medicines and God's help, the Mango Tree group is able to assist one another, care for orphans and operate a number of small businesses to fund their efforts (including paying school fees for the orphans). The hope is that USAID will be restored soon. In the meantime, about \$870 is needed each month to get the ARVs needed for 38 people.

Please mark your calendars and join in the conversation if you are able. Thank you.

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## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The Deadline for the April 2025 issue of Baker News is Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

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## TOPS GIFT CARDS

Tops gift cards are available in the church office during the week and before and after worship service on Sunday mornings. Denominations are \$10, \$20, \$50, & \$100. The proceeds from this fundraiser go to the Tiffany Windows Fund. Thank you for your support.

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## PRAYER AND PRAISE

We will pray together on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Please plan to join us for Prayer & Praise on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Chapel.

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## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (UWF) NEWS

Ladies Wednesday Bible Study will meet March 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am in the **Parlor**. Please read and be ready to discuss Days 40-42 (pgs. 102-108) in the book *The Blessed Life* by Kelly Minter.

**UWF Executive Committee** will NOT meet in the month of March as World Day of Prayer Service 2025 will be held at Baker Church, Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 10am.

**Hands & Hearts** will meet Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the Chapel. The group will be putting together care packages for Baker member, Taylor Trulin and friends, who are in the Marines.

**Memorial Day Flowers** Order forms for this year are included with this newsletter, available in the SAME and Main St entrances, or in the Church Office. Orders are **due** by **March 17<sup>th</sup>** with pickup of flowers on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Love & Learn** next scheduled meeting is Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at noon in the Chapel. Carol Weaver will be presenting a "Call to Prayer & Self Denial" program.

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### **Meditation and Yoga as Christian Spiritual Practice**

Breathe, stretch, and reflect. Mind, body, and spirit come together in meditation and yoga as Christian spiritual practice.

For March, we will meet the first and third Thursday: March 6<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Join us! For more information, contact Connie Tsujimoto at 714-5486.

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### **PRAYER CHANGES THINGS**

To add your prayer requests to the Baker Prayer Chain, please email Sue McFeely at: [smcfeely@live.com](mailto:smcfeely@live.com) or call at 716-870-1972.

### **AD COUNCIL MEETING**

Will be held Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Chapel.

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## **JOHN WESLEY SAID...**

Do not even give a single thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours or not. Just because someone does not agree with everything you say does not mean that they are sinning. Nor is this or that opinion essential to the work of God. Be patient with those who disagree with you. Do not condemn those who do not see things just as you do, or who think it is their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or small.

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**TABLE FOR ALL**  
Monthly Community Dinner



Our next "Table for All" will be on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 6-6:45pm. We will be serving Chili, Cornbread, Salad and Apple Crisp with Ice Cream. Come join us for food and fellowship!!! Please share about our meal with your friends, neighbors or anyone you feel would enjoy this special time of fellowship. Contact Mary Ann Kopp at 716-482-0044 or at [maryannkopp@icloud.com](mailto:maryannkopp@icloud.com) if you have any questions and/or would like to volunteer.

We would love to have a permanent or rotating Greeter for the dinner as Mary Doyle is no longer able to serve.

You would greet all the guests and keep count of the guests, Church members and volunteers. Please see Mary Ann if interested.

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### **PASTRY AUCTION/POT LUCK**

On Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, Baker will be hosting the annual Pastry auction and Pot Luck lunch to benefit the Seneca St. UMC. This event will immediately follow the worship service, at approximately 11:30am. Please consider bringing a pastry/dessert for our favorite MC, Bob Sowyrda, to sell, a dish to pass for the pot luck and/or a monetary donation. Mark the date on your calendar...additional details will be announced in the What's Happening insert.

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## A NEW OPPORTUNITY

Peacemakers: Seeking Wisdom and Grace in Troubled Times: Some have expressed how disturbing the world has become. We want to understand how to live out our Christian faith in the marketplace. We believe it begins with prayer, searching the Scriptures, and listening to voices that can equip us with correct teaching. We desire to be faithful witnesses of Jesus, what He taught, and how He lived. Our first meeting will be Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at noon. This is not a Baker group (and not a formal Bible study)--it's an open invitation to anyone who desires a connection with others who want to live out Jesus' command to love God and to love our neighbor. Join us! Bring a friend.

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## SAVE THE DATE

The annual Easter Eggstravaganza will be held on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> 11:30am-1pm. Indoor, free community event with egg hunt, "balloon guy", games, photos, and crafts for the kids. Open to all.

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## HANDS & HEARTS JUMBLE SALE

The Hands & Hearts committee is in charge of the mini Jumble Sale which will be held on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Sale will be held from 9am - Noon in Frantz Hall; with a Bag Sale from 12 -1pm. Sale is Cash Only.

We will be setting up and accepting donations Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:30-8pm.

Also accepting donations on Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> & Thursday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>; times to be announced. Please hold on to your donations until those dates.

We **CANNOT** accept baby/infant items, clothing, books / CD's, stuffed animals, electronics, or large exercise or ski equipment.

Set-up for the Jumble sale will begin Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm in Frantz Hall. Help is always needed and appreciated.

Thank you for your support!!

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## CITY MISSION NEWS

Sue McFeely and I attended the City Mission Church Ambassador's meeting. It was very informative and full of Christian fellowship. We found out that our Church has won an award for completing all 4 of the tasks that the Mission is hoping that they will fulfill each year. These tasks include -1. Education- (we had a speaker from the Mission present to our Church) 2. Volunteer - (our work at the Thrift Store and Bingo Nights) 3. Provide practical needs- (our collections of sweatpants, underwear, etc.) and 4. Fundraise- (our collections for meals and other things).

They are now in need of men's, SIZES LARGE & X-LARGE T-SHIRTS. So please consider contributing to this collection. You can put your donations of t-shirts in the wooden box, marked City Mission, in the SAME entrance. Thank you and congratulations on winning the award and for all you do for the homeless in the area!

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## FISH OF EAST AURORA

The food items for March is:

**CANNED VEGETABLES**

Please leave your donations on the shelf in the SAME entrance to be delivered to FISH.