



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061



VOLUME 25 ISSUE 6 JUNE 2023

At Church on Sundays:

- ◆ 8:30 am Early Informal Service - Chapel in the Woods
- ◆ 9:30 am Regular Service is available live on Facebook and YouTube. The Church's website has the links.
- ◆ 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: Through June 9

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

Summer Hours

June 12—August 25

9:00 am to 1:00 pm M-F

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Danyal Mohammadzadeh

Pastor

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Administrative Assistant



Why am I following Christ in the Methodist tradition?

June 28 is John Wesley's 320th birthday. In the mid-18th century the calendar was changed in England. Ten days were dropped off the calendar. This was to bring England into uniformity with the rest of the world who had made the change to the Gregorian calendar in 1582. This changed John Wesley's birth date to June 28. This year, we will celebrate his birthday on the June 25 Sunday Service by singing a couple of his brother's hymns (Charles Wesley), contemplating on the tenants of Wesleyan theology, and of course enjoying his birthday cake.

Also, George will blow out candles on top of his birthday cake. You may ask why George? Well, it was not my decision. Actually, it was Wesley's wish. In 1786, John Wesley wrote in the opening paragraph of *Thoughts Upon Methodism*: "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should only exist as, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."

We have many saints in our church, many saints with different marvelous gifts. I'm so glad that God appointed George to be the beacon of Methodism in the FUMC. He does not let us be a "a dead sect" as far as Wesley was concerned. George's knowledge of the Wesleyan movement and his passion for the denomination are fascinating but none of them will make him unique. His actions make him a unique Methodist disciple of

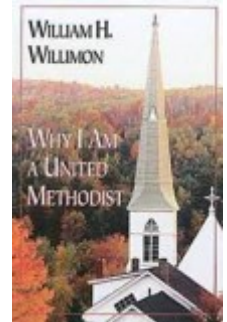
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As we put the finishing touches on this issue of The Church BELL, the various activities that are a part of Change The World are underway. A complete report on Change The World will appear in the Summer BELL.

(Continued from page 1)

Christ, a Methodist who “hold(s) fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which Methodists first set out” as John Wesley wished.

June would be a good opportunity for us to think about this question: Why am I a Methodist? Mr. Y who always sits in the back row responds: “Because my parents and my grandparents were Methodists.” Mrs. X who attends the church Bible study says: “One reason I live out my discipleship as a Methodist is the Wesleyan balance between God’s providence on one hand and human freedom on the other.” Mrs. X asserts Methodists don’t believe that God has a reason for everything. Rather, Methodists believe in the God who loves us enough to give us the freedom to reject that love; the God who is relentlessly at work to fulfill his saving purpose for us while never abrogating the freedom he planted within us; the God who invites everyone — not just a predestined few — to receive his love and grace in Jesus Christ.



Q who recently asked to be addressed as “their” and not “she” or “he” responds differently to the question. Q said, “I’m a follower of Christ in the Methodist tradition because of the Wesleyan balance of personal piety with social action.” Q believes that personal piety is the way we breathe in and social action is the way we breathe out. The Methodists have always agreed with the epistle of James that faith without works is dead. The inner transformation of the heart must be expressed through social transformation of the world in which we live.

My personal reason for following Christ in the Methodist tradition is the balance between present and future salvation. Methodists believe that God’s salvation is not a static thing. It’s not a form of spiritual vaccination. We don’t just “get saved” and then sit around waiting to go to heaven. Salvation is a living, growing, dynamic relationship in which God forgives and heals the brokenness in our lives, relationships and in the whole creation so that we participate in God’s transformation of the world.

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Ed. Note: The William Willimon book “Why I Am a United Methodist” is available in our church library.

IS THERE A GRADUATE IN YOUR FAMILY?



Our church needs up to date information on both our **High School and College 2023 graduates**, to be listed in the Sunday bulletin and The Summer BELL. To help make this happen, please send a graduate’s name(s), school(s), and information about future plans to Gail Welkley, our Administrative Assistant, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. A small photo of the graduate will be appreciated. So that we don’t miss anyone, even if you have just a name, pass it on and we will collect the other information. Email to office@fumceg.org or call 518-477-9693.

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. June 2023, Volume 25, Issue 6. **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.

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Salvation begins now and continues throughout our lives. Wesley used the word “sanctification” to describe the ongoing process by which the grace of God is constantly at work in us to shape our lives into the likeness of Christ. The work begins here and continues within us until it is fulfilled in heaven.

One of Charles Wesley’s greatest hymns (UMH 384) begins in the way God’s love meets us in the present:

*Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.*

It begins right here, right now, when we experience the love of God in our hearts. But the last verse of the hymn points to the way that love continues to be at work within us all the way to heaven.

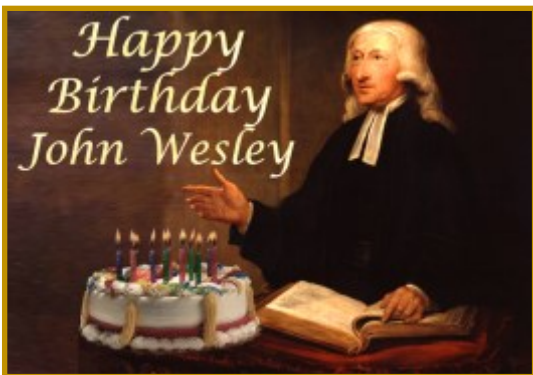
*Finish, then, Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be.
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.*

My prayer is that faith, working in us through that “love divine all loves excelling,” will fulfill God’s new creation in and through “the people called Methodist” in our time. Amen!

Blessings, *Pastor Danyal*

SOME NOTES ABOUT WORSHIP FOR JUNE

The Easter Season finished the last Sunday in May with Pentecost. We now begin the Season After Pentecost, sometimes called Ordinary Time or Kingdomtide. A couple of highlights in the month of June. On **June 11** we will celebrate Confirmation Sunday. Your attendance that Sunday will be a sign of great support for our new Confirmands as they take this very important next step in their faith life.



Later in the month we will celebrate John Wesley’s birthday. This happy occasion will be the focus of Pastor Danyal’s sermon on **June 25**. Wesley was a dedicated journalist. In 1774, he wrote;

“This being my birthday, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering. How is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? That my sight is considerably better now and my nerves firmer than there were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is the good pleasure of God, who doth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are: (1) My constantly rising at four, for about fifty years. (2) My generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world. (3) My never travelling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year.”

Be in church on **June 25** to hear the rest of the story.

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Here is more on the individual Sundays and other dates in the month.

June 4 *Trinity Sunday* Peace with Justice Sunday
Pastor Bob Long will be leading worship and preaching at both services.

June 11 *Second Sunday after Pentecost, Confirmation Sunday*
Len Finke will be preaching at both services. Pastor Danyal will be present at and participate in the 9:30 service.

June 14 Flag Day

June 18 *Third Sunday after Pentecost* Father's Day
Laura Clark will be leading worship and preaching at both services.



June 19 (Monday) Juneteenth

June 25 *Fourth Sunday after Pentecost* - Pastor Danyal's theme is John Wesley's birthday

June 28 (Wednesday) John Wesley's birthday (1703)

Pastor Danyal will be vacationing part of the month of June. He will only be preaching one Sunday, June 25. Our 9:30 am Sunday worship service is live streamed on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FUMCEG and on YouTube. Go to our church webpage for a link to prior worship services and to the livestream.

HERE IS THE LECTIONARY FOR JUNE

June 4 – Genesis 1:1-2:4; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

June 11 – Genesis 12:1-9; Psalm 33:1-12; Romans 4:13-25; Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

June 18 – Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

June 25 - Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 10:24-39

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY - JUNE 4

The first Sunday in June is Peace with Justice Sunday. Every year, on the First Sunday after Pentecost, United Methodists celebrate this day by collecting a special offering. Administered by the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS), the offering benefits peace with justice ministries in the annual conference and around the world.



A portion of our gifts supports the work of GBCS. The agency awards grants to ministries that do vital peace with justice work in many places around the world. GBCS distributes three different grants available to United Methodist congregations and organizations. The grants support ethnic/minority local church ministries, as well as programs related to the

denomination's Human Relations Day and Peace with Justice Sunday. The board connects with conferences, agencies and other networks to educate, equip and mobilize actions in support of economic, health and gender justice.

Peace with Justice Sunday is a faithful expression of shalom in the Bible. It calls the church to strengthen its capacity to advocate publicly in communities and nations throughout the world. It aims to make shalom visible and active in people's lives and communities. When we celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday, we witness to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed and secure world.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Hello Families,

It's hard to believe Summer is right around the corner! I hope all children and youth had a fantastic school year. Congratulations to all of our students who have graduated this year!

June 4 will be the last Sunday School class for the school year. We will resume classes on **September 10**. Next year, we are planning on breaking up the classrooms again since we have grown so much the past year! A big thank you goes to all of our volunteers and staff that helped make Sunday School a success this year.

June 11 this year's students will be confirmed. Confirmation will take place during our normal 9:30 am church service. After, everyone is invited to Fellowship Hall for cake and refreshments. Congratulations to Arianna, Andrei and Owen on your confirmation this year! It has been a spectacular class and I can't see the ways in which they choose to get involved with our church in the coming years.



Vacation Bible School will be on Wednesday evenings from **July 12-August 9**. Class will take place from 6:00 pm -7:30 pm. Dinner will be provided, games, activities, music and of course a lesson. Children of all ages are welcome. Children age 5 and up can be dropped off and picked up. Please email me to sign up! You don't have to sign up for every Wednesday. You are welcome to come as little as one Wednesday or all of them.

I am looking forward to a wonderful summer and a great new school year!

Blessings, *Amanda Trainor* — EGChristianEdFUMC@gmail.com

UNITED METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Youth Group only has a few more meetings left before we break for Summer. We had such a wonderful year making memories and I hope I will see everyone in the fall. I am already starting to plan.

June 3 FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL !! We will be looking for Youth to help with the food truck festival. Set up will start at 9:00 am (Food Trucks will start serving at 11:30 am). We will need set up of tables and chairs under the pines. We will also need help during the day with a children's table. The food truck festival will end at 3:30 pm. We will also need help to clean up the tables and chairs. (We should also put out a bin for cans and bottles for the return).



June 11 Will be our last youth group meeting for this School year. We will have a junior and senior high meeting, We will have tie dye making taco party. Celebrating a great year with lots of memories. We will meet until 1:00 pm. Please bring an item to tie dye. We will also have a wacky scavenger hunt.

Thank you for a great year. I can't wait until September for another youth group year. We welcome Youth from 5th grade to 12th grade, even if they are not part of church. Our doors are open to all youth. I hope everyone has a great and safe summer.

Blessings, *Amber* — Youthleaderamber@gmail.com

EMAIL PROBLEM ALERT

Our email system is having trouble sending to Yahoo email addresses. And sometimes AOL, Verizon, and Hotmail addresses. We can't predict when this will occur, so you may get some mailings and not others. Our tech committee is working on transitioning to a new email server, but that will take some time. In the meantime, check the church website for the calendar or pick up a copy of the announcements at church on Sunday morning or from the information table near the Sanctuary.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

June 3 we will hold a bake sale during the **Food Truck Festival**. If you want to bake something to sell please do and bring it the day before and leave it in the kitchen. Thanks



United Women in Faith is having a High Tea at 12:00 noon **July 28** at Lorriane Beals' house. Lorraine always has fun games. If you wish to go please let a member of the UMW/UWF know so we can plan enough food.

SAVE THIS DATE To all the women of the church - **July 29** is the Bridal shower for Ellie, Pastor Danyal's fiancée. We are inviting all the women of the church. Time is 10:00 am to help setup, 11:30 am for all guests to arrive. The Bride will arrive at 12:00 noon. We will have food games and cake, Ida McKay's pink punch and fun. Please let Patty Chartrand know by **July 15** text 518-308-9538 or email at pjdc560@gmail.com. if you are coming.

CREATION CARE SERIES

The Eco-Team will hold its final video and discussion series on **June 18**. We will watch a TED Talk by Huma Yusuf, "A new social contract for global climate justice," and follow it with discussion. The session will be 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.



STORYTELLING - THE NEXT INSTALLMENT

The **June 7** Storytelling Night will feature **Olan Schillinger**, a high school student who attends Emma Willard School and her Narratives of Youth Project. Olan will present her Project with us .

Olan volunteers with young children who have emigrated from war torn and unsafe areas of the world. She assists them in writing books to discuss themselves and their experiences in both English and their home languages. This increases their literacy skills and sharing the books has educated others on the current conditions children experience in other parts of the world.

We will have a time for questions and for light refreshments. A free will offering will benefit our FUMC youth.

THANK YOU ROBERT!



On May 3 a large crowd enjoyed our own Robert Thomsen, FUMC Choir Director's Story Telling Night. Robert gave us a detailed look at the history of church music from early times (AD) which often involved chanting without instruments, to later times of carols, spirituals, and hymns. Robert also shared a comprehensive presentation of our church music, the history of our organ, choir, and many choir directors. We enjoyed a singalong to the earliest printed church bulletin of 1938, "Fairest Lord Jesus" and seeing the many photographs he shared of our choir and church musical events over several years. Lastly, he mentioned integral members who connected music to the community with Sunday services, coffee house nights, cookies and carols, madrigal dinners, and all of our handbell choirs. We have been blessed by the many talented individuals past and present who provide us with a rich music component to our church services for 150 years and beyond.

FIRST MOONBEE HELD



Our first Moonbee was held on May 9 in Fellowship Hall. Although attendance was light, it was definitely worthwhile. The enthusiastic founder of the Mooncatcher Project, Ellie Wellsheim was there to give directions and provide information about the Project. Since 2011, the Mooncatcher Project has been making reusable, washable menstrual management kits, referred to as “Mooncatcher Kits” for distribution to girls around the world. They



provide the information and supplies needed to manage menstruation with dignity and confidence, increasing the girls’ chances of staying in school. We hope to offer another Moonbee next year and encourage others to participate in this valuable mission. Our thanks to all who helped out.

CORNERSTONE CAMPUS MINISTRY

In early May we received this message from Dawn Snay, President of the Board, “The Protestant Campus Ministry board is thrilled to announce Minister Laurie DeJong Zuverink will serve as our Interim Lay Minister starting on **June 1, 2023**. Our prayers have been answered!”



Minister DeJong Zuverink is a current PhD student in Social Welfare, and she comes with years of ministry and social justice work. Currently, she is an active member and guest Minister at Journey United Church of Christ, where she also serves as the Leadership Team Chair, and has served on the Leadership Team since 2021. Minister DeJong is passionate about the intersection of social work and religion, and we know God has placed her here to help our students continue their ministry [now that Rev. Sandy Damhof has just retired from the position].”

In the picture to the left are, seated, Sienna Jones – President Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry, a May graduate, Luke Morello, former President, a January graduate.

And standing is our new Interim Lay Minister Laurie DeJong Zuverink.

SOME SHORT NOTES—OF IMPORTANCE



- Right at the start of June, **June 1**, Upper New York Conference will be meeting in Syracuse, face to face, for the first time in three years. It will be the first meeting of Conference under the leadership of Bishop Héctor A. Burgos Núñez. All the details are in the pre-conference workbook, available on-line at: https://issuu.com/uppernewyork/docs/pre-conference_workbook_2023_final_for_online_pdf, or a hard copy in the church office. More details from the meeting will be in the Summer BELL.
- The Upper New York conference will be livestreamed for those not planning to attend in-person. Watch what happens during this important and inspiring event beginning at 10:30 am. on Thursday, **June 1**. Go to <https://www.unyumc.org/events/2023-annual-conference> for the Livestream connection.
- There is still time to sign-up to participate in the Prayer Vigil for the Kairos Prison Ministry Weekend #31, **June 8 to 11**. Go to <https://bit.ly/KairosPrayerVigil>. This inspiring ministry very much needs our help on this important part of a Kairos Weekend. Some suggestions for how to pray for the weekend are at the same link. Any questions, see George Herrick or call the church office.



Reconciling Ministry Brunch

No reservation or ticket needed, but sign-ups appreciated.

They help with planning and preparations.

Sunday June 25 after morning worship

Immediately following our 9:30 am service on **June 25** our Reconciling Ministry Team will host a “no ticket, no reservation” brunch in the Fellowship Hall. Come, enjoy a good meal, take part in a time of fellowship, and help celebrate the 12th anniversary of First UMC East Greenbush becoming a Reconciling Congregation. You are invited even if you just want a cup of coffee.



You can help make this special event happen!

We need people for the following:

To sew more Reconciling Ministry stoles so that we have enough for all -- this is a big one that needs volunteers *tout de suite*

To plan the details for the brunch

To help make purchases, prepare the meal, serve and clean-up

There is a sign-up clipboard on the table in the church foyer. For more information and questions, see George Herrick – 518 477-9693.



The **Pride Center of the Capital Region** is excited to announce the **2023 Capital PRIDE Parade and Festival** on **Sunday June 11, 2023** in **Albany's historic Washington Park**. The Capital Pride Parade **Kicks Off at 11:45 am** starting down State St. onto Lark Street and then Madison Ave. Then join the crowd in Washington Park for the on stage entertainment, for the food trucks and all the good stuff to eat, and for the other vendors. Be sure to stop by the educational displays that are part of the day's program.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST SCHENECTADY CELEBRATES

On **May 6** I had the pleasure to be a part of the audience at First UMC Schenectady as they celebrated their 27th anniversary as a Reconciling Congregation. Guest presenters for the day were Bishop Karen P. Oliveto and Mark A. Miller. Bishop Oliveto is the first openly LGBTQA Bishop in the United Methodist Church. Mark is a Professor of Music at Drew University. It was a day very well spent at a church that has been a leader in work with the LGBTQA community. Most of the day was taken up with Bishop Oliveto's presentation in the morning and Mark's music in the afternoon. A wonderful lunch was prepared by church members for the noon hour.



Use the link to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCH3lqdgARc> for Bishop Oliveto's presentation. The quality leaves something to be desired. There are sound gaps. A link to the video of Mark's presentation has not been included because his microphone did not pick up any of the music.

Some quick notes about the video: Start listening at about 9 minutes. Don't skip Pastor Sara's introduction of Bishop Oliveto. For example, she said Bishop Karen is one of the reasons she has for hope in The United Methodist Church. The Bishop's early comments are about hopelessness. Then the audience got a chance to air their thoughts. The Bishop's next comments include some about The Statue of Liberty. Interesting thoughts. Later she talks about taking one hour a day “to play” (which, for her, includes learning new magic tricks) and then asks the question of all of us, “How do you play?” Again the audience got a chance to respond. The last major part of the morning was when the audience got a chance to question the Bishop about “anything”. Skip to about 2.02 on the video and you can hear me asking about youth in the church.

To those who were not present that Saturday – you missed something very special.

George Herrick

Love

Faith and love go over boundaries and time.

Will you be mine?

Love is forever and never ends.

Love is patient. Love is kind.

“Nothing exists that can’t be seen.” Can you see love?

Look at me.

Love is Mom singing The Battle Hymn of the Republic and The Old Rugged Cross.

The smell of chocolate chip cookies baking and warm.

Dad playing the piano while
we washed dishes and marched around the room.

Love is people and pets who need you.

Love never regrets. Love gives us courage.

Love connects us Tuesday afternoons
at Hawthorne Ridge.

Members of the Good News Group, Hawthorne Ridge