



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061

We Are A Reconciling Congregation



VOLUME 27 ISSUE 4 - APRIL 2025

◆ **8:30 am** Early Informal

Service suspended until May, 2025

◆ **9:30 am** Regular Service and Sunday School

This service also available live on Facebook and YouTube. The Church's website has the links.

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www.facebook.com/FUMCEG

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Dear congregation of FUMC,

As we approach this sacred season of Easter, I find myself reflecting deeply on the profound mystery of the resurrection. When someone confides in me, "I struggle to believe in the resurrection," my heart reaches out to them with understanding and compassion. You are not alone in these feelings. Even Jesus' closest friends, companions, and disciples experienced doubt, despite being witnesses to His life and teachings.

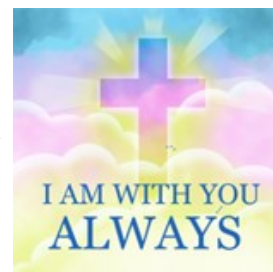
Jesus spoke of His death and resurrection multiple times, yet many of His followers initially found it hard to believe He had risen. This struggle is a testament to the extraordinary nature of the resurrection, an event so profound that it challenges our understanding and faith.

The death and resurrection of Jesus are inseparable, each giving meaning to the other. The resurrection is a powerful affirmation that poor choices, evil, hate, and death do not have the final word. By raising Christ from the dead, God demonstrated that the forces of darkness, which sought to extinguish the light, ultimately could not prevail. This divine act signifies that light triumphs over darkness, love conquers hate, and life vanquishes death. It offers us hope and assurance that despite the presence of poor choices and suffering, there is a greater power of redemption and renewal at work.

The cross, once a symbol of suffering and defeat, has become a beacon of hope and redemption. It reminds us that no matter how deeply we are mired in our own failings, there is always a path to healing through God's grace.

In Matthew 28:16-20, the risen Jesus appears to His disciples and commands them to go into the world as His witnesses, **even though some of them still doubted**. He says:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."



This passage highlights our call to bear witness to the good news Jesus proclaimed. Despite our doubts and uncertainties, Christ calls us each day to share His message of love, hope, and redemption.

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John 21:25 concludes the Gospel with a reminder of the vastness of Jesus' works:

"Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."

This verse suggests that the world needs the unique witness to Jesus's transforming love that only you and other friends of Jesus, individually and together, can bear. Each person's testimony is a vital part of the larger story of Christ's love and redemption. It is through these collective and individual witnesses that the light of Jesus continues to shine in the world.

As we celebrate Easter, let us embrace the hope and renewal that the resurrection brings. Let us be inspired to share our unique stories of faith and transformation, knowing that we are part of a greater narrative of love and redemption.

May the peace and joy of the risen Christ be with you all.

With love and blessings,
Pastor Danya

HERE IS THE LECTIONARY FOR APRIL

- April 6: 5th Sunday in Lent - Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8
 April 13: Palm/Passion Sunday - Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16
 April 17: Holy Thursday - Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26;
 John 13:1-17, 31b-35
 April 18: Good Friday - Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42
 April 20: Easter Sunday - Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-9-26; John 20:1-18



With the rising costs of postage, envelopes, ink and paper, the church will be sending out The Church Bell by **email only** beginning with the September issue. It costs the church about \$50 a month for postage (\$600 per year) plus the envelopes, ink and paper. Please send an email to Editor@fumceg.org with your name and email address by July 31 so we have time to enter all the email addresses.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

Happy Spring! April brings new life to our Sunday School and Youth Group! Spring is a time for growth for all things, even US! We welcome our new butterfly friends to class and as we watch them grow, we will reflect on how simple changes and acts of kindness can help us all develop and grow into followers of Jesus.

April 13 - Palm Sunday

April 20—Easter—there will not be Sunday School today-but we will have an Easter Egg hunt after service.

April 21—Youth Group Meet-up

Can't wait to see you all on each Sunday during April.

Many blessings, Lauren Lehmann



SAVE THE DATE:

Our VBS program will be held Monday, **July 28 - Friday, August 1, 2025** from 5:00 pm -7:30 pm. The theme for this year's VBS will be True North: Alaska!

We are looking forward to planning this event for all the youth. More info to share in the upcoming months! Please email Lauren at LLehmann@fumceg.org if you are able to volunteer to help at our VBS program this year.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Library: Did you know we have a library? It is next to the nursery. There are over 3,000 titles of books in there. The library is set up by subject and you can browse to see what you would want to read. There are also a few series of books that are fun to read. To check out the book, just sign the card in the back of the book and add the date, put it in the metal box and return after a month. When done, put it in the basket and browse some more.

Thrift Sale May 2 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm and May 3 from 9:00 am - 12:00 noon which is bag day. We will have a snack bar both days

Set up begins on April 27 after church services. Drop off is April 27 12:00 noon - 3:00 pm and during the week April 28-30 from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. Nothing is accepted after April 30.

ITEMS accepted are women's, men's and children's clothing, shoes handbags, hats, coats, LINENS: bedsheets, comforters, pillowcases, towels, tablecloths, curtains, HOUSEWARES: pots, pans, dishes, glassware, bakeware, utensils and small appliances. WE ARE NOT ACCEPTING: toys, books, furniture, CD, DVD, electronic, holiday items or crafts.

HELP is needed with everything. The sign up sheet is in the foyer. Any amount of time you can devote to us is greatly appreciated.

Next meeting is April 7 at 2:00 pm. Everyone is invited.



MADE BY HAND WITH LOVE OUTREACH MISSION

Knitting, Crocheting, Sewing, Chatting- Our group meets Tuesdays twice a month-**April 15 and 29**- to enjoy visiting with friends while creating hand made items. We are using our Time, Talent and Treasures to meet some of the needs in our community and beyond. We are currently making: hat and mitten sets for Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, Care Shawls for Patients with ALS, and afghans 48"x48" for Hospice and the VA Hospital- all to be distributed in May. A new mission is for blankets for S.H.I.P.- Sheriff's Homeless Improvement Project in Albany County. Some of us are experienced while others are learning a new skill. Everyone is welcome to join the group. Materials are available. More info contact: aleta.schweigert@gmail.com or reginagwheeler@gmail.com



Mark your calendar - **May 17** will be **The Food Truck Festival!** Planning is underway. If you would like to volunteer to help, please reach out to Amber at atelford@fumceg.org. We are also looking for vendors, musicians and donations of baskets for the raffle.

The EcoTeam will collect Styrofoam, glass bottles and jars, and household batteries on **April 13** at the parking lot garage before and after the 9:30 am service. Styrofoam must be free of tape and staples. Styrofoam used for food or drink is excluded. Glass bottles and jars must be clean, but labels do not need to be removed. Household batteries that are corroded and large lithium batteries used for tools are excluded.

My faith demands -- this is not optional -- my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference. - President Jimmy Carter



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY AHEAD!

Are you looking for something that you can do for Planet Earth? Everyone can do something and our church highway crew will be continuing to spruce up a two-mile section of Routes 9 & 20 for the fourteenth year. Can you help? Helmets, bags, vests and trash grabbers will be provided to those who show up on April 5 at 8:00 am at the church. If you can spare an hour, we would appreciate your help collecting any accumulated trash left over from the winter along the highway. Clean-Ups will also be held on June 7, August 2 and October 11. See John Schmidt or Kevin Conley with any questions.

Thanks from The Eco-Team!

Family Assistance Ministries

Lending Closet

Family Assistance Ministries (FAM) is expanding our Adaptive Lending Closet to include walkers, wheelchairs and other adaptive items.

Currently, we have two manual wheelchairs, standard walkers, a rollator four-wheeled walker with hand brakes, and an electric motorized scooter type vehicle and an assortment of other items.

If you or a family member have need for any of these items, please contact Susie Calyer, Carrie Larson or John Schmidt.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE UPCOMING ART SHOW

Don't forget to mark your calendar for April 5 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm so that you attend our 3rd Annual Community Art Show. Not only will you enjoy the unique forms of art by adults and children, including painting, photography, sculpture, drawings and quilting - but also the talented musicians in the Fellowship Hall sharing their "musical art" while you enjoy beverages in the café. Juliana Davis is returning for her third year of sharing her violin songs.

We can't forget to mention that you will be enticed to purchase some of the delicious homemade baked goods too.

You and your family might also like to get your creative juices flowing by stopping at one of the art stations. Garden rock painting is always a favorite, while designing a greeting card or bookmark could include an Easter theme. New this year is making a water bottle wind spiral which is a fun way to recycle, and/or adding your name and a sketch to the large wall mural.

Kim Romano, owner of "Flower Blossom Design", located in Pinecrest Plaza on Springhurst Drive (also home of Crisp Cannoli and Nic's Trattoria) is donating one of her floral creations that will bring a breath of spring into your home. Her website is worth looking at: www.flowerblossom-design.com.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can email Amber Telford at Artshowfumceg@gmail.com


VRH, Supply Closet Donations: The Missions and Social Responsibility Committee will be collecting items for **Van Rensselaer Heights**, a HUD-subsidized senior apartment complex in Rensselaer, NY. They have 107 apartments and to qualify, people must be low income and over the age of 62 or disabled. With the Easter season upon us, they're looking for us to help bring joy to their residents and celebrate the holidays. Their biggest need currently is items for the supply closet. The year-round supply closet provides residents with household cleaning supplies such as: **hygiene products, paper products (paper towels, tissues, toilet paper), laundry detergent, etc.**, free of charge. If you'd like to donate any of those items, there will be a labeled **bin in the church foyer from April 1st to April 30th**.

Donate Hygiene Items



Thank you, Lorraine Beals

Storytelling Night
Wednesday, April 2
7PM



All Are Welcome!
Refreshments

Haley & Poppy
The Story of Ed Fennell
and his daughter Haley
Non-Verbal Developmental Disabilities
First United Methodist Church
1 Gilligan Road, E. Greenbush, NY

Storytelling Night begins at 7:00 pm on
 Wednesday, April 2.

UPCOMING GRADUATIONS

In our May and June issues of the Church Bell we would like to honor students who are graduating this year. If you have a child, grandchild, niece, nephew you would like to honor, please send a picture and short bio of their accomplishments. Even if you have a child "graduating" from kindergarten.



HAWTHORNE RIDGE

Good News Group

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" Isaiah 40:31

"Faith is the assurance of what we hope for, and the conviction of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

"Hope is being able to see light despite all the darkness."

Martin Luther King

My Hope Is...

My hope is a leap of faith that
 God cares for me.
 My hope is that humanity wakes
 up to Mother Earth.
 My hope is for another day.
 My hope is that I can walk again.
 My hope is for love and maybe
 love leads to hope.
 My hope is to feel God's pres-
 ence.
 My hope is that God hears my
 prayers.
 My hope is that God heals me
 and takes away my fear.
 My hope is that I am not alone.
 Hope heals our hearts.

(Written by the Good News Group from a recent 2025 discussion.)

What is “Change the World” All About?

This year is the 12th year of our involvement in “Change the World”. For those who are just joining us, “Change the World” is a movement that was introduced to our church back in 2014. We can trace its roots to a group of church members who wanted us to leave our pews and go out into the community to demonstrate God’s love, instead of just talking about it. Some churches called it “Sunday Serve”, others called it “The Church is Leaving the Building”. Whatever name was attached to it, the common theme was a call to put our faith in action. It sounds like something Jesus would endorse! Church members have long been accused of “talking the talk” without “walking the walk”. “Change the World” is not a new or revolutionary concept, it’s merely **an encouragement to take action, spread the love, DO SOMETHING!**



Our church has a long-standing history of generously spreading God’s love all year long through our many programs and activities. We are a giving church. We recognize that there are many among us who struggle. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these my brothers, you did for me". (Matthew 25:40)

Sadly, the number of people in need is growing. The number of opportunities for helping though, is unlimited. As much as we would like to help everyone, we know we can’t. That knowledge shouldn’t stop us however from helping as many others as we can.



We also sometimes need a reminder that it doesn’t have to cost a fortune. How expensive is a smile or a kind word? Can you afford to spare a can of soup to help feed someone? Can you knit or crochet? We have a group at church that is making hats and mittens that will go into our Redbird Mission Shoeboxes for needy families in the Appalachians. Consider joining them. See Aleta or Regina.

Our creative Change the World Team members are working diligently to prepare a month-long list of activities in May for us to participate in. It will be finalized before the May Bell is out. Please watch for it and let us know if you have suggestions. We encourage you to find an opportunity to share God’s love with someone. We are only limited by our imagination!



We would like to dedicate this year’s Change the World to the memory of our dear friend, mentor, Mission’s leader and true disciple of Christ, Matie Flowers, whose dedication and compassion continues to inspire us to reach out to others in need.

John Schmidt, Change the World Coordinator

The Missions Team and Qholaqhoe Mountain Connections would like to thank all who donated to the recent Food Drive Appeal. \$550. was contributed to assist those in Lesotho in southern Africa suffering from a severe drought. Your dollars are hard at work providing nourishment to children and adults in need. Lynn Minderman of QMC sends her personal thank you. We are hoping to have a representative of QMC visit in June to provide an update. Our support of this charity that provides education and food has been ongoing for approximately fifteen years in our church. We appreciate all your support.



Puzzle!

First, write the word that fits each definition. Then transfer those letters to the correct numbered lines below, completing John 20:17 (NIV). Finally, unscramble the circled letters to complete the sentence at the bottom.

C
H
I
I
D
R
E
N'
S

P
A
G
E

1. Water that falls from the sky 1 2 3 4

2. Birds lay these in a nest 5 6 7 8

3. A newly hatched hen 9 10 11 12 13

4. These bloom in spring 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

5. A caterpillar transformed 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

6. Dirt mixed with water 30 31 32

J 5 8 31 20 8 2 3 32 ... " 1 2 30

2 20 12 25 4 32 11 4 6 24 16 30 29

F 2 23 10 18 26 2 4 32 29 16 22 1

F 2 24 10 25 19 23 16 30 29 G 16 32

2 4 32 29 16 31 1 G 16 32 "

John 20:17, NIV

Jesus has _____!

Answers: rain, eggs, chick, flowers, butterfly, mud; Jesus said ... "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." (John 20:17, NIV) Jesus has risen!

SPECIAL SERVICES

Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday

Holy Week Services at First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush. Please Join Us!

Palm Sunday, April 13 at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary or online (instructions below).

Come for the palm parade!

Maundy Thursday, April 17, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

We will remember the Last Supper and Jesus' act of love and humility with a potluck supper, Holy Communion, passion of Christ and hymn singing. This service will not be live streamed.

Our traditional **Holy Week Prayer Vigil** will begin at 8:00 pm on **April 17** following the Maundy Thursday service and continue through 3:00 pm on **Good Friday, April 18**. We invite you to cover one or more half hour blocks of time. Please sign up on the sheets in the church lobby or call the church office at 518-477-9693. You can participate in the prayer vigil either at the church or at home.

Good Friday April 18 at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

The Sanctuary Choir will sing Joseph Martin's cantata "*The Solemn Shadows, A Service for Tenebrae.*" Attend in person or watch the live stream (instructions below).

Easter Sunday, April 20! We will celebrate with two services:

Sunrise service in the outdoor Chapel in the Woods at 6:30 am.

Easter service at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary or online (instructions below).

To view the live stream go to the church home page at <https://www.fumceg.org>, click on the "WATCH LIVE" box, then click on the "Watch on YouTube" button.

