



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061-1780

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2018

### **Sundays at FUMC:**

- ♦ Early Informal Service  
8:30 am
- ♦ Regular Service 9:30 am
- ♦ Sunday School 9:30 am

### **Also on Sundays:**

- ♦ Service at Hawthorne  
Ridge - 1:00 pm

### **We are on the Web:**

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

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[youthleaderamber@gmail.com](mailto:youthleaderamber@gmail.com)

Rev. Sundar R. Samuel,  
*Pastor*

Gail Welkley,  
*Administrative Assistant*

*Dear Members and friends,*

Emailsanta.com receives more than a million emails every year, and each one gets a response. Here are some samples of the emails they receive:



*Dear Santa, I'm sorry, but I don't have a chimney...I'll leave the cat flap unlocked for you, but please watch out for the litter box! Jon (aged 4).*

*Dear Santa, I'm sorry for putting all that Ex-lax in your milk last year, but I wasn't sure if you were real. My dad was really mad. Bri, 7.*

*Dear Santa, Do you know Jesus is the real reason for the Christmas? Not to be mean, but he is. Rosanne. 11.*

Rosanne is right, of course. Jesus is indeed the reason for the season!

My second parish was in Bainbridge, NY. Right across from the parsonage was the commons where every summer a whole bunch of vendors would set up for a local flea market every Saturday. One such Saturday, I came upon an antique Christmas crèche, or a manger scene. The price was too good to be true. When I questioned the owner, she verified that it was the correct price. "You can have it for a dollar," she said. "It's all there except Jesus". No wonder the price was so low! A Christmas crèche is worthless without the figurine of the Christ child. That's the centerpiece, the most important part.

That says it all, doesn't it? That's what Christmas is all about. That is why we read with so much eagerness that wondrous story about shepherds, angels, the wise men and a star! All those who came to see the babe Jesus were amazed at what they heard from the angels, and how the heavenly bodies led them to this infant to worship and offer precious gifts. Someone has called it the greatest story ever told, and it is.

When they laid the first transatlantic cable across the bed of the Atlantic Ocean to Europe they wondered: what should be the first message sent over this cable to see if it is working? Finally, they chose these words spoken first by the angels: "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind."

This Advent Season, the first thing we need to see is that

*(Continued on page 2)*

*A Reconciling Congregation*

(Continued from page 1)

"Love came down at Christmas." Christmas began in the heart of God. The New Testament teaches us that the very nature of God is love. In the glow of Christmas, we know ourselves to be loved and we are led to love others.

It is no accident that Christmas comes at the darkest time of the year. We don't know the date when Jesus was actually born, so when the date was set for Christmas it was to symbolize the words of the Prophet Isaiah that "the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light." Christmas represents hope. There is no finer symbol of hope than the birth of the Christ child. A baby is God's opinion that life should go on...

This is to say that Christmas is the best news this world could ever receive. An angel had the privilege of first announcing the news to the shepherds. "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." What a powerful message.

Years ago author Chuck Swindoll pointed out the difference that a baby can make. He wrote of Napoleon sweeping through Austria in 1809. That was the big news that transfixed the world of that time. Looking back, however, the really important news of that year was not the battles that were fought, but the babies that were born: William Gladstone, for example, one of the finest statesmen that England ever produced. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, the extraordinary poet. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Edgar Allen Poe, Charles Darwin, and perhaps most notably, Abraham Lincoln.

Swindoll writes, "if there had been news broadcasts at that time, I'm certain these words would have been heard: 'The destiny of the world is being shaped on an Austrian battlefield today.' Or was it?"

"Funny, only a handful of history buffs today could name even two or three of the Austrian campaigns. Looking back, you and I realize that history was actually being shaped in the cradles of England and America as young mothers held in their arms the shakers and the movers of the future..." (Charles R. Swindoll, *Growing Deep in the Christian Life* (Portland: Multnomah press, 1986).

History was certainly being shaped as Mary held her newborn son in her arms. Not only the history of the world, but your history and mine. Let us give God thanks today. Christmas comes from the heart of God. Christmas is about hope for all mankind and Christmas is the best news this world could ever receive.

I wish you and yours a wonderful Advent Season and a blessed Christmas.



Rejoice!

*Pastor Sundar*

## JANUARY BLOOD DRIVE

SAVE YOUR BLOOD! If you are a regular blood donor, try to wait until **Friday, January 25** for the Red Cross Blood Drive Here at our church. New donors will also be welcome and encouraged.

**THE BELL** is published monthly (with the exception of August) by the First United Methodist Church, 1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061-1780. December 2018, Volume 20, Issue 11. G. Herrick, **Editor**; S. Samuel, G. Welkley, **Editing Team**; J. Van Ornam, **Proofreader**; K. Van Buren, B. Van Ornam, **Production Team**; R. Reineke, **Photographer**; L. Heyer, **Mailing Coordinator**

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## WORSHIP AT FUMC IN DECEMBER

The first four Sundays in December are the Sundays of the season of Advent, a time observed in many Christian churches when we wait expectantly and prepare for the birth of Jesus. It's the time to move to Year C if you would like to read through the lectionary this new year.

Advent, the time when, in our worship services we light one candle each week, symbolizing the four virtues Jesus brings us, Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. One day within the Advent season, on **December 18**, we will hold a special worship service, Blue Christmas. It's a service especially for those who are dealing with a loss this holiday season. Invite your friends and neighbors who may find this service helpful as we prepare for Christmas. Page 4 has more information about this special service. A more complete listing of all the worship activities this month can be found on pages 6 and 7. In case you missed it last year and would like to stop and give thought to the challenging events of the last few months, here is a repeat from last year's BELL. "If you are looking for a different way to start thinking about the Christmas holiday, try the YouTube presentation at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjqRZSTYKxY>. It's a video clip, dated in approach and quality, from the Amos 'n' Andy Christmas Show of December 1952."

For our Jewish neighbors, Hanukkah is celebrated this month from **Dec 2 to Dec 10**. And for those of African heritage, Kwanzaa will be celebrated from **Dec 26 to Jan 1, 2019**.

Pastor Sundar will be in the pulpit for each of the five Sundays in December.

Here is the lectionary for December:

- December 2 **First Sunday of Advent** Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36
- December 9 **Second Sunday of Advent** Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11;  
Luke 3:1-6
- December 16 **Third Sunday of Advent** Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7;  
Luke 3:7-18
- December 23 **Fourth Sunday of Advent** Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10;  
Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)
- December 24 **Christmas Eve** Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
- December 25 **Christmas Day** Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14
- December 30 **First Sunday After Christmas Day** 1 Samuel 2:18-20; Psalm 148;  
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

## SCARVES, SCARVES AND MORE SCARVES

### Caring Ministries- Red Scarves for Foster Care Kids in College

**65 Scarves** (see picture below) have been lovingly created by our ladies and have been sent to *Foster Care to Success* ([www.fc2success.org](http://www.fc2success.org)). They will be distributed in Care Packages on Valentine's Day. This organization helps 5000 students each year with tuition, mentoring and care packages. Check out their website to see if you or a group can help in other ways too. I **thank you all for your great support** with this project. Next year watch for the "**Hatsgiving**" project, hats for children with cancer.

Contact Aleta Schweigert 518-479-3182 at [aleta.schweigert@gmail.com](mailto:aleta.schweigert@gmail.com) with any questions or suggestions.



## BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

At 7:00pm on **Tuesday, December 18** we will hold our Blue Christmas Worship Service here at our church. This is a service for all who are dealing with a loss this holiday season, a loved one, friend, job, home, health, faith, or any other loss. Everyone who is "feeling blue" and their supporters, friends and family are invited to attend. Please invite your friends and neighbors who might find this service helpful in their life. The invitation is for all in our community. No need to be a member of our church or any particular faith community to attend. All are welcome.



### Blue Christmas Prayer

There's no room at Christmas for sadness,  
There's no place for hearts that are blue.  
All the world wants to hear  
Is a word full of cheer,  
Not a sigh, not a tear, not from you.

There's no room at Christmas for loneliness,  
There's no place for your emptiness and grief.  
All the world wants is peace,  
Mistletoe and Christmas trees,  
Not a heartache that mars its beliefs.

There's no room at Christmas for sickness,  
There's no place or time to be ill.  
All the world wants is health,  
Prosperity and wealth,  
Not a pain that can spoil its goodwill.

There's no room at Christmas for Jesus,  
There's no place for His family, too,  
All the world would not share,  
No one seems to really care,  
A stable will just have to do.

Silence.....

Yes, there's room at Christmas for sadness,  
There's a place in God's heart for you.  
For He knows pain and loss,  
Which He felt on the Cross,  
So this candle is lit here for you...

\*For Christ knows what it's like to be blue.

\*Used with the blessing of The Presbyterian Church in  
Canada

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



THANK YOU TO ALL who helped with the Thrift Sale, Brooks BBQ, and the Roast Beef dinner. The UMW really appreciates everyone . You are Blessed Angels.

The UMW Christmas Party is **Monday, December 3** at 6:30 pm. in the Fellowship Hall. We are having a Potluck and cookie exchange. It's time for relaxing holiday fun. Anyone can join us.

The Sunday School Musical is **December 15 and 16**. After the **December 16** performance, the UMW is providing a meal for the performers and their family and friends. The menu has been set, but we just need a little extra help setting up tables after church for 100 people and meal servers in the kitchen. The supper is buffet style but assistance in setting up is still needed.

ATTENTION: We have a smaller dishwasher in the kitchen thanks to the Green Fiber Dumpster (ECO TEAM) and the Trustees. The UMW has been purchasing a large amount of paper products and the cost has increased every year. With the new equipment, we are asking small groups and Coffee Hour hosts to not use paper cups. Use the washable cups, plates and silverware and when the event is over, load them into the dishwasher and turn it on. The UMW would rather use our money for our youth and other mission projects than throw away paper. Thank you.

## ORDER A POINSETTIA FOR THE SANCTUARY SOON!!

Orders must be received in the church office no later than **Monday, December 10**. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 518-477-9693.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Advent is a busy time for our church and SUNDAY SCHOOL! It is a wonderful time of the year to spend not only with our friends and families, but with our church family as well, celebrating the birth of Christ. We will be sharing Advent Calendars with our Sunday School children, please be sure to take one home. We do have extra calendars if you would like one for a grandchild or neighbor, please ask Heidi for one. Wishing everyone a blessed Christmas.

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 9**, we will be making Advent centerpieces during Sunday School time. It is a popular activity. Each child can make a centerpiece to bring home. If you have any decorations to donate, small ornaments, bows, ribbons, pine cones, etc., please bring them in and leave them in Heidi's office. Thank you in advance.

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 15** and **SUNDAY DECEMBER 16**, our kids and youth will be performing The Secret of Snowflake County - Hope in a Humble Stall. They have been rehearsing, and they are amazing! You won't want to miss it! Show times are 4:00pm both days. The UMW is hosting a dinner in the Fellowship Hall after the Sunday show. Hope to see you there!

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 23**, The Sunday School will be hosting a Christmas store during Sunday school time. Kids and youth can purchase Christmas gifts for their family. The cost is a few pennies or a dollar, whatever they can give. They enjoy being able to purchase gifts for their families! We could use some adult wrappers to volunteer in the store. Please let Heidi know if you can help.

There is a Children's service at 5:00 on **Christmas Eve**. Many kids and youth participate in the service, through music and scripture . It is a wonderful service for families.

**We will have** Sunday School on **December 30**, the last Sunday of 2018.

## UNITED METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

**December 2** - We will have a parent information meeting for **LOVE WELL – Youth 2019** after play practice. I would also like to have youth there for 15-20 minutes to discuss the *Friday Night Alive* for December and January

**December 9** - Junior & Senior Youth Group - After Play Practice - Lunch will be provided and we will be having our Christmas Poloza. Please bring a wrapped gift. The cost should be between \$5.00 to \$10.00 to play the White Elephant Game. We will also be playing other games.

**December 14** - Senior High Youth Group Game Night is at 7:00pm-9:00pm. Snacks will be provided.

**December 28** - *Friday Night Alive* - This is for everyone. The service starts at 7:00pm. Following the service, Game Night for juniors and seniors will begin at 7:30pm-9:00pm.

## THE GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree is up in the church foyer. Please select a slip of paper from the tree and purchase the item listed. Then bring that gift in to church by **Sunday, December 9**. Please be sure your gift is UNWRAPPED. The gifts can be placed in the bin marked "Giving Tree" in the foyer. The items will be brought to the CoNSERNS-U Christmas Store. Please support this very important ministry.



# CHRISTMAS SEASON

## WORSHIP SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

### 9:30 SERVICE MESSAGE THEME FOR ADVENT "God With Us"

#### Sunday, December 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

- 8:30 am – Early Worship with Holy Communion - *"Who Owns the Cloud: Google or God?"*
- 9:30 am – Morning Worship with Holy Communion - *"Our Potter"*
- 1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service with Holy Communion
- 2:30 pm – Worship at Riverside Nursing Home, Castleton

#### Sunday, December 9 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

- 8:30 am – Early Worship - *"At the Intersection of Heaven and Earth"*
- 9:15 AM – "Byrd in the Bush" will play in the sanctuary for a sing-a-long
- 9:30 am – Morning Worship – *"Our Shepherd"*
- 1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service

#### Saturday, December 15

- 4:00 pm – Christmas Musical, *"The Secret of Snowflake County"*

#### Sunday, December 16 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

- 8:30 am – Early Worship - *"The Peace of Christmas"*
- 9:30am – Morning Worship – *"Our Living Branch"*  
with music by the EmBELLishments (adult bell choir)
- 1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service
- 4:00 pm – Christmas Musical, *"The Secret of Snowflake County"* w/dinner to follow

#### Tuesday, December 18

- 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service

#### Sunday, December 23 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

- 8:30 am - Early Worship - *"A Difficult But Joyous Journey"*
- 9:30 am – Morning Worship – *"Our Guide"*
- 1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service – A Christmas Eve Service

**Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve**

5:00 pm – Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with The CHIMettes  
(The CHIMettes will perform for the 5:00 pm service only)

7:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service –  
"No Angels, No Shepherds, No Star"

9:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service followed by Holy Communion  
"A Great Light"

**Wednesday, December 26**

2:00 pm – Worship at Rosewood Rehabilitation Center

**Friday, December 28**

7:00 pm – *Friday Night Alive* (Youth-led Contemporary worship)

**Sunday, December 30 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day**

8:30 am – Early Worship

9:30 am – Morning Worship

1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service

3:00 pm – Carols and Cookies Concert - Sanctuary Choir, "Byrd in the Bush"  
and others will perform

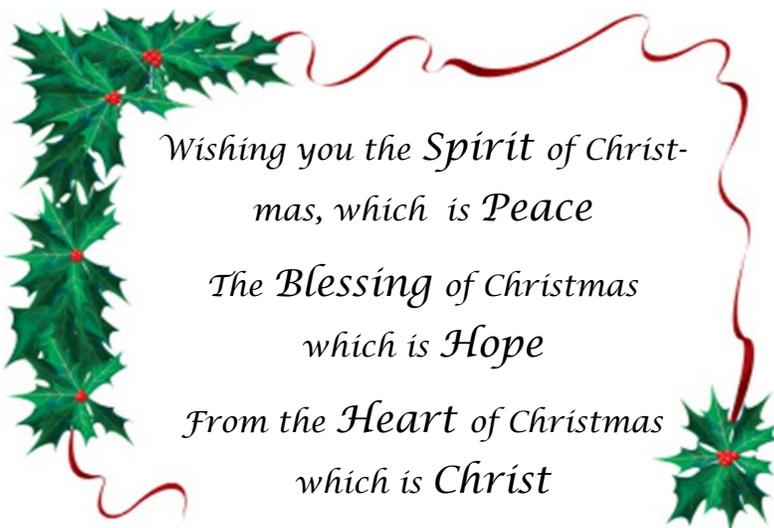
**Sunday, January 6 – Epiphany Sunday**

8:30 am – Early Worship with Holy Communion

9:30 am – Morning Worship with Holy Communion

1:00 pm - Hawthorne Ridge Worship Service with Holy Communion

**From the staff of The Church BELL**



*Wishing you the Spirit of Christmas,  
which is Peace*

*The Blessing of Christmas  
which is Hope*

*From the Heart of Christmas  
which is Christ*

*Pastor Sandra R. James*  
*Kathy VanBuren Botkin*  
*Janet VanDoren*  
*Paul Welkley*  
*George E. Harris*  
*Lois Hope*



## WORSHIP COMMITTEE SURVEY

We would love to hear your thoughts on how to make the worship service more engaging to members and visitors! Please complete the survey included in The BELL and return to the collection box in the Narthex, or complete the survey online at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MGZQ9RM>. You may also receive the survey link via email; you only need to complete the survey once and it only takes a few minutes. Your responses will provide us with valuable information! Responses are due no later than **Sunday, December 16, 2018**.

## STYROFOAM COLLECTION

Give the environment a Christmas gift this year. The next collection day is **Sunday, January 6**, so make sure to save any that you receive during the holidays. Remember, Styrofoam (polystyrene) must be clean and tape and staples must be removed. Generally, it will be white. If it is any color other than white, look for recycling symbol #6. If you have questions, please contact Kevin Conley ([e.kevin.conley@gmail.com](mailto:e.kevin.conley@gmail.com), 518.253.4907).



## FINANCIAL COMMITMENT CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Financial Commitment Campaign finished on November 4. During the campaign, the Church received 76 pledges for a total of \$179,807 for 2019. We are truly grateful for your responses and prayers during the campaign.

Even though the campaign has ended, it's not too late to turn in your pledge card. You can mail the card to church or put it in the collection plate on Sunday. Extra pledge cards are also available in the back of the Church sanctuary. Thank you so much for your continued support for the ministries of our Church!

## SPECIAL FOR WORLD AIDS DAY



First, click on this link for a United Methodist Church video, a prayer for people living with HIV/AIDS <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HL9yiiZ1b2E>. On **Tuesday, December 4**, be at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center for The AIDS Institute's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual World AIDS Day in Albany. If you have never seen any of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, here is your chance to see many panels, part of a full day of activities and displays put together by the NYS Department of Health. "Remembering History – Celebrating Life" is their theme for the day that runs from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Go to the NYS Dept. of Health website for more information ([www.health.ny.gov](http://www.health.ny.gov)).

## THREE KINGS CELEBRATION NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

For several years now, our church has joined forces with The Church of the Covenant in Averill Park, St. Paul's in Castleton, and The Delmar United Methodist Church in support of Iglesia Cristiana Emmanuel (Emmanuel Faith Community), a ministry that reaches out to the Hispanic/Latino population of the Capital Area. Pastor Mariana Rodriguez has asked if we would consider once again donating new and gently used toys for children up to 12 years of age for their Three Kings Celebration, on **January 6**. If you are willing and able to help make a child's Christmas season a little brighter this year, there will be a box for donations of toys, books, stuffed animals, make-up, and games in our church foyer. Gift cards from Wal-Mart in ten or twenty dollar denominations would also be appreciated for the older children. (Please turn in gift cards directly to the office, or to John Schmidt for safekeeping). **Please do not wrap or tag the toys.** Thank you for your assistance. All are welcome to attend the service beginning at 3PM which will be held at the Third Reformed Church at 20 Ten Eyck Ave. in Albany. **iFeliz Navidad!** -- Missions & Social Responsibility Ministry



## **OUR STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION: Vision at Patmos Reflections**

Over a period of 6 weeks, twenty individuals in our Monday and Tuesday Bible study groups looked at The Book of Revelation: Vision at Patmos by Catherine G. Gonzalez and Justo L. Gonzalez. It took each one of us on a journey we had never experienced. This little book of only 122 pages gave us some wonderful insights into the history of the early church and its struggles against persecution and how it survived and thrived in its infant faith.

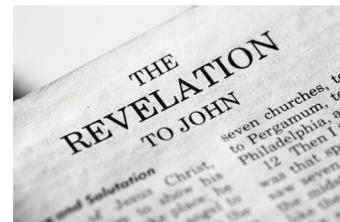
The study of the book gave us insights into how people are often tempted to compromise with the powers of evil when they face persecution. The book of Revelation not only conveys some interesting information but also speaks to us today and calls us to obedience to Christ in today's world order.

We found the Book of Revelation to be extremely practical in help us live our Christian faith. We also discovered that the Book of Revelation is a book of hope. For those who serve the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ), there is no reason to fear any form of evil in our lifetime.

Please read the following reflections of three members of our study group:

### ***Errol Fitzgerald:***

In the third part of the hymn, "O Holy City, Seen of John" it says"  
 O shame to us who rest content  
 While lust and greed for gain  
 In street and shop and tenement  
 Wring gold from human pain  
 And bitter lips in blind despair  
 Cry, "Christ hath died in vain!"



This hymn calls us to action - not resting content. Revelation warns against compromising with the evil-one. One must serve either the Lamb or the beast. John speaks of the costs and sacrifices of standing up to evil-Rome in its heyday. There were costs then and there will be costs today for standing up to evil. Revelation's message speaks to waste and greed. We must neither pollute the earth, nor should we turn our backs on or exploit the less fortunate for our own comfort and privacy. We must not compromise with or make excuse for evil. There will be final reckoning - John promises.

### ***Jan Ingraham:***

The new perspective I gained as a result of this course:

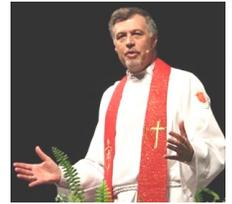
I had never read Revelation before. I stayed away from the book because it was supposed to be difficult to understand and rather fantastical. I did find that to be true. However, I had always viewed sin as personal. The temptation to do something unkind or thoughtless was an individual fight. The study of Revelation made me think about sin as an evil presence in the world. While it's still an individual fight, the force is larger than what is within us. This is something I will continue to think about.

### ***Irad Ingraham:***

As a former district attorney I learned what society deemed to be proper conduct and sinful conduct. The rules are outlined in the penal code. Sinful conduct, however, as developed by John contains a whole raft of violations not covered by today's rules. Fornication, idolatry and the trilogies of evil: the beast from the sea, false prophets and various violations of Roman rules. While debate exists in our statutes for the maintenance of a death penalty, it was implemented quite regularly to punish the sinners in John's time. John describes the ghoulish conduct of the bloody harlot in destroying miscreants. In Revelation 17:6 John sees a woman holding a golden cup drinking the blood of martyrs. The world that John lives in can hopefully be destroyed by an all-powerful Lamb, and I can return to reliance on my law books.



Make me an instrument of Your peace; Where there is hatred, let me sow love; (Calibri 7pt.) **Where there is injury, pardon: Where there is discord, harmony; (Bodoni MT Black 6pt.)** Where there is error, truth; *Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; (Lucinda Calligraphy 5pt.)* **Where there is darkness, light; And where there is sadness, joy... (Ericadway 6pt.)** Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. (Times New Roman 7pt.) *For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned."* ~ Francis of Assisi (AR Blanca 7pt.)



- The Special Session of General Conference on **February 23-26, 2019** is drawing closer. To help us better understand the sexuality issues and their impact on the future of The United Methodist Church to be discussed at that conference, **Bishop Webb will be at Shenendehowa UMC** on December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4 – 6 pm to discuss the report of the **Commission On A Way Forward**. George Herrick has more information.
- **LOVE WELL – Youth 2019**. That should make your thinking go to Kansas City, Missouri, on **July 10-14, 2019**, 8,000 youth and leaders and everything else related to making one very, very big national gathering of United Methodist youth and leaders. Some of our youth have already expressed interest in attending. Now to the nuts and bolts, **how do we finance this venture for our youth?** Do you have any good ideas? Please share your thoughts with [editor@fumceg.org](mailto:editor@fumceg.org).
- How would you like to be a part of the **Ecumenical Witness of Baptism** team and visit other churches as a witness, just like the people who come to our church when we have a baptism? If you are interested, **save the date of Sunday, January 13, 2019**. We will have a meeting at First Lutheran Church, Albany to talk about the program and have a time of fellowship together. More in the January Church BELL.
- There is a new flagpole in **Bell Park in Brainard**, site of the former Brainard Methodist Church. At the dedication ceremony on Veterans Day the Mayor of the Village of East Nassau, Adam Acquario and a couple others of us were talking about the steeple and bell from the former church that are now part of the park. **The steeple is much in need of a paint job**. We came up with a plan to tackle the job in early spring. Watch the next issues of The BELL for more details – and how you can help.
- The Capital Area Council of Churches has announced the start of the application period for their **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarships**. Completed applications must be postmarked no later than **Sunday, March 31, 2019**. Contact the church office if you already know you are interested and would like an application form. More information in The January Church BELL.
- **Cleaning Kits (Flood Buckets)** were going to be packed at our church on November 18. That date has been changed. Watch for the announcement of the new date. In the meantime, **we still need supplies to fill the buckets**. Please look for the updated list of wants found on the bright pink sheets on the long table in the church foyer.
- **Thanksgiving Dinner was a great success!** Despite the intense cold outside, the Fellowship and wonderful food made us warm inside. **Thanks to Carrie and Peter Larson**, their family and the many helpers for this traditional feast with all the trimmings (plus biryani - yum!). Maybe we could have more of these types of communal meals? Just a thought...
- Our **Annual Church Conference** was held on Sunday, November 25, following morning worship. Rev. Bob Long, an elder other than our pastor, was back with us again this year to chair the meeting. First he shared some words of wisdom and then led us through the business items that needed to be discussed and voted upon at that meeting. One of those votes elected Rich Daniels and Jim Perry as Trustees for the years 2019-2021. A more detailed report of the meeting will be published in next month's Church BELL.



## **CORNERSTONE WINTER BREAK MISSION TRIP TO PUERTO RICO, JANUARY 5-12, 2019**

### **You Can Help Make a Difference!**

On **January 5**, a group of 15-20 members of UAlbany Cornerstone students will be traveling to Puerto Rico to work with Lutheran Disaster Response to address the needs of those impacted by Hurricane Maria. The cost per student is approximately \$800. Each student is asked to contribute \$100 toward the cost and the balance is covered by fund-raisers and donations from congregations and individual members and this year a generous grant from SUNY. If you would like to "adopt a student" for the trip, please make your check payable to "Protestant Campus Ministry" and mail to Rev. Sandy Damhof, UAlbany Interfaith Center ~ CC346, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222. Suggested "adoption fee" is \$175 but any amount is welcome!

**NOTE:** The results are in from the Cornerstone Bake Sale on November 18. \$2962 was raised for the trip by the 6 churches where the sales were held. A special THANK YOU to the drivers including our very own Mary McIntosh!

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