



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061



VOLUME 25 ISSUE 2 FEBRUARY 2023

At Church on Sundays:

- ♦ 8:30 am Early Informal Service - Fellowship Hall
- ♦ 9:30 am Regular Service
Also streaming live on Facebook, available on YouTube same afternoon
- ♦ Sunday School & Youth Group—see inside for details

Visit us on the Web:

www.fumceg.org

www.facebook.com/FUMCEG

Phone: (518) 477-9693

Fax: (518) 477-4336

Church Office Hours:

9:00 am to 2:30 pm M-F

Email: office@fumceg.org

BELL/Bulletin (only) Email:

editor@fumceg.org

Children's Education Email:

egchristianedfmc@gmail.com

Youth Ministries Email:

youthleaderamber@gmail.com

Danyal Mohammadzadeh
Pastor

Gail Welkley
Administrative Assistant

FROM OUR PASTOR'S DESK

We are the People of the Book



There are many storytellers who have made a huge impact throughout the years. And Luke is one of them. For nearly two thousand years, Christians have looked to the Gospels to teach us about the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Each Gospel tells the story in its own way, with unique emphases that the writers want us to grasp about the life of Jesus.

The Gospel does not identify its author, but Christian tradition has Luke, a physician and companion of Paul, as the author of both Luke and Acts. The Book of Acts is written as a sequel to Luke. Luke addressed his Gospel to a man named Theophilus who may have commissioned the Gospel. In the introduction, Luke expresses his aim to write "a carefully ordered account" of the life of Jesus, having "investigated everything carefully," so that his audience might "have confidence in the soundness of the instruction you have received" (Luke 1:1-4).

I will present a sermon series that reviews the Gospel of Luke during the season of Lent. If we pay close attention to Luke's unique stories—those not found in any other Gospel—and Luke's particular way of telling the stories found in other Gospels, we will see an emphasis on Jesus's appeal to outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws—that is, the marginalized, the broken, those who felt unseen, alone, or second-class. They weren't perfect. Many of them were struggling and didn't have their acts together. Whoever they were, Jesus brought the good news of God's kingdom to those who most needed to hear it. That includes us and our community of faith in East Greenbush.

Through Luke's stories we find Jesus's care and compassion for all as he welcomes sinners and outcasts. As we study Luke and see Jesus's concern for those who were considered unimportant, we hear a hopeful and inspiring word for our lives today: Jesus came to lift up the lowly.

In Lent 2023, I invite you to join me for reading the Gospel of Luke in a 40-day time period beginning on February 22.

On February 22, Ash Wednesday, we will contemplate on life's temptations. God will touch our foreheads by the ashes of the last year palms in the evening gathering.

(Continued on page 2)

A Reconciling Congregation

(Continued from page 1)

On February 26, the first Sunday of Lent, we will walk with the rejected Jesus in his hometown's streets as we recall our own experiences of feeling like an outsider.

On March 5, the second Sunday of Lent, we will explore the role of women in the ministry of Jesus and how Luke shows us the way Jesus valued women, ministered with them, taught them, and lifted them up. It calls us to strive for equality for women today, and highlights how Jesus sees all of us as dearly loved children of God.

On March 12, the third Sunday of Lent, we will listen to Jesus' parables. In the third Sunday of Lent, we will explore some of the unique parables we find in Luke's Gospel, including the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the well-known parable of the prodigal son, and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Through these parables, we find Jesus teaching that he came to lift up the lowly.



On March 19, the fourth Sunday of Lent, Luke introduces Jesus's journey to Jerusalem, which comprises ten chapters, approximately 40 percent of Luke's Gospel, and highlights the way these stories increase the urgency of Jesus's ministry and mission. In particular, the story of Jesus healing the Samaritan leper demonstrates an ongoing commitment to lifting up the lowly.

On March 26, the fifth Sunday of Lent, we will explore the final week of Jesus's life, beginning with Jesus passing through Jericho and his encounter with the tax collector Zacchaeus, followed by Jesus's entry into Jerusalem, his teachings there, and the last supper with his disciples. In these stories and teachings, we see once again Jesus's mission to lift up the lowly and reach the outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws.

On April 2, Palm Sunday, Luke addresses Jesus's death on the cross, where he identified with the outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws by being crucified as a criminal. It explores the final words of Jesus as recorded in Luke, which shows that even in death Jesus was seeking those who are lost.

On April 6, Maundy Thursday, we will walk step by step with Jesus and his disciples from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. We will gather around a dinner table in the fellowship hall at 6:00 pm. I will wash your hands. I will cook a Mediterranean meal for you and we will eat together. When the supper is over, I'll share with you the bread of life and the juice of the new covenant. We all will receive the Holy Communion. Then, we will sing some of the traditional Lenten hymns as we listen to the passion of Christ.

On April 7, Good Friday, we will gather in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm to meditate with the 2023 Cantata presented by the FUMC choir.

On April 9, Easter, we will gather twice: Sunrise Service and Easter Service. The Resurrection is God's final act of lifting up the lowly in the Holy Sunday. In the Resurrection, Jesus defeats death and evil. The Gospel of Luke proclaims the good news of Easter that Christ is risen, focusing on Luke's account of the Resurrection and what it means for our lives and our world that God has defeated death and evil by raising Jesus from the dead.

Blessings, *Danyal*

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. February 2023, Volume 25, Issue 2. **George Herrick**, Editor; **Shawna Lambert**, **Danyal Mohammadzadeh**, **Gail Welkley**, Editing Team; **Kathy Van Buren**, Production Leader; **Dave Caneen**, Photographer; The Church Staff: **Danyal Mohammadzadeh**, Pastor; **Gail Welkley**, Administrative Assistant; **Amanda Trainor**, Director of Children's Christian Education; **Amber Telford**, Youth Leader; **Jacqueline Krahforst**, Organist; **Robert Thomsen**, Choir Director; **Cynthia McLaughlin**, Director of Bell Choirs; **Steven Green**, Custodian; **Kevin Clark**, Part-time Custodian; **Laura Clark**, Lay Leader; **Rhoda Demanya**, Peer Minister, Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry, The University at Albany; **Helen de Leon Camarce**, Missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, Treasurer of the agency's Cambodia and Southeast Asia Missions and part of the Cambodia Women's Livelihood Projects.

SOME NOTES ABOUT WORSHIP FOR FEBRUARY

During the month of February Syracuse University, along with many other organizations and agencies, will be celebrating Black History Month using as their theme, “Black Resistance: Building Bridges and Navigating Barriers.” Black History Month celebrates the unique contributions of African Americans to the American history. Whatever your heritage or background, black history is part of everyone's history. One approach our United Methodist Church takes to this celebration is through music. In November last year Discipleship Ministries looked at the hymn, 'Nobody Knows the Trouble I See'. Part of their comments about the hymn said,



“African American scholar and sociologist W.E.B. DuBois (1868–1963) quotes the first two musical measures (without text) of “Nobody knows the trouble” at the beginning of the opening chapter, “On Our Spiritual Strivings,” in his famous book, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). In this chapter, he poses an unasked question that, though never posed aloud, is on the tips of the tongues of even well-meaning and compassionate people: “How does it feel to be a problem?” (DuBois, 1903, p. 15) This unasked, rhetorical question can only be answered in what DuBois has called “The Sorrow Songs.” “Nobody knows the trouble” is, perhaps, at the head of the list.”

The UMC General Commission of Religion and Race (GCORR) has a number of suggestions on how we can participate in this special month. Check here for the list: <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/29-ways-to-participate-in-black-history-month>.

Here is more on the individual Sundays of the month plus Ash Wednesday

February 5 FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY, Holy Communion will be part of both Sunday services.

February 12 SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 19 TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

February 22 Ash Wednesday – 7:00 pm This service includes the dispensing of ashes from last year's palms.

February 26 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, our Peer Minister Rhoda Demanya will be assisting in this morning's service.

Pastor Danyal will be preaching each Sunday in February. Our 9:30 am Sunday worship service is live streamed on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FUMCEG. It is also available on You Tube later that same Sunday afternoon at **Worship Service FUMCEG-YouTube**.

Here is the lectionary for February:

February 5 Isaiah 58:1-12, Psalm 112:1-10, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, Matthew 5:13-20

February 12 Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 119:1-8, 1 Corinthians 3:1-9, Matthew 5:21-37

February 19 Transfiguration Sunday Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 99, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

February 22 Ash Wednesday Isaiah 58:1-12, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 26 Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11



SUNDAY SCHOOL



It is hard to believe Spring is right around the corner! I hope everyone has had a safe and healthy winter so far this year. January was a fantastic month for Sunday School students. We learned about the importance of baptism, what God's grace means, Paul's letter to the church, prepared for the Fruit of the Spirit art show and had lots of fun while learning it!

We have lots of new faces in Sunday School. If you have not yet, please make sure to contact me for a Sunday School registration form. Also, it appears our older youth Sunday School students have disappeared. Please contact me if your teen is interested in participating in Sunday School – we would LOVE to get our older youth up and running again.

Here is the schedule for February: **February 5**, Matthew 5:13-20; **February 12**, Matthew 5:21-37; **February 19**, Matthew 17:19; **February 26**, Psalm 51

Confirmation class continues to run smoothly. Upcoming dates for Confirmation Class are: **February 5**, regular class time; **February 12**, making ashes for Ash Wednesday service; **February 19**, no class; **February 26**, regular class time.

Please be sure to read the message from Youth Leader, Amber Telford, for important upcoming dates and donations for our annual Love Kits.

Blessings,
Amanda Trainor
EGChristianEdFUMC@gmail.com

UNITED METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

We are already in the second month of 2023! We had so much fun bowling in January and I can't wait to see how much more fun we will have in the rest of 2023.

February 5 we will be having a Senior High Meeting (Grades 8th -12th) from 11:00 am - 12:30 pm . Come hang out as a group as we plan the art show, bake sale and other youth meeting items. We will also play games and have snacks.

February 12 we will be having a Junior High Meeting (Grades 5th - 7th) from 11:00 am -12:30 pm. Come help decorate bags and make cards to be placed in the Love Kit bags. We will also be having snacks and playing games.

February 26 During Sunday school any junior & senior high youth that would like to help put the love kits together are welcome to come help. We will be donating the Love Kits to the Homeless Shelter and then having lunch. We will be taking a ride to drop off the Love Kits and vote on a place to eat lunch. All Youth are invited to go to the homeless shelter to drop off love kits and have lunch.

Sneak Peak Into March 2023

March 12 we will be going to AIR - Albany Indoor Rock Gym at 12:00 noon. Please bring \$10. Lunch will be provided.

March 25 will be our Art Show. We will be looking for any youth who are musically inclined to play music in the sanctuary as visitors are viewing art. we will also be looking for donations for a bake sale and there will be other needs for volunteers.

Friends are always welcome to be a part of the Youth Group.

If you have any questions please email Amber at Youthleaderamber@gmail.com



Blessings,
AmberTelford

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS WEEK

“We celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week from **February 14 to February 20** annually. It’s a celebration of all the ways we can become a positive influence in each other’s lives. Even one small act of kindness can mean a great deal to somebody. The world can be selfish and cruel sometimes and not everyone receives the same kind of support they need. In such a world, it is important for us to constantly be reminded to be kind to one another and to give others hope whenever we can. A small and random gesture of kindness can go a long way.” That’s from the National Today website. From that same place comes this list of five fascinating facts about kindness:

1. Kindness gets rid of stress
2. Being kind increases stamina
3. Being kind can reduce your blood pressure
4. Kindness stabilizes our mood
5. Being kind makes us happy.



Want some suggestions on how to celebrate? Check the calendar posted in the church foyer for a whole bunch. The same RAK website has this note, “There are many ways to show kindness. Sending small compliments or even an uplifting message to someone can go a long way.” If you can’t find something you can do for each day of the month, how about at least something for RAK Day, February 17, 2023?

LOVE KITS

It's not too late to donate toiletry items. The Youth Group will be collecting items for the Love Kits to be given to the Homeless Shelter until February 19. Please drop off any items to the donation box in the lobby. The goal is to make 45 love kit bags for the residents.

Items include: Shampoo and Conditioner; Body soap; deodorant; Tooth Brushes, Tooth Paste and Floss; Hair Brushes and hair ties; hand warmers; new socks and new underwear; gloves and scarves razors and shaving cream; new towels and washcloths; lotion.

Thank you, The Youth Group

OUR YOUTH ARE CALLING — “*COME VIEW SOME UNIQUE ART, LISTEN TO YOUNG MUSICIANS, DO SOME ART AND BUY A SWEET TREAT*”



Our Youth Group is looking for artwork of all kinds: painting, drawing, sculpture and photography, for a **COMMUNITY WIDE ART SHOW** to be held here at our church on **March 25, 2023**. Creative artists of all ages are encouraged to submit works for display. Submissions with an Art Agreement Form are needed at the church by Sunday, **March 19**. The theme for the art show is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Art can have one item of the theme or incorporate the full theme. The artworks on display are not being offered for sale. But there will be a bake sale. Buy some goodies and/or make a donation. Funds collected will benefit youth attending **YOUTH 2023** in Daytona Beach, Florida from **July 25-28, 2023**. Please email Amber Telford at Youthleaderamber@gmail.com for the Artwork agreement form and with any questions.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The UMW, Women In Faith, have not met during the colder months. We will resume our monthly meetings on **March 6**. We have much to discuss. We are hoping to have a spring barbecue using the Barbecue Delight company. We had them here last spring and everyone thought the dinners were great.

All women of the church are welcome to attend the meetings. We are always looking for new faces and new ideas. Please consider joining us.

THE CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND

The Church Endowment Fund generates approximately \$8,000 of dividends and interest each year. When Church receipts equal or exceed the Church budget, Endowment dividends and interest are used to begin new or expand existing ministries. Since the onset of the pandemic the Church budget has been under stress and Endowment monies have been critical to the maintenance of our existing activities.

Donations to the Endowment Funds can be made in a variety of ways. They can be gifts for no particular reason, they can be gifts in memory of someone, they can be part of your will. Whatever the motivation, these gifts support the current and future ministries of this Church.



If you would like to explore giving to the Endowment, talk with a member of the Endowment Committee or the minister.

Committee members: Carl Eno; Kirsten Downer; John Peterson; Peter Larson, Chair

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” Aesop

ECO-TEAM

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



First among the “3 Rs” of sustainability is to REDUCE consumption. Perhaps you were successful with this over the holidays. If so, congratulations, you are a step ahead of many of us! A close second is REUSE, and a helpful resource for this is found on the Eco-Team page at (<https://fumceg.org/ecoteam>). My favorite is GE Elfun Computer Rehab. They take computers, including my “ancient,” 8 year old PC, and fix them up for schools. Other items you can donate for reuse include yarn, hearing aids, eyeglasses, furniture, building materials and more. What we can’t use, we RECYCLE. The resource on the Eco-Team page also lists places to recycle items, including books, textiles, paints and more.

Kevin Conley.

PLASTIC USE IN THE KITCHEN

In December, our Church Council approved a new initiative to reduce the use of plastic in the kitchen and Fellowship Hall. We are requesting both church and outside groups to avoid the use of plastic when possible. Small groups using the kitchen are invited to use the church’s cookware and tableware and the dishwasher. Groups purchasing disposable dinnerware are asked to buy paper, rather than Styrofoam or plastic cups or plates. If paper products are not sturdy enough for the group’s event, we ask the group to consider purchasing heavy duty plastic tableware that it can wash and reuse.



Around 380 million metric tons of plastic are produced yearly - roughly the same as the entire weight of humanity (earthday.org). Yet, less than 10% of plastic is recycled. The rest is sent to the landfill, releasing toxic liquids during decomposition, or incinerated, releasing harmful dioxins. Adopting sustainable habits and practices as in this initiative to reduce our plastic use will allow us to “meet our present human needs while ensuring that future generations have the resources they need to thrive ([Methodist Social Principles](#)).”

Questions about this new initiative may be directed to Kevin (e.kevin.conley@gmail.com).

“What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

This year, 2023, is our 150th Anniversary in East Greenbush Celebration.

“We are the Church” has been our truth for 150 years. We will be remembering what this church has meant and re-imagining what it will mean now, and in the future. In her book “Loucene Link Trueworthy’s Remembrances of the First United Methodist Church,” she relates what is critical for our strong church. “A quality music program, a vital Sunday School, and new ways for providing opportunities for congregational members to meet one another and have a good time.” Added to that are learning and growing in our spiritual faith and Caring and Mission work that has been ongoing all those years.



Each month we will be including all the generations of our church family, and the community, by having events to continue and expand on those principles. There are calendars, stickers, Christmas ornaments, Art Show, “Storytelling Nights,” Sunday School and Youth projects in (February they will ask us for 150 Things That You Love), Lenten Soup Lunches, Memorial Day Parade, August Picnic and much more. Other ideas are being discussed and we welcome any suggestions and helpers. Want to ride the float? Tell a Story? Make soup? “We Are The Church.”

THANK YOU FOR A MAGICAL AFTERNOON



A special thank you to the Choir and performers from the Coffee House for the outstanding Cookies and Carols program held in the afternoon on the second Sunday in January. The afternoon of music, stories, poems and delicious cookies helped all who attended embrace the message of Christmas...joy, caring and love .

SOME SHORT NOTES OF IMPORTANCE

◆ The Upper New York Conference’s **March 2023** Special Session of Annual Conference to consider disaffiliation requests will take place remotely on March 25 from 9:00 am-12:00 noon. Registration will open on **February 1, 2023**, and close on **March 10, 2023**.



◆ The Red Cross Blood Drive that was held here at our church on January 20 had a goal of 20 units. The actual result of the day - 23 units donated. Lee Pierce would have been happy.

◆ 2022 THE YEAR IN PHOTOS - if you haven’t already seen this collection, click on the link to UM News below and see some great pictures from last year. <https://express.adobe.com/page/7voELiR0yLlkA/>. Scroll down to the picture of the First United Methodist Church in Mayfield, Kentucky, which was heavily damaged by a tornado.

◆ Blanket Sunday will be held on **Sunday, February 12**. This is a program sponsored by the United Women in Faith. Please make donations payable to the UMW.

◆ The St. Patrick’s Day Coffee House is **Friday, March 17**, in the Fellowship Hall. Music in many forms, stories and possibly a couple of jokes will be presented from 7:00 pm-8:30 pm. Come and enjoy our talented performers, munch on our selection of delicious goodies and share an evening of fun and visiting with friends and family.

“You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

PREPARING FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE



The committee on Petitions and Resolutions is charged with overseeing the submission, review, and presentation of petitions and resolutions to the Annual Conference.

The resolutions and petitions for the 2023 Upper New York Annual Conference session must be submitted to the Committee no later than **March 15, 2023**. Submissions should be emailed to the Petitions and Resolutions Committee at petitions@unyumc.org.

Click this link https://www.unyumc.org/images/uploads/2023_PR_Writing_and_Submission_Guidelines.pdf for writing and submission guidelines as well as a petition and resolution template and a sample petition and resolution submission form.

All reports and materials to be published in the *Journal Vol. 1* are due on **March 15, 2023**. These items should be submitted to report@unyumc.org.

“Never lose a chance of saying a kind word.”

William Makepeace Thackeray

Storytelling Night

We are people of story. Our traditions, religions, histories, and biographies are compilations of stories told and received, handed down, edited, redacted, metaphorized, dreamed up. Storytelling Night is a monthly evening of food, fellowship, and storytelling. We gather monthly around the stories of people. And, we believe that each story - of our fears, of our hopes, of our lives, of our families, of our undoing, of our renaissance, of our redemption - can be inspiring to us and to others . . . but only if that story is shared. The practice of storytelling (and of story-hearing) is an essential part of being human, and we want to encourage, uplift, facilitate, and gather around the telling and hearing of stories. Join us if you want to share or hear a story!

Wednesdays at 7 PM

February 1: Danyal Mohammadzadeh, a journalist and human rights activist from Iran.

March 1: Elaine M. Rudzinski, the Chief of Police of the East Greenbush Police Department.

April 5: Roberta Reno, East Greenbush Town Historian.

May 3: Robert Thomsen, Choir Director at First UMC of East Greenbush

First United Methodist Church, 1 Gilligan Rd, East Greenbush, NY



“For attractive lips, speak words of kindness.” - Audrey Hepburn

COFFEE HOUR



Growing up, and now watching the kids grow in the church, coffee hour, following Sunday morning worship, has been one of everyone's favorite times. A small snack, delicious juice and hot coffee as we all gathered and had fellowship has been a welcome treat. To this day when you tell the Sunday School kids that there is coffee hour you hear them cheer. Coffee hour is all volunteer based, minus the coffee which is provided.

The Hospitality ministry is still looking for volunteers to host coffee hour. Sign up is in the lobby. You can volunteer with a friend, a committee, your family or just you. If you have any questions please see Amber Telford.

CREATION CARE SERIES

The Eco-Team will hold a monthly video and discussion series starting **February 5th**. In each session, participants view a short TED Talk and follow with discussion. The sessions are held in Room 16 and will run from 11:00 am—12:00 noon. **If you would like to participate via ZOOM, please send a request to e.kevin.conley@gmail.com and he will send you a link.** This series is intended to inform, but just as importantly, encourage us to talk to one another about the climate emergency that we are in and learn what actions we can take to protect and heal the earth. Topics for the series are shown below. Participants can attend one or all of the series.

- **February 5** - The global opportunity to accelerate Africa's sustainable future, Vanessa Nakate and Mary Robinson
- **February 26** - A new social contract for global climate justice, Huma Yusuf
- **March 26** - How wind energy could power Earth ... 18 times over, Dan Jørgensen
- **April 30** - What seaweed and cow burps have to do with climate change, Ermias Kebeab

FUMCEG AT HAWTHORNE RIDGE

Several years ago a group of church members who lived at Hawthorne Ridge started a Bible study with Deb Samuel. As more people joined, they asked their administration if our church could do a Sunday service in their meeting room. Administration approved, and we had weekly services and Bible study until the start of the pandemic. We kept in touch weekly with the residents who had participated, and we were pleased in July when we were allowed to re-start the Bible study. Carrie Larson has been leading the group, Jean Sheviak and Pastor Danyal attend, and Deb Samuel continues to provide lessons.

Now named "The Good News Group," generally 9 or 10 residents meet with us for an hour on Tuesday afternoons. Pastor Danyal celebrates Communion once a month. Each meeting is a journey into spiritual development reflecting on Bible passages and themes, sharing memories of life experiences and strengthening bonds with who we are today and who we hope to become.

The group had a special treat on November 28 when we were joined by the daughters of one of the participants. Both are missionaries, one in Belize and the other based in Singapore. Each of the missionaries shared their experiences in trying to make life better for neglected children, struggling families and empty hearts, one at the grass roots level by fostering over 40 children and building homes for the homeless and the other bringing the hope and joy of Christianity by training indigenous people to become missionaries in their own land. The fellowship, learning and enjoyment of those participating in this group brings joy to all who attend.



A picture of some of the members of the Hawthorne Ridge Good News Group with Carrie Larson and Jean Sheviak

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Help Ecumenism Thrive Explore Food Insecurity

THE 2023 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES will be held on **February 9**, at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 10 North Main Ave. in Albany. *(Note that this is a change from earlier communications.)* The meeting will open with a social time from 6:00 pm to 6:30 pm. The business portion will start at 6:30 pm and the program at 7.



This year we have a program exploring food insecurity that will include a presentation about the successes and challenges of a local food pantry and a look beyond direct services from the Food Pantries of the Capital District. The program will end with some brief contemplation on how a successful CACC can assist churches in this important

opportunity to show love for all our neighbors.

Member churches are encouraged to send one or more, clergy and laity, to the Assembly. Those attending are asked to register either online, contacting the CACC office at capareacc@gmail.com or calling (518) 462-5450.

Encourage others who may not see this message to attend this important meeting so that our church may be well represented at the Council.

THE LATEST FROM CORNERSTONE

On January 24 Mary McIntosh, Karen Terwilliger, Kathy VanBuren, Pastor Danyal and Ellie Sadr and George Herrick hosted the Food and Faith program at Cornerstone Campus Ministry. We have received this note, "Thanks so much for hosting our Food and Faith last night! We appreciate your willingness to feed our bodies and our souls." In response to some of our questions, Chaplain Sandy Damhof has sent us this link to a fun video about their recent Service Trip to Kentucky, <https://youtu.be/E5GZYxB7U1I>



Now, we have been asked to serve one more Tuesday Food and Faith Program this semester for Cornerstone. Our ladies might have some suggestions to share about what to prepare for the students. If you, men or women, are willing to help on a Food and Faith program please speak to any one of our January participants. We would really like to help make the first semester for our new Campus Chaplain a big success.



JOIN THE CELEBRATION

The people of Upper New York have received the following invitation. Join us to celebrate the assignment of Bishop Héctor A. Burgos-Nuñez as the new episcopal leader for Upper New York. Bishop Héctor's service of installation and celebration is Saturday, **March 11, 2023** beginning at 2 p.m. at Liverpool First United Methodist Church, located at 604 Oswego St. in Liverpool, NY.

This service of installation and celebration is intended for the whole Conference. You may participate in one of two ways:

1. *In-person at the Liverpool First United Methodist Church. A limited number of seats are available. Please RSVP for in-person participation no later than March registering [here](#). A reception will follow this service onsite.*
2. *Watch the livestream from anywhere in the Conference. For livestream participation, no RSVP is necessary. Go to the Conference website at unyumc.org. On the top bar, select "Events" and scroll down to the Bishop's installation. Follow the directions.*

WHAT IS MSR-21?

"Christ has no body now, but yours. No hands, no feet on earth, but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks compassion into the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which Christ blesses the world."

Teresa of Avila 1515-1582

Our Missions and Social Responsibility for the 21st Century Ministry, (MSR21) is and has been a very vital, active ministry within our church. We support about 18 organizations with an annual budget of \$6000 supplemented by money from bequests (10% of bequests to the church are set aside for Missions). MSR-21 is one of our many Caring Ministries here at First United Methodist Church. Our support extends from local food pantries in Castleton and Rensselaer as well as several area shelters to our brothers and sisters who are struggling in distant Cambodia, Uganda and Lesotho. All possible only through the generosity and compassion of our congregation. The need is great, and seems to be increasing all the time. Due to space limitations, we can only give you a sample here of what our very dedicated Missions Team is doing.



One of our most recent projects was a campaign to assist the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless on Sheridan Avenue in Albany. We received word that men's winter clothing was in short supply. Clothing donations were requested and the clothing poured in. Several trips to the Shelter were made to drop off the clothes.

For over a year now, a small army of volunteers from our church have been preparing and delivering lunches on Mondays for Joseph's House and Shelter Outreach Van in Troy. A delicious and nutritious meal is always welcome.

For the last ten years, we have supported high school students with scholarships in one of the poorest countries on Earth, Lesotho in southern Africa. Students are receiving an education who would otherwise be working in fields alongside their parents. They can now aspire to become teachers, engineers, or social workers. We receive letters from these students on a regular basis who always express their appreciation and gratitude.

Another recipient of our support is the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky. In the past two years, as part of the Change the World Program held in May, 111 shoeboxes were filled with personal hygiene products for men, women and children living in poverty in the Appalachians.

Our Missions Team consists of Susie Calyer, John Haase, Carrie Larson, Gary Klee, Fred Henson, Len Finke, Matie Flowers, Pastor Danyal, and co-chairs Kevin Conley and John Schmidt. Please see any of us with questions or suggestions. We meet monthly and are always looking for new members who share a passion for missions



Remember the picture of our NEJ Conference delegation that appeared in the December issue of The Church BELL? Just for fun, here is that same group in a more relaxed mode being led by our new Bishop Héctor.

It's a new year and an opportunity to start it off healthy!



A **Heart of Hope Wellness clinic** will be held in Fellowship Hall on **Saturday morning, March 11 from 10:00 am-12:00 noon**. A goal of this clinic is to increase awareness of the importance of heart and cancer screening, while honoring the memory of Warren A. Mackey – coach, educator, athlete, salesman and singer, and who the *Times Union* named, *The Unofficial Mayor of Albany*. Here at our church we will have guest speakers as well as demonstrations and interactive sessions on a variety of wellness opportunities. This will include information about access to Albany Medical Center free cancer screenings.

This wellness clinic is good for all our church family, and it will help elevate the importance of organ donation, preventative healthcare, and living a healthy lifestyle to mitigate heart and cancer risks.

Physical and spiritual wellness go hand in hand. Both need our attention and commitment.

Remember the date: Saturday, March 11, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

Please contact Laura Clark or Carrie Larson with questions. We hope to see you there. Our Heart of Hope Wellness campaign is sponsored by the Warren & Denyse Mackey Foundation.

“The everyday kindness of the back roads more than makes up for the acts of greed in the headlines.” Charles Kuralt

.EVENTS BEYOND OUR LOCAL CHURCH

Saint Paul's Praise Band



FEBRUARY 2, 2023, 6:30 PM

Saint Paul's Church
1583 Carney Road Castleton NY, 12033

Experience "Wear Out My Shoes" - an album of new praise, recorded live!

These songs will be released for free online for use in worship to the glory of God.

Donations collected at this event will benefit disaster relief efforts in Buffalo, NY facilitated by the Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church.