



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061

We Are A Reconciling Congregation



VOLUME 28 ISSUE 2 - FEBRUARY 2026

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

February 1: 4th Sunday after the Epiphany; Holy Communion

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn

Sermon: Called To Foolishness

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 18:31,
Matthew 5:1-12

February 8: 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

Preacher: Pastor Jen

Sermon: The Fast I Choose

Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-12;
Matthew 5:13-20

February 15: Transfiguration Sunday

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth

Sermon: On The Mountaintop

Scripture: Exodus 24:-12-18; Matthew 17:1-9

February 18: Ash Wednesday, Time 7:00 pm

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth

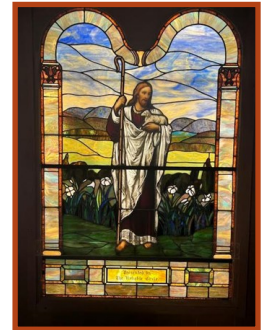
Music: Chancel Choir

February 22: 1st Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Pastor Jen

Sermon: Gaining Wisdom

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 and Matthew 4:1-11



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

This service is also available live on YouTube using the links on the Church's website.

Visit us on the Web:

www.fumceg.org

www.facebook.com/FUMCEG

Phone: (518) 477-9693

Fax: (518) 477-4336

Church Office Hours:

Beginning February 16

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

Email: office@fumceg.org

BELL (only) Email:

editor@fumceg.org

Announcements Email:

office@fumceg.org

Pastor

Rev. Mary Beth Blinn

Pastormarybeth@fumceg.org

Rev. Jennifer Williamson

Pastorjennifer@fumceg.org

Gail Welkley,

Administrative Assistant

Lauren Lehmann,

Sunday School Coordinator

LLehmann@fumceg.org

Martha Deyo, **Organist**

Robert Thomsen, **Choir Director**

Steve Green and Bob Rumsey
Custodians

GAIL IS RETIRING!

After 16 years of faithful service to our church community our administrative assistant, **Gail Welkley** will be beginning her well-deserved retirement in February 2026. Gail's last day in the office is scheduled for February 13, 2026.

We are deeply grateful for Gail's many years of dedication, commitment, and care for our congregation. Her presence has been a true blessing to our church family, and we wish her all the best as she begins this new chapter.

The SPPRC has begun the hiring process for the Administrative Assistant position. If you or someone you know may be interested in this part-time role, please contact Deb Rubenstein at drubenstein@fumceg.org or reach out to any SPPRC member for more information.



NEW CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

NEW OFFICE HOURS

New Office Hours beginning February 16th. 9:00 am-1:00 pm.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The next meeting of the United Women in Faith will be February 2 at 2:00 pm in room 5/6. All women of the church are welcome to attend. Even if you are not able to come to our monthly meetings but would like to receive the minutes of the meetings, we would be glad to add you to our email list to keep you apprised of what is happening. We are always happy to accommodate new members.

4TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY WIDE ART SHOW

Now's the time to mark your calendar to attend our joyful celebration of ART. Saturday, March 7, 2026, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm artists of all ages from the Capital Region will present their creative talents in areas of painting, photography, sculpture, pottery, drawings, fabric, needle work and other mediums. Many of the art pieces will be available for purchase too.

The afternoon also includes talented musicians in the Fellowship Hall sharing their relaxing "musical art" as you enjoy beverages from our "Harmony" Café while visiting with friends and families.

You might be enticed to purchase some of the delectable homemade baked goods too. Get your own creative juices flowing by stopping at one of our "DIY" art stations.

To create some interest and encourage children to participate in the art show, Amber Telford is offering a **FREE** children's workshop February 22 - 11:00 am at church.

To quote one of last year's attendees, "There are very few free events as fine as this one."

If you would like more information about this event or about entering your own art, email Beth Buckner at: artshow@fumceg.org



MADE BY HAND WITH LOVE OUTREACH MISSIONS FEBRUARY 2026

Our group will meet Tuesdays, February 10 and 24 at 10:00 am to 11:30 am in Rooms 5/6. This is a chance to get out with old and new friends. We will be working on hats and mittens for the Red Bird Mission boxes which will be filled in May as part of the Change The World program. If you don't do mittens...we can do that and you can make a hat to match.

Our newest gifts to make are yellow and/or white preemie hats 9" circumference by 4- 4 1/2 inches long.




These hats will be added to "Brinley's Bags". These are care packages designed to bring comfort to Capital Region NICU families. The bags include such things as Kleenex, notebooks, lifesavers etc. The tiny hats will be added to those bags as a token of hope from us. (check out the Facebook page for more info about other ways to help too) As always we continue to make afghans, shawls, and hats for kids with cancer. Contact us for specific requirements of sizes.

In the spring we will be making children's pillowcases for Ronald McDonald House. Each takes 1 Yard of cotton fabric. Looking for donations of fabric or \$\$ to buy fabric.


NAVIGATING CHANGE

LIFE, DEATH AND DIGNITY




JOIN US ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 AT 11:00 AM


FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1 GILLIGAN ROAD, E. GREENBUSH
FOR AN INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION.



*PRACTICAL PLANNING
EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT
NAVIGATING CARE CHOICES*



REV. JENNIFER WILIAMSON,
PASTOR/ CHAPLAIN, AND
JENNIFER SCHMIDT, NURSE PRACTIONER



ALL ARE WELCOME REFRESHMENTS
MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS MINISTRY

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 2026 Volume 28, Issue 2. **George Herrick**, Editor Emeritus; **Kathy Van Buren**, Editor; **Marian Smith**, Envelope Labeler.

FROM THE ECO TEAM

Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act (PRRIA) (NY Senate Bill 1464/NY Assembly Bill 1749). Plastics are made from a combination of chemicals and fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas). Over 16,000 chemicals are used to make plastics, which is one of the reasons only 6% of plastics are recycled in the U.S.



Microplastics and nano plastics have been found in the human heart, brain, liver, kidney, both reproductive organs, breast milk. We are still trying to understand the health impact of ingesting plastic but initial findings indicate microplastics contribute to cancer, dementia, and preterm births, among other health issues. The plastics crisis affects poor and marginalized communities more than any other groups. Communities living near chemical and plastic producing plants, as well as incinerators and landfills, face higher rates of cancer, asthma, childhood leukemia, low birth weight, and other serious health issues.

The PRRIA establishes a statewide Extended Producer Responsibility program for almost all packaging. It will:

- Reduce plastic packaging by 30% in 12 years
- Require remaining packaging to be recycled or reused effectively
- Make companies pay municipalities for waste management of packaging
- Reduce toxic chemicals, thus bringing protections for communities and consumers
- Prohibit the false solution of “chemical recycling” from counting toward recycling targets

The United Methodist Book of Resolutions states:

- “It is important that the church provides information on the chemicals we encounter so that those we buy are as safe as possible and our disposal of the same is least harmful to the environment.”
- “We encourage measures to minimize the use of toxic and hazardous substances, strengthen right to know policies so that individuals and community can understand threats from pollution and support policies that hold polluters responsible for the cost of cleanup and health impacts.”

The Social Principles in the Book of Discipline state:

- “We are called to practice responsible stewardship, and to live in right relationship with the Creator and with the whole of God’s creation.”
- “Producers must be responsible for their adverse impact on food packaging, distribution and transport.”
- “We further believe churches have a right and responsibility to educate and equip their members to be effective advocates for justice in the wider world.”

In December, in consideration of the immense cost of managing plastic packaging waste, the serious health impacts caused by plastic production and the guidance provided in the UM Book of Resolutions and UM Social Principles, the Church Council approved a resolution to communicate to our representatives our support for passage of the PRRIA. A copy of the approved resolution is posted on the Eco Team bulletin board.



COMING SOON

Our 13th Annual Change the World!
Save the Month of May
See John Schmidt For Suggestions, Ideas
Planning Meeting in February



The graphic features a central white circle containing the text and a megaphone. The background is a blue and yellow sunburst pattern with a white dot grid. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The megaphone is blue and white. The logo at the bottom is a globe with the words 'CHANGE THE WORLD' in blue and green.

STORYTELLING NIGHT KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY

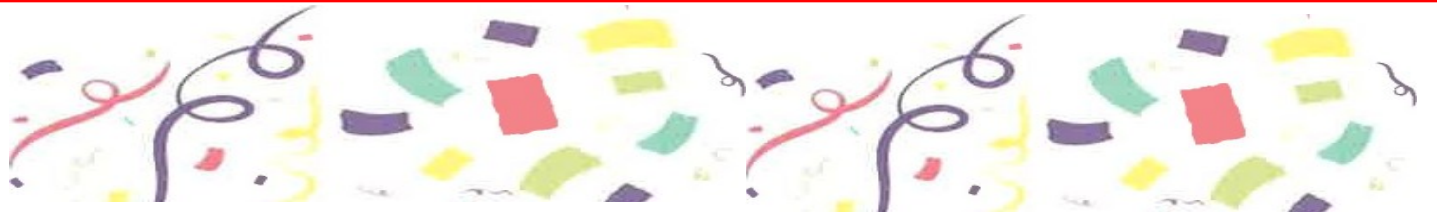


WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 7:00 PM

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1 GILLIGAN ROAD
EAST GREENBUSH, NY

GEORGE HERRICK WILL SHARE HIS EXPERIENCES
WITH PRISON MINISTRY. PLEASE JOIN US!

ALL WELCOME-REFRESHMENTS & DOOR PRIZES



CHILDREN'S CREATIVE WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

11:00 am

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1 GILLIGAN ROAD
EAST GREENBUSH, NY 12061**

Open to children of all ages.
Help nurture the creativity within
Your child

RSVP via email:
artshow@fumceg.org

THIS EVENT IS FREE





COME SHARE YOUR CREATIVE TALENTS

AT THE

4TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY ART SHOW

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026—2:00 PM TO 4:00 PM

SPONSORED BY

THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1 GILLIGAN ROAD, EAST GREENBUSH, NY 12061

Children's Art Encouraged
No entry fee for Children under 18

\$10 adult placement fee for up to 3 entries.

Scholarships are available.

You may sell your work!

For more information email: artshow@fumceg.org

Mediums include but not limited to oil, acrylic, watercolor, pottery, wood, sculpture, mosaic, drawing, quilting/fabric, needle work, photography, all mixed media



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Last month, an appeal was sent out for our local food pantries: CoNSERNS-U and The Anchor by our Missions Ministry. Once again, our generous congregation came to the rescue! \$940 was received, which will be split between the two food pantries. The Missions Ministry and all those who benefit from the food pantries thank you for your donations and for thinking of others experiencing difficult times