

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061



VOLUME 25 ISSUE 10 NOVEMBER 2023

At Church on Sundays:

- ◆ 8:30 am Early Informal Service
- 9:30 am Regular Service.
 This service also 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: 9:00 am to 2:30 pm M-F

Email: office@fumceg.org

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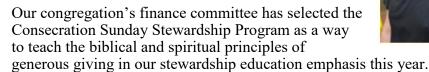
Danyal Mohammadzadeh *Pastor*

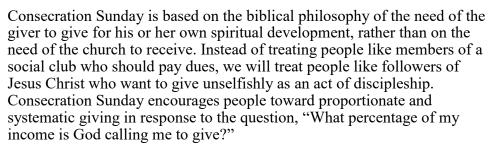
Gail Welkley

Administrative Assistant

Thanksgiving Sunday

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.





Sunday, **November 19**, is our congregation's Consecration Sunday. I urge you to plan now to attend the two important events: Sunday morning worship and the Celebration Brunch immediately following worship that same day. During morning worship, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and around the world.

The effectiveness of our church's mission and ministries next year depends on your initiative and dedication. Consecration Sunday is not only about sharing our financial resources. We ask you to let us know how much time you would like to dedicate for participating in different church missions and activities. Please specify on which committees you would like to serve.

Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in Consecration Sunday events.

Pastor Danyal

SOME NOTES ABOUT WORSHIP FOR NOVEMBER

Four of the lectionary readings for November come from the Gospel of Matthew. The picture to the right has

one more line from Matthew's gospel, "Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith". November is a good month for that reminder. We start the month with prayers for all the saints we have lost in the past year. Later in the month we celebrate with prayers of Thanksgiving on that holiday. That's just two of the times we focus on prayer this month.

Another focus for our thoughts in November is Native American Heritage Month. The US Department of the Interior reminds us that this month ". . . is a time to celebrate the traditions, languages and stories of Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and affiliated Island communities and



ensure their rich histories and contributions continue to thrive with each passing generation." For an interesting look at this topic, take a few minutes and look at the video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVfeqB29iDI.

As noted below, Sunday, **November 12** is Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday. To get a better understanding of this topic from a United Methodist point of view, take a look at this very short video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSETwfaEh40.

Here are more of the details for each Sunday in November:

November 5 – *All Saints Sunday* – Holy Communion. During the 9:30 am worship service the names of this year's departed saints will be read.

Pastor Danyal's sermon theme - A recognition of our dependence on God, one another, and the bounty of creation.

- **November 12** *Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost* Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday Pastor Danyal's sermon theme *Will we find ourselves in the story of God's love?*
- **November 19** *Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost* Thanksgiving Sunday, Consecration Sunday David Haase will be preaching. The theme of his message is "*Four Talents*."
- November 26 Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday United Methodist Student Day
 Pastor Danyal's sermon theme Whether we are giving or receiving, gratitude opens our
 hearts to receive the abundance of life more fully.

(Continued on page 3)



Our Annual Church Conference meeting will be held here at our church on Sunday, **November 12** beginning at 3:00 pm. This being a Church Conference, all members of our local church may vote at the meeting. Meeting with us, same time, same place, will be: St. Paul's UMC, Castleton; Niverville-Chatham Center UMC; North Chatham UMC; Grace UMC, Nassau; Grace UMC, Ravena; South Bethlehem UMC; and Stephentown Federated Church.

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(Continued from page 2)

HERE IS THE LECTIONARY FOR NOVEMBER

November 5 – Joshua 3:7-17; Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12

November 12 – Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

November 19 – Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

November 26 - Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-34; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

Morning worship in the Chapel in the Woods on October 1 included the Blessing of the Animals. Two of the animals at the service are shown in the picture to the right. This service has its roots in 12th century Italy and the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Saint Francis is the Catholic Church's patron saint of animals and the environment.



NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK



On **November 19-25** this year we celebrate **National Bible Week**. Declared in 1941 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, this week is meant to encourage reading the Bible and sharing God's word.

"National Today", a group that keeps track of fun holidays and special moments on the cultural calendar, on their website, offers these ways to observe National Bible Week:

1. Explore a new verse or teaching

Bible verses are sometimes hard to comprehend. This week-long holiday is the perfect opportunity to get acquainted with the hidden gems of the great text. Even non-Christians can gain some universal wisdom from the scriptures.

2. Attend a service at a different denomination

Many lessons and interpretations can be learned from the sermons of the different church denominations. A great way to expand your community and share your faith is to switch up your denominations.

3. Invite your friends to a Bible reading

An afternoon filled with friendship and the religious teachings of the Bible is a great way to celebrate National Bible Week. Engage in praise and worship, or prayer, then round up with a potluck while remembering all the things to be thankful for.

THE BUECHNER NARRATIVE WRITING PROJECT

First person narratives (under 1,000 words) on the topic "Gap" are due December 1, 2023, and on the topic "Help" are due February 1, 2024. Published essays receive \$100. More information about this challenge is in the November issue of The Christian Century magazine, available in our Church Library. See also the Summer 2023 issue of The Church BELL.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

hange Before going to bed on **November 4**, turn your clocks back or you will be verrrrry early for church. Remember fall back.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Hello Sunday School Families,

I hope all is well! It has been such a beautiful Autumn. I hope everyone is enjoying the lovely weather. It is difficult to believe that Advent will be here before we know it. I want to give a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the waffle breakfast and the classroom clean up project. Both were successful, fruitful events for our church.

Please see the list of Sunday School lessons for the month of November below:

Sunday, **November 5:** Revelations 7:9-17 John describes a vision

Sunday, November 12: A Psalm of Thanksgiving

Sunday, November 19: Philippians 4:4-13

Sunday, November 26: John 6:5-23

Last, but not least, if anyone would like to participate in the Christmas Eve Family Service, please let me know. Thank you,

Blessings, Amanda Trainor — EGChristianEdFUMC@gmail.com

UNITED METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

I am so excited for the Holiday Season. The Holidays are my favorite time of Year. I hope you join me in the Holiday Cheer and give back this season. We have so much to be thankful for. We have a great youth group, a great church community but most of all we have a loving God. As we look at how busy our schedules are, take time out to be together with fellow youth and take time to be with God.

November 5th Junior High will meet during Sunday School from 9:30 am - 11:00 am. We will be discussing our Change for Change Project. We will be working on a campaign and talking about ideas for December. There will be donuts!!!

November 5th Senior High will meet 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. We have a few projects to work on. One is our part in the 150th Anniversary Celebration. Bring your ideas on interviewing elders in the church. What Questions can we ask them? What do you want to know?

We also have to talk about December events. There will be snacks. I will send out a list asking for your favorites.

November 12th We will be working on our project for December 2nd. Both junior and senior high kids can join. We will meet until 12:00 noon.

November 17th Please join me on a Friday night at the YMCA to help set up for their Basket Brigade from 5:30 pm -? The Y is devoted to giving 1,500 families a full Thanksgiving meal for them to cook. There will be a link to sign up to volunteer. They are putting the meals together on Saturday Morning.

November 19th We will Finish the Project for December 2nd. We will meet until 12:00 noon.

Happy Thanksgiving. May God Bless you and your family and a safe trip for anyone traveling.

Blessings, Amber—Youthleaderamber@gmail.com

RED CROSS

There will be a Red Cross Blood Drive here at our church on Tuesday, **November 14**. They are scheduling both "blood" and "power red" donations. You can add your name to the list of donors by contacting the American Red Cross at 1-800-RED CROSS or visit redcroswsblood.org use sponsor code:egumc.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH—UMW

Thank you, John and Karen Peterson, Bill Bronk, Mary Smith, Priscilla McCaughin, Lorraine Beals, Janet Schmidt, Marian Smith and Trudy Sorell who helped to make our 2023 Brooks' Barbeque a success. The brownie bakers outdid themselves, thank you. We realized \$1,602 at this event. Monies earned go toward maintaining a supply of coffee, creamer and juice and other kitchen supplies for our coffee hours after church. We also provide scholarships to our youth to attend church-related camp in the summer and contributed to Youth 2023 so youth could attend that event.

November - The Giving Tree. The gifts on the tree are given to CoNSERNS-U for their Christmas Store. Watch for details and for our *Giving Tree* in the church fover.

November 6 at 7:00 pm is our regular meeting and we will be discussing our next year and our Christmas Party.

MADE BY HAND WITH LOVE OUTREACH MISSION

Our handiwork group is nearing our goal of 150 soft hats for kids with cancer. Please have your hats to church by Sunday November 12 for delivery by Thanksgiving. Donations for shipping costs for hatsgiving.org would be appreciated. They send the hats to several children's hospitals. Thank you to all the hands at work. We will be meeting Tuesday **November 7** at 10:00 am.

Please contact us if you have questions. reginagwheeler@gmail.com and/or aleta.schweigert@gmail.com

YES, IT'S ALREADY TIME TO ORDER POINSETTIAS!

You can help fill the sanctuary with beautiful flowering poinsettias for Christmas while honoring or remem-



bering special people in your life. We are offering 6.5" size plants, available in **RED for \$12.00 each plant.** Please write your order on the order sheet found on the long table in the lobby. Remember to make checks payable to the "United Methodist Women." Orders must be received in the church office no later than Sunday, December 10. If you have any questions, please call the church office at

518-477-9693. Thank you.

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE HOUR NEEDS YOU!

In order for coffee hour to be a success we need you to volunteer for it. That seems like a big task, but it's just coffee, maybe a treat to share and a nice friendly smile. Sign-up sheets are in the lobby. If you have questions please see Amber. You also don't have to do it alone. Friends, committees, families can all share the task and sign up together.



A NOTE OF APPRECIATION



A Big Thank You for Trustees and Others who pitched in to keep the Church grounds looking beautiful. Patty Chartrand, Kate Henson and Susie Calyer for their garden work, Paul Deming who kept the Chapel and the Church entrance walks clean and clear, Kevin and Cindy Conley for edging and pruning the five trees outside the Sanctuary, Becky and Pat Frament for sprucing up the education entrance, Dave Caneen and Kurt Schlachter for removing brush and trimming evergreens, John Peterson for striping the parking lot,

and Pat, John, and Peter for their mowing. It has been a busy year with a lot of rain and a long growing season. Once again, many thanks!

A NIGHT OF RECONCILING AND HEALING

On the evening of October 4, Pastor Danyal welcomed a group of about 65 people in the Fellowship Hall to a



night of reconciliation and healing. After a unison prayer and the singing of "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace," Director of Children's Christian Education Amanda Trainor introduced Jon Romano. Jon was speaking in East Greenbush for the first time since he fired a shotgun in Columbia High School in February 2004, terrifying the school community and wounding an assistant principal. He stressed repeatedly that he was not trying to make excuses or justify his actions. Rather, he wanted to help us understand how this happened so that we could help others who may be on similar paths. After describing his background, Jon talked about what had led him to take the gun into the school in 2004 and what he had hoped to accomplish: suicide.

Jon's message to the group assembled was clear. Not much has changed since 2004. Issues such as mental health and gun violence have largely gone unaddressed. Many troubled kids still feel unheard, unseen, and misunderstood. We need to listen to them and ask open-ended questions to help them connect to others in their lives.

Answering questions from those in attendance, Jon suggested just being there for kids, treating them like anybody else, and sharing your experiences so they hear how other people negotiated their way through difficult times. He also noted that it meant a lot to know that some members of the community didn't reject him and reached out to him despite what he had done.

In 2020, Jon was released from prison after serving a little over 17 years of his 20-year sentence. Subsequently, he began working at an Albany homeless shelter, where he fell victim to a sword attack by one of the guests. In response to a question as to how he was able to forgive his attacker, Jon replied, "I had blessings that he did not have." Holding onto anger is toxic, he added, and forgiveness is more about us than it is about others.

On October 6, 2023, Chris Churchill's front-page column in the *Times Union* focused on this program at our church.



STORYTELLING NIGHT FOR NOVEMBER

At 7:00 pm, Wednesday, **November 1**, the Rev. Steven M. Smith will talk about his journey and experiences as a clergyperson in The United Methodist Church as the parent of a transgender child. Smith has served in ministry in the Troy and Upper New York Conferences for over 26 years, in urban and suburban settings in the Capital Region. A longtime advocate for justice ministries, he has a commitment to diversity and inclusivity, though being the parent of a transgender child has created challenges and opportunities in ministry.





HOLIDAY COFFEE HOUSE

The Mistress of Chatter says, "SAVE THE DATE". The Holiday Coffee House will be held Friday, November 17 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We have a talented roster of performers, delicious snacks, and our enthusiastic audience. Contributions at entry help support struggling families in our community. Hope to see you there!



Desserts Thru the Decades

A 150th Anniversary Celebration Party Saturday, **December 2**, 2:00-4:00 in Fellowship Hall

Come share the recognition of our Methodist Church being in East Greenbush since 1873

Invite members from the past, family and friends to celebrate

NEWS OF OUR CHURCH'S 150TH YEAR CELEBRATION

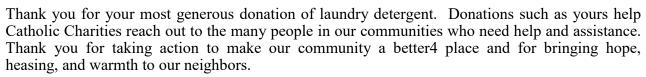
LOVELY CERAMIC CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS with the **150th LOGO** are now available for sale. The cost is \$5.00. Think about getting one for yourself and gifting one. Beginning **November 5**, we will have them at Sunday services. You can also speak to Lorraine Beals or Aleta Schweigert to purchase one.

TIMELINE IS PROGRESSING George Herrick is continuing his work on the 150 year timeline of major activities and events in our church's history. Soon you will be able to add notes of significant events you have been part of over the life of our church. Watch for more information later this month.

HISTORY BOOKS Over the years several accounts of the history of our church have been written. Two of the most recent are now available to share. If you would like one of these please contact George Herrick. FIRST Gerald Dunn did the book "The First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush, New York" about the history of the church's existence, its struggles, its growth, the move to a new building, social and outreach activities. SECOND Loucene Trueworthy's Remembrances of the First United Methodist Church" by Louise Pearce. This book highlights life in the church. Loucene was born in 1909 and spent her entire life as part of this community. Her great grandfather, David Phillips, was one of the founders of East Greenbush Methodist Church. Her Remembrances will resonate with many of us.

Conserns-u says thank you

CoNSERNS-U, a Catholic Charities Tri-County Services program is most grateful for our donors who support our mission of helping individual families meet their basic fundamental needs.





On behalf of the staff and clients of CoNSERNS-U, I again thank you.

John Proper, Program Coordinator



ELECTION DAY – BE SURE TO VOTE

Tuesday, **November 7**, 2023 is Election Day. It's the day all of us eligible voters should be going to the polls and casting our ballots for those we think will do the best leading our government in the months to come. **First** – get informed. **Second** – think and decide who best can fill the various government offices. **Third** – VOTE.

HOLIDAY OUTREACH



Last year our church began an exciting partnership with the very appreciative folks at Van Rensselaer Heights in Rensselaer. We helped to stock their supply closet and library, assisted with flower and vegetable planting and provided some refreshments and uplifting music by our choir during our Change the World celebration in May. They are in need of donations for their supply closet once again. If you can help, we will be accepting donations from **November 19- December 24.** There is a bin in the church foyer for donations. Needed items include: cleaning supplies, including laundry detergent, hygiene products (deodorant, toothpaste, bath soap, shampoo), and paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet paper). Books would also be appreciated for their library. Thank you and Happy Holi-

days from the Missions Team.

HELP PROMOTE BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

In a nation that appears to be so polarized, it's often a challenge to find an issue that can unite us. Following the powerful presentation given by Jon Romano on October 4 at our church, we seem to agree that *one thing that we need is a better understanding and awareness of mental health*. God has provided the tools we need, as well as the people who can help us with the current crisis of violence in our society. Everyone has a role to play. Our church is beginning a new initiative to begin the process. Ultimately, we would like to invite the community and schools to join forces with us. If you would like to become involved, please watch for and add your name to the sign-up sheet in the church foyer and watch the weekly announcements and the monthly Church Bell for further developments. Contact John Schmidt, Caring Ministries Coordinator with questions. Thank you for being a part of the solution.



CREATION CARE SERIES

The Eco-Team will hold two more video and discussion sessions this fall. In each session, participants view a talk or video and follow with discussion. The sessions are held in Room 16 and will run from 11:00–12:00

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. Dates and topics for the series are shown below. Participants can attend one or both sessions.

November 5: FOUR WAYS WE CAN AVOID A CATASTROPHIC DROUGHT, a TED Talk. As the world's climate patterns continue to shift unpredictably, places where drinking water was once abundant may soon find reservoirs dry and groundwater aquifers depleted. In this talk, civil and environmental engineer David Sedlak shares four practical solutions to the ongoing urban water crisis.

December 3: A CREATIVE APPROACH TO COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION, a TED Talk. To address the perils of climate change, eco-artist Xavier Cortada offers a creative vision of community organizing inspired by art that engages, educates, and empowers.

CONFERENCES, PROGRAMS, MORE CONFERENCES

Laura Clark, part of the Lay Leadership of our local church and of Upper New York Annual Conference, has had a busy schedule this year. In addition to the meeting of UNYAC on June 1-3, 2023 in Syracuse, there were two special sessions of the conference, one in the spring and one in the fall to deal with disaffiliation. Then there was the Youth Conference in Daytona, meetings at our local church and even a pro-



gram in Hawaii. Look for a report about her busy church life in the December issue of The Church BELL.

CROP HUNGER WALK

This year, 16 people from our church joined Emmanuel Reformed Church in the CROP Hunger Walk on a

3.2 mile walk through the Village of Castleton on Hudson. We started the event with a tour of The Anchor Food Pantry, a picture of the group and a blessing. Walkers included Sarah and Jules Davis, Judy Galvin, John Glasheen-Haase, Fred and Kate Henson, Pastor Danyal Mohammadazadeh, Valerie Perrott, John and Janet Schmidt and their daughters Jessica Armstrong and Jennifer Schmidt-Leckonby, Amanda



Trainor, Fran Berger and Cindy and Kevin Conley. A final tally for the walk is not yet available, but our church raised at least \$1,800. Twenty-five percent of the money raised will go to The Anchor. The remainder will fund Church World Service hunger and disaster relief programs in the U.S. and around the world. So, what can \$2,000 do? It can cover fifteen months of meals for a family in the U.S., two piglets for each of ten families to raise and sell to cover expenses AND a month of groceries for twenty refugee families in Egypt.

COUNCIL AWARDS DINNER

Bob is standing at the far left in this picture of award winners.



On October 11, the Capital Area Council of Churches held their Annual Fall Dinner and Awards Celebration at the Italian American Community Center. Award winners this year included: William B. Hedberg, Angela Warner, Rev. Robert Long, Rabbi Rena Kieval, Uzma Popal.

Rev. Robert Long, a retired United Methodist pastor, is a familiar face here at our church. He has been our preacher, and he has chaired several "official" meetings of our church, including the one where we voted to become a Reconciling Congregation. More than once, when Bob was here to lead a meeting and the Cornerstone students came with a bake sale at the same time, Bob would make a bake sale purchase

which he would then proceed to auction off to raise funds for a "cause of the day".

At the CACC dinner, Bob received the **Rev. Joyce Steinkraus Giles Pastoral Service Award.** To be eligible for this award, a pastor must:

- actively participate in the Council or one of its programs
- have done outstanding pastoral ministry
- exemplify racial, gender, and denominational inclusiveness

Bob has met all three criteria. For example, for the first one, Bob is a baptism witness for the Council.

Congratulations Bob, on receiving the Giles Pastoral Service Award!

ASK THE PASTOR

My beloved church family,

In last month's issue, I announced a new feature to be printed in The Bell. It is an anonymous advice column intended to help promote mental well-being and provide a safe space where you can ask questions. If you are looking for a new perspective on a challenging issue you may be facing, please send a message to me by mail or email. Your question and my response will appear in The Bell, but you will not be identified.



COMING DECEMBER 8 AND 9



HEAR YE, HEAR YE! The Lord and Lady of Greenbush Manor invite you as their honored guests for an evening of merriment, feasting and song to lighten your hearts for the Christmas Season and year long. Join us in our Great Hall at the First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush, 1 Gilligan Road. We will enjoy wassail (mulled cider), roast beef and gravy, potatoes, and vegetables, as well as Trifle, tea and coffee. Guests are invited to dress in Medieval period costumes to honor their hosts this eve.

You may opt to attend the dinner and show on Friday, **December 8** at 7:00 pm or on Saturday, **December 9** at 6:00 pm. Prepaid reservations are required.

Please call the church at 518-477-9693 or Sharon Wheeler at 407-718-7707. This is a fund-raising event held very infrequently so don't miss this opportunity! Tickets are only \$40. For those who cannot attend, consider paying it forward in the spirit of Christmas for those who are less fortunate.

WASSAIL BOWL NEEDS FILLING

The Christmas Madrigal Dinner committee asks your help in the preparation for this splendid event. Please circle the below task if you are able to assist with any of the following:

Thursday 12/7Friday 12/8—7:00 pmSaturday 12/9—6:00 pmSet up HallKitchen helpKitchen helpDecoratingServerServerKitchen PrepClean-up 9:00 pmClean-up 8:00 pm

Also Needed: Bakers for Sally Lunn Bread (recipe provided) and Trifle **Items needed for show on loan:** Tall Candlesticks, Silver Trays, Trifle Bowls

Please fill in your name and phone number and email or leave in the offering plate or church office. Be sure to put your name on the bottom of your items. Questions? Sharon Wheeler 407-718-7707 or madrigaldinnershow2023@gmail.com FB site Madrigal Dinner Show 2023 FUMC

Name:	Phone	Email	

STAFF APPRECIATION DAY



On Sunday, October 22 the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) recognized the amazing work our of our staff during Sunday morning worship and with a gift and cake during coffee hour after worship. In the picture above are staff members and their liaisons: Deborah Rubenstein – Chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee, Robert Thomsen – Choir Director, Colleen Rumsey – member SPRC, Cynthia McLaughlin – Bell Choirs Conductor, Gail Welkley – Administrative Assistant, Jacqueline Krahforst (partly hidden behind Gail) – Organist, Amber Telford – Youth Leader, Laurel Fitzmaurice – member SPRC, Danyal Mohammadzadeh – Pastor, Steven Green, Custodian, Tom McLaughlin – member SPRC. Missing from the picture are Amanda Trainor – Director of Children's Christian Education, and Beverly—Part-time Custodian.



