

The Community Messenger February 2026

Erica Extemporaneous

A friend recently shared an insight with me gleaned from her personal Bible study. It occurred to her that “the God who took care of the two to three million people in the desert for forty years is the same God who takes care of me, and your mom, and you, and all of us.” She marveled that she had never quite thought of things that way. That kind of constancy, that steadfast faith, that longevity... It is hard to comprehend. It is all at once the most basic and simple premise and an unfathomable mystery.

The same God who breathed life into all of creation, naming and claiming each one of us, is the God who lingers at the bedside as one’s final breath is drawn. It is the God who weeps as entire species of animals face extinction, as the climate itself shifts and strains.

The same God who parted the Red Sea, quite literally making a way where there was no way, is the God who guards and guides our discernment process when we are faced with impossible choices. It is the God who grants us the courage to take that first fateful step, not altogether sure where it might take us.

The same God who sent his only child into a world gone awry, a world that would reject and ridicule him, criticize and crucify him, is the God who sends us into a world weary, nearly bereft, but holding out hope. It is the God who gives us a voice, who gives us the courage to speak.

The same God... and we, who know God, who are known by God, who strive to share the love, the compassion God has given, will never be the same.



Take good care,

Erica



Greetings from Gabby!



John Howland and I are looking forward to making paper hearts to share with our friends on Valentines Day. We have a lot of friends living in Pastor Erica's office. It might take a while. That's okay. We have time! We haven't been exploring too much. It is too snowy! It is too cold! Would you like to be our Valentine?

Your friends~ Gabby
and John Howland

News from the Official Board

The decision to cancel our worship service on January 25 was made after an online discussion by board members. It was noted that most of the parking lot was ice-covered, and the service that plows for us had no salt to spread (this is an ongoing problem in our area). In light of these facts, the extremely low temperatures, and the expected snowfall, it was decided to cancel the service for the safety of our staff and our congregation. Any questions or concerns about this decision can be addressed to myself or any member of the Board.

-Alan Purdum

From the Open and Affirming Committee

Members of the congregation enjoyed Brandy Pauline's presentation entitled "An Unconventional Path to God". If you missed it, it will be available on the church's website and on our Facebook page. Brandy has also posted it on Facebook.

Our next event will be Rev. Erica Brown discussing "Sin, Sexuality, and Scripture". This will take place in the Chapel after worship on February 15th.

-Alan Purdum

Operating Fund

| | December Activity | YTD Balance | Budget YTD |
|------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Income | \$27,143.26 | \$289,986.48 | \$272,114.00 |
| Expenses | \$20,476.60 | \$260,741.91 | \$272,114.00 |
| Difference | \$6,666.66 | \$29,244.57 | \$0.00 |

Diaconate and Elders' Schedules – February 2026

| Date | Elder | Diaconate Sanctuary (All Month) | Diaconate Kitchen (All Month) |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| February 1 | Tom Hitmar | Anna Marie Ottney – Captain | Sanctuary Dawn Adgate |
| February 8 | Brooke Schubert | Emma Adgate | |
| February 15 | Bim Turner | Haylee Adgate | JHR Dawn Adgate |
| February 22 | Katy Kell | John Layfield | |

Lectionary for February 2026

February 1, 2026

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12

February 8, 2026

Isaiah 58:1-9a, (9b-12)

Psalm 112:1-9, (10)

1 Corinthians 2:1-12, (13-16)

Matthew 5:13-20

February 15, 2026

Exodus 24:12-18

Psalm 99

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9

February 22, 2026

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

CLIENT CHOICE FOOD PANTRY



Just a reminder that the February Food Pantry is scheduled for Friday, February 20th between 3-5 pm. We will be picking up an order of food from Second Harvest on Thursday morning, the 19th, and then unloading and stocking the shelves. Volunteers are always welcome! ~Linda Hitmar

STILL TIME TO LEARN ALL ABOUT US!

Would you like to learn more about Howland Community Church? We are affiliated with three denominations – the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, and the International Council of Community Churches. The three-week study was to begin on Tuesday, January 20. However, due to the severe weather, the first two sessions were postponed.

If you are still interested, the studies are now scheduled for Tuesdays - February 3, 10, and 17 at 1:00 pm and/or 7:00 pm.

Please let Erica know if you are interested!



International Council of Community Churches



It's Almost Fish Fry Time!!!



Fish Fry season is about to begin. Ash Wednesday is February 18. That means the first Fish Fry will be February 20 from 4:30 - 6:30 pm. Lots of volunteers are needed to make this year a success. Sign-up sheets will be available in the back of the Sanctuary for volunteers.

The dinner includes fried or baked fish, mac-n-cheese or baked potato, green beans, coleslaw, applesauce, bread, dessert, and beverage. The cost is \$16.00 for adults and \$8.00 for children. Take out is available.



- AQUARIUS
- CANDLELIGHT
- CARNATION
- CHOCOLATE
- COZY
- CUPID
- FEBRUARY
- FIREPLACE
- FRIENDSHIP
- GROUNDHOG DAY
- HEART
- HUG
- KISS
- LEAP YEAR
- LOVE
- MARDI GRAS
- PINK
- PISCES
- PRESIDENTS DAY
- RED
- ROMANCE
- ROSES
- SKIING
- SNOW
- SWEETHEART
- VALENTINE
- WINTER

February

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February 2026 - HCC Calendar



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1 10 AM Worship Annual Meeting | 2 6 PM Trustees 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH) | 3 Affiliations Study (Library) 1 pm &/or 7 pm | 4 1 PM Women's Group (JHR) | 5 6-8 PM Girl Scouts (NH) | 6 | 7 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH) |
| 8 10 AM Worship Noisy Coin Offering | 9 6 PM Open & Affirming Comm. 7 PM Elders 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH) | 10 Affiliations Study (Library) 1 pm &/or 7 pm | 11 1 PM Women's Group (JHR) | 12 7 PM Game Night (JHR) | 13 | 14  1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH) |
| 15 10 AM Worship – Mardi Gras Sunday – Celebration Band Open & Affirming Comm. Meeting – Rev. Brown - after service (Chapel) | 16 Presidents' Day 6 PM Finance 7 PM Official Board 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH) | 17 Affiliations Study (Library) 1 pm &/or 7 pm | 18 Ash Wednesday Services @ noon & 7 pm | 19 6-8 PM Girl Scouts (NH) | 20 3-5 PM Client Choice Food Pantry Fish Fry 4:30-6:30 pm | 21 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH) |
| 22 10 AM Worship | 23 7 PM Boy Scouts (NH) | 24 | 25 1 PM Women's Group (JHR) | 26 7 PM Game Night (JHR) | 27 Fish Fry 4:30-6:30 pm | 28 11 AM – 12:30 PM Free Fellowship Meal (SH) 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH) |



The
Celebration
Band will
enliven our
worship on
February 15th
'Mardi Gras'
Sunday!

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HOWLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH
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 Warren, Ohio 44484

WE'RE ON THE WEB:
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Reverend Erica L. Brown, Senior Minister
 Andrew Purdum, Director of Music
 Rebecca Shelton, Organist
 Minta Pitts, Custodian
 Diane Andrews, Office Coordinator
 Alan Purdum, Chair of the Congregation
 Sarah Sanders, Vice-Chair of the Congregation

The Community Messenger is the monthly newsletter of the **Howland Community Church** (affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, and the International Council of Community Churches). Our church is “**A House of Prayer for All People.**” We offer Sunday School for children and a fellowship gathering after Worship. Communion is served every Sunday.

Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday
9:00 am – 1:00 pm



International Council of Community Churches