

# January news



## Love Messy

"I love messy," my work friend said with a genuine smile on her face. She had just driven some people from one place to another and briefly recapped the highlights of the craziest 20 minutes in the car. Hearing just that part, I was already feeling anxious about the situation I wasn't even involved in and I couldn't picture actually embracing it.

This was a few months ago, and it is still sticking in my mind. Sometimes I do a word-of-the-year. If you don't know what that is, it's a twist on New Year's resolutions. Kind of just keeping that word or theme on your mind during the year, especially when making choices and goals and having conversations.

Amanda's phrase has stuck in brain, and I want "**love messy**" to make its way to my own heart during 2026.

I have a hard time with messy. *I don't have a hard time with literal mess – I've been known to leave piles of mail wherever I find a spot, and if I try on three different sweaters before work, there's a good chance they will still be in a pile when I get home from work.* But I dread messy situations. I will run all possible scenarios through my mind "I love messy," my work friend said with a genuine smile on her face. She had just driven some people from one place to another and briefly recapped the highlights of the craziest 20 minutes in the car. Hearing just that part, I was already feeling anxious about the situation I wasn't even involved in and I couldn't picture actually embracing it.

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Because of this I know I have missed out on lots of wonderful experiences and friendships. It's not something I am proud of – this is my confession.

I don't think I'm alone in struggling with avoiding difficult situations. If it's you, follow me to Matthew chapter 2.

Matthew chapter 1 ends with the beautiful story of our Messiah coming to earth for our redemption. There are songs we sing about the birth of Jesus, children's plays recreating it, and Linus' reciting the Luke version in A Charlie Brown Christmas. But most of the next chapter isn't typically on paintings in Hobby Lobby.

It starts with wise men, or Magi, looking for the Messiah and turns dark quickly. King Herod finds out about it and tries to trick them into telling him where Jesus is. When that doesn't work, he orders every baby boy in Bethlehem 2 years old and younger to be murdered. Joseph and Mary have to run to Egypt until Herod dies.

Life isn't going to be tidy. The beginning of a new year feels like a fresh start and a clean slate, but most of us will encounter some difficult situations at some point in 2026. It might even be messy. But we aren't alone.

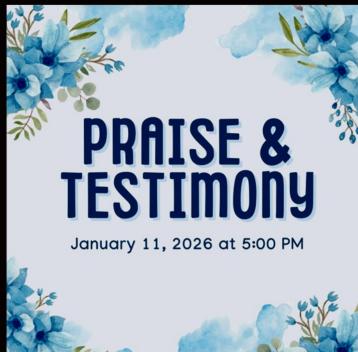
I try to hold on to this false sense of security that everything is safe and comfortable, and anxiety is high when something goes south. The truth is, we don't have control over it anyway. But we know Who does.

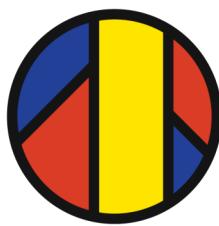
This year, my goal is to love messy. To embrace the situations I might have shied away from in the past out of fear that it was going to be uncomfortable. To trust the One leading me.

***"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."***  
Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)

- Jennifer Chapman

2026





# January 2026

All Church, HF Kids, HF Youth, HF Women's Min, Thrive

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
<b>Church Office Closed</b>						
4 THRIVE— Rorabaugh Group	5	6 Prayer Shawl THRIVE-Young Adult	7 Wed. Night Activities @ 6 PM  Women's Bible Study	8 THRIVE— Married Group	9 NYI Lock In	10 2nd Saturday Prayer
11 Praise & Testimony	12	13 THRIVE-Rick's THRIVE-Young Adult	14 Wed. Night Activities @ 6 PM  Women's Bible Study	15 Women's Ministry Game Night	16	17 WIDOW'S LUNCHEON
18 NDI Meeting	19	20 Prayer Shawl THRIVE-Young Adult	21 Wed. Night Activities @ 6 PM  Women's Bible Study	22 Win-A-Couple Class Dinner  THRIVE— Married Group	23	24
25 Leadership Team Meeting	26	27 THRIVE-Rick's THRIVE-Young Adult	28 Wed. Night Activities @ 6 PM  Women's Bible Study	29	30	31

# Connect.Thrive.Serve.

*"Our vision at HF is to be a church that is CONNECTING with Christ and people, THRIVING in Christ and God's Word and SERVING Christ and others."*

## CONNECTING:

**All-Church Informational Meeting:** HF is in a special place of momentum as we close 2025 and look forward to 2026. God has been ever-faithful to us and as good stewards of His blessings we are planning for the future. On January 11 following the Morning Worship there will be an exciting All-Church Informational Meeting to provide updates on our plans moving into 2026 and beyond. This meeting is for any person who calls HF their church home and I would love it if you would plan to attend.

**Ministry Center:** (*Gathering Room*) The most recent Phase One renovations included the shelf wall & TV installations. The back counter with sink & ice maker, the window bar and baseboards will be installed next. We're getting closer and closer to completion and our Open House... stay tuned!

**Signage Updating:** In our efforts to have clearer direction for our guests and new attenders we are in the process of updating all of the signage around our campus and in all of our connection and resource materials. *\*Although classrooms will now have posted numbers over the doors, in-house we are not changing SS class names.* I shared last month that we have been working on a church logo refresh after about 15 years and those will be added for 2026. We will be sharing these at the All-church Informational Meeting.

**Discipleship (Sunday School) class updated:** Our Seekers adult SS class has been updated with new carpet, paint, TV and décor. Some seating has been adjusted to make it easier to come and go as well. Come on down to the last room on the right (*Adult Education wing*) and check it out. And give the class a visit any time on Sunday mornings at 9:30.

## THRIVING:

**Compassionate Ministry:** HFCN has been very focused over the last several years on helping those around us in need. Throughout 2025 your HF Leadership Team has done its due diligence to help people in our community by allotting funds for food, clothing, gas, utilities, rent, Thanksgiving and Christmas needs and more. *\*Everyone in need fills-out the proper paperwork for consideration and our records, as we take the stewarding of our funds as a high priority.* Thank you for your generosity in giving over and above your tithe throughout the year, to our monthly NMI projects (*local & global*), special projects (*Disaster Relief, Gathering Room etc.*), and for collecting needed items (*Crisis Care Kits, Lily's Place Christmas etc.*) You are truly living the definition of being the hands and feet of the Gospel!

**HF Youth Ministries:** Your HF leadership team has worked hard to pray, discuss and plan how we can begin the process of interviewing and hiring a Youth Pastor. We believe that the Lord's timing is always right and that now is the right time to focus our efforts in reaching the

next generation with the Gospel. This will call for the leadership to reorganize and reprioritize some things, but we are excited about what we believe will be a new chapter in the life of our church. We will need your help and your faithfulness in serving and giving, so thank you in advance. More information to come in the January All-Church Information Meeting. (*Jan. 11*)

\*A huge thank you to all of our Youth Ministry Volunteers who give of your time and energy to show genuine love to our teenagers. A special thank you to Matt and Sarah Thomas. With Matt's leadership, they have sacrificed and led our Youth Group with a heart of passion, and compassion, for the last several years. Their leadership has resulted in a great base for the future and we are eternally grateful.

## SERVING:

There are plenty of opportunities available in each church ministry to serve. Here are a few:

**Community Garden:** Recognizing we're in the winter months, we continue to plan for Spring. So, we would welcome someone with a passion for gardening to oversee our Community Garden year-round. Please contact Pastoral Staff if you can serve here.

**Van Coordinator:** Every week we pick up children, teenagers and adults that would not otherwise be able to be here. Thank you to so many of you who have stepped up to serve as riders or drivers on Sundays and Wednesdays. Your service here makes a tremendous difference in the Kingdom! We are still in need of someone with a heart for this ministry that would be willing to schedule riders and drivers, as well as recruit new ones. Please contact Pastor Marc or Nathan Miller if you can serve here.

\*Also, there are rotation options now for Sun. AM and Wed. PM (*1 time per month or floater*) if you are able to serve as a van rider or driver.

**HF Youth:** Our youth are our greatest resource for the future of ministry here at HFCN.

Please consider investing in them by volunteering. You are needed and there are several opportunities available. Please contact Pastor Trevor if you're able to serve.

It is my hope as your Pastor, that as we continue to do ministry here at Huntington First as we move forward in reaching people for Jesus, that you stay well informed. We hope this helps. And as always, I'm always available if you need to chat. Until we see each other again, let's all go and be light in a dark world!

In Jesus,  
Pastor Marc