



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061

We Are A Reconciling Congregation



VOLUME 28 ISSUE 3 - MARCH 2026

◆ **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

Administrative Assistant

Lauren Lehmann,

Sunday School Coordinator

LLehmann@fumceg.org

Martha Deyo, **Organist**

Robert Thomsen, **Choir Director**

Steve Green and Bob Rumsey
Custodians



We have entered the season that prepares us for Easter. These forty days of Lent (not counting Sundays) are a time for reflection, confession, serving, and remembering. As we journey together at FUMC, Pastor Jen and I invite you to join us in worship at 9:30 am each Sunday and create space on your calendar for each of the special Holy Week services that are being planned. Lent can also be a time of sacrificial giving. How will God guide you to support the Roof Fund that is being announced during this season or second-mile gift to our church's budgeted ministries? These days are the holiest of days. How wonderful that we can mark them together.

Pastor Mary Beth

WORSHIP DURING LENT

March 1: Second Sunday in Lent, Holy Communion

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn

Sermon: "The Gospel in Miniature"

Scripture: Psalm 121; John 3:1-17

March 8: Third Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Pastor Jen Williamson

Sermon: "Deep Dive"

Scripture: John 4:5-42

March 15: Fourth Sunday in Lent; One Great Hour of Sharing
Pretzel Sunday

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn

Sermon: "Called by God"

Scripture: I Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23

March 22: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn

Sermon: "Life and Death"

Scripture: John 13:1-17, 31-35

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

March 29: 9:30 in the Sanctuary - **Palm/Passion Sunday**

Procession with Palms, musical offerings by the Chancel Choir and Sanctuary Choir
Dramatic reading of the Story of Jesus' Passion

April 2: 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall - **Holy Thursday**

Holy Communion, Foot Washing service for those who would like to participate
Worship leader: Pastor Jen Williamson
Musical Offering by Sanctuary Choir ensemble

April 2, 8:00 pm - April 3, 3:00 pm - Prayer Vigil

This is the link to sign up for the prayer vigil: <https://forms.gle/Hz2dmQ5roJkm7qZJ9>

You are invited to offer prayer for yourself, your family, our church, nation and world from your home or at the church (Friday, 9:00 am -3:00 pm). Sign-ups coming for at church or online.

April 3: 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary - **Good Friday**

Choir Cantata: "The Lenten Sketches" by Joseph M. Martin
Music, narration and projected art convey the last days of Jesus' life

April 5: 6:30 am in the Outdoor Chapel - **Easter Sunrise Service** (Inclement weather: Sanctuary)

Worship leaders: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn and Robert Thomsen

9:30 am in the Sanctuary - **Easter Worship Service**

Worship leaders: Rev. Mary Beth Blinn and Rev. Jen Williamson
Musical offering: Sanctuary Choir

APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

It is my joy to share with you today that Bishop Héctor A. Burgos-Núñez has appointed Rev. Debbie Earthrowl as the new pastor of our congregation. Debbie will begin her new responsibilities on July 1st. We are a part of an itinerant appointment system. We have met with Debbie to get to know her and to ask questions.

Debbie is currently completing her time as our District Superintendent, and is excited to return to pastoral ministry. She writes in her profile: I consider it a privilege to serve congregations and communities as we seek ways to welcome all, grow in faith and discipleship, and bear witness to God's truly amazing grace and mercy available to all. I appreciate the sense of belonging that a faith community fosters, and the way God continues to call and equip us all to be about God's mission in particular places, using the unique passions and gifts that each one brings.

Our new pastor will work with us and the conference so that we continue to nurture disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Bishop Burgos-Núñez, our district superintendent, and the Upper New York Conference leaders will work with us to continue growing as a congregation. I know you will join our bishop, our new pastor, and me in helping to make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In the coming months, Rev Earthrowl will be working with Pastor Blinn and Pastor Williamson to ensure a smooth transition. She will be meeting with leadership committees within our congregation as part of this process. The congregation will also have many opportunities to get to know Rev. Earthrowl through meet-and-greet gatherings during the first three months of her appointment. I hope you will join me in warmly welcoming Rev. Debbie Earthrowl to our church community. If you would like to welcome Rev. Earthrowl, cards and notes can be sent to 46 Grey Fox Drive, Fort Edward, NY 12828.

Best regards,
Deb Rubenstein
SPPRC Chair

UMCOR SUNDAY

March 15

UMCOR Sunday seeks to increase awareness and support for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Gifts given on UMCOR Sunday play a vital role in enhancing the church's global humanitarian response because these funds cover UMCOR's administrative costs. Your support ensures that 100% of donations given to UMCOR throughout the year can be directed toward on-the-ground relief and recovery efforts, allowing UMCOR to effectively respond to crises and provide assistance where it's needed most.

TIME TO ORDER EASTER LILIES OR TULIPS

6" Easter Lilies cost \$12.00 each and 6" Tulips cost \$8.00 each.

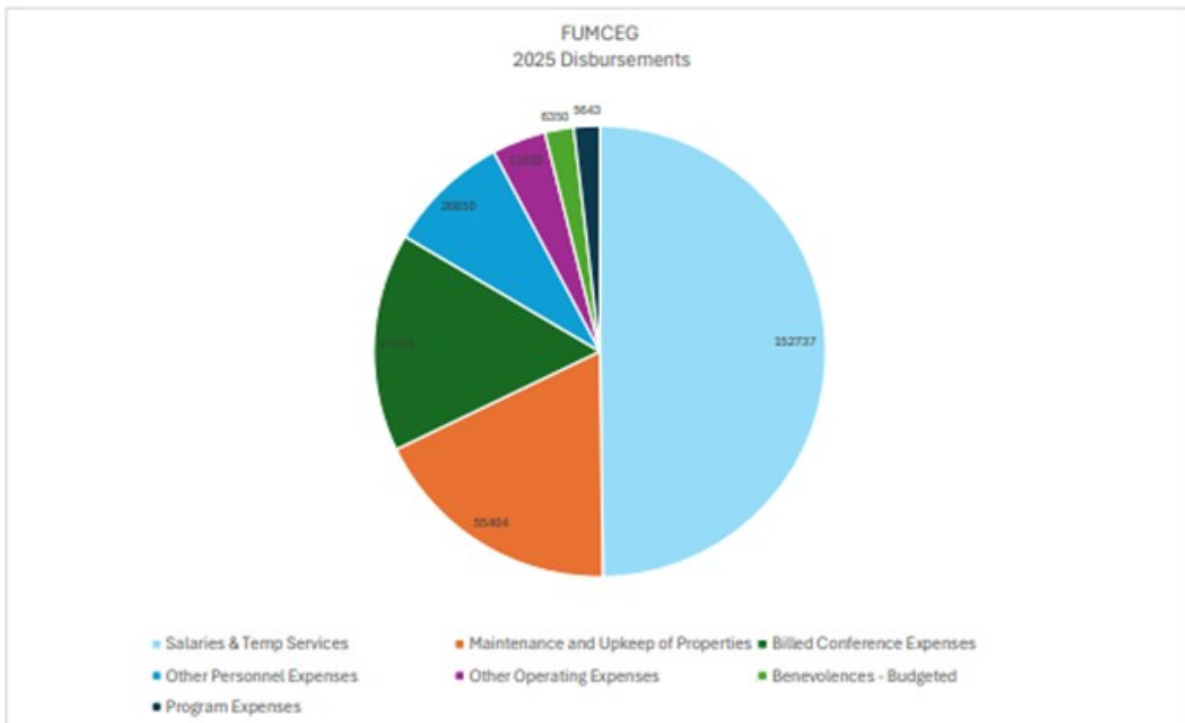
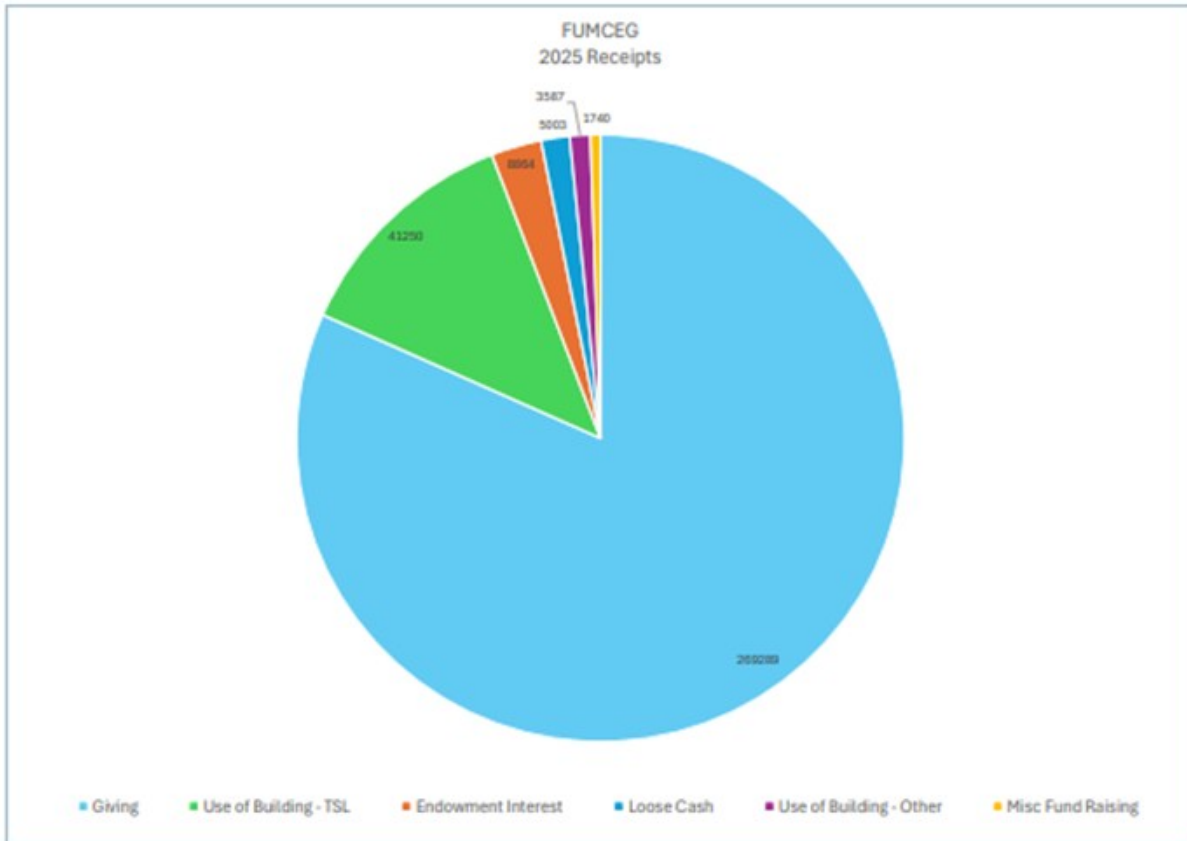
Please write your order on this sheet and make checks payable to the
"United Women in Faith."

Orders must be received in the church office no later than
Sunday, March 31, 2025. Please call the church office at
518-477-9693 with any questions. Thank you.



FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Below is a graph indicating the breakdown of how your donations to our church are distributed.



BUILDING PROJECT

Dear Members and Friends of The First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush, we need your help!

Sections of the Church roof are now in excess of thirty years old. We have been blessed by the efforts of past generations who have provided us with this wonderful facility to worship and congregate in. It is up to us to see that it continues to be maintained. Recent visits to the Church will have revealed our new hallway decorations, gray buckets on the floor and ceiling insulation where tiles are missing. Each is the result of roof leaks.

The cost to replace the complete flat roof section is estimated to be \$175,000, a daunting number. The Trustees are proposing that the project be divided into thirds. The first area to be undertaken is the space where we have been experiencing the greatest problems over the years. This includes the lobby area and the corridor running down the front of the Education wing from the outside wall to the courtyard wall, approximately 6,200 square feet. The cost to replace this section is \$52,000 with the possibility that it may increase slightly if insulation materials that are presently under the existing roof need to be replaced. It is our desire to undertake this work this summer.

The solution to accomplishing this goal lies with all of us. We ask that you prayerfully consider your ability to contribute funds over the next months so that we can see this project successfully completed. Should we raise more than is needed we will increase the amount of roof area we replace.

Your gift can be made in a number of ways. If by check please mark "Roof" in the memo line and either place in the collection plate or mail to the Church. If cash please place in a pew envelope and mark "Roof" on the outside. If online please designate the funds are for the "Roof". No gift is too small, together as a congregation, we can work to achieve our goal over the next few months.

Sincerely yours,

John A Peterson President of the Board of Trustees
Arthur Sanderson Head of the Finance Committee
Colleen M Rumsey Chair of the Church Council

LUNCH DURING LENT

March 25, 2026 at 12:00 noon

You are each invited to join together for a Soup and Sandwich Lunch During Lent at noon Wednesday, March 25 in Fellowship Hall. We will also have our Famous Fruit Salad and Desserts. Pastor Mary Beth Blinn will provide a devotional. After a long, white winter this is a great opportunity to meet up with old and new friends and share God's love. We have also invited other local churches to celebrate the season with us, so we hope to have a crowd. Please come!!

Please call Mary Smith 518-477-4648 to let us know you are coming (for a head count for the menu) and bring a guest. We will **not** be making personal calls for this lunch.

MISSIONS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



At the last Church Council meeting on February 11, a discussion was held about the national unrest in our country. Immigration is one of many complicated topics that we endeavor to understand. We believe that we are called to make sense of the world, and as Christians and Methodists to listen to our hearts. Our Church Council encourages us to seek the truth and discern what God asks of us. We believe that The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church can be a useful tool to that end. The Social Principles express The United Methodist Church's official positions

on societal issues, casting a vision for a just and equitable world. The booklet can be ordered from Cokesbury or viewed online at umcjustice.org/documents.

Following is an excerpt from the Social Principles on Migrants, Immigrants and Refugees. We affirm the dignity, worth and rights of migrants, immigrants and refugees, including displaced and stateless people. In so doing, we acknowledge that the world today is facing an unprecedented crisis related to the displacement of vast numbers of people due to such factors as ongoing wars and other hostilities, foreign interventions, widespread famine and hunger, global warming and climate change, and the failure of nation-states to adequately protect and care for their people. We recognize that displaced people are particularly vulnerable as their in-between status often provides them with few protections and benefits, leaving them open to exploitation, violence and abuse. We urge United Methodists to welcome migrants, refugees, and immigrants into their congregations and to commit themselves to providing concrete support, including help with navigating restrictive and often lengthy immigration policies, and assistance with securing food, housing, education, employment and other kinds of support. We oppose all laws and policies that attempt to criminalize, dehumanize or punish displaced individuals and families based on their status as migrants, immigrants or refugees. Additionally, we decry attempts to detain displaced people and hold them in inhumane and unsanitary conditions. We challenge policies that call for the separation of families, especially parents and minor children, and we oppose the existence of for-profit detention centers for such purposes.



FROM THE ECO TEAM

Repair Café

The Eco Team is collaborating with the Village of Castleton to hold a Repair Café on March 14th from 10am–2 pm. It will be held at the Firehouse on 11 Green Ave. A Repair Café is a community event where volunteer Repair Coaches help you bring new life to a loved item that has been broken, ripped, stopped working or become dull. The Coaches show you how to restore items and save them from the landfill. Kinds of items you can bring:

- Lamps, vacuums, clocks, small appliances, electrical items
- Computers and digital devices
- Sewing - clothing and textiles, dolls, stuffed animals, dog toys, shirts, buttons, zippers, backpacks, cushions
- Children's bikes
- Tools for sharpening
- Chairs and other small wood furniture repair



ST. PATRICK’S DAY COFFEE HOUSE

March 20, 2026

7:00-8:30

”Why shouldn’t you iron a four leaf clover?

You don’t want to press your luck!”

The St. Patrick’s Day Coffee House promises to be an evening of uplifting music, stories, Irish jokes, friends and scrumptious snacks. This is the last Coffee House of the season and we hope to see you there. Proceeds from the entrance basket go to our Family Assistance Ministries to help local families with a variety of needs.



STEWARDSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

The Missions and Social Responsibility Committee (MSRC) received \$6,000 in the church budget in 2025 and distributed the money among charitable organizations. The table below shows the percentage of distributed dollars by the populations the organizations served. A third (33%) of the money went to people who are impoverished. A third (33%) went to those who are food or housing insecure. The remaining third was sent to organizations serving victims of disaster or domestic violence, refugees, persons buying their first home and persons unable to read.

Target Group (People who are...)	Spent
impoverished	33%
lacking nourishment	17%
housing insecure	15%
victims of disaster	13%
refugees	11%
buying first home	4%
victims of domestic violence	4%
unable to read	3%

Another way to view the distribution of MSRC funds is by geography. Just over half (51%) of the money went to local or regional organizations. An additional thirteen percent went to organizations serving people in the U.S. The remaining funds went to organizations serving people around the world.

Geography	Distribution
Local	43%
Regional	8%
National	13%
Global	38%
GRAND TOTAL	100%

But this picture is incomplete. It does not include the distribution of money you contributed to the CROP Hunger Walk, the Church-wide Christmas Card, UMC Special Sunday collections, the food and other donations made during Change The World or dropped in bins throughout the year or donations made by Women In Faith.



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

Community Art Show

Saturday, March 7, 2026
2 - 4 pm

STOP BY TO VIEW OUR GALLERY,
VISIT HARMONY CAFE TO
LISTEN TO LOCAL MUSICAL TALENT,
ENJOYING FRESH BAKED GOODS OR
CREATE AT THE ART STATION.

SOME
Artists'
WORK IS FOR SALE.

Free
ADMISSION





STORYTELLING NIGHT

KIMBERLY CARLOCK
NY CONNECTS COORDINATOR

TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:

- FIND CARE AND SUPPORT
- REMAIN INDEPENDENT
- UNDERSTAND CARE OPTIONS
- LEARN ABOUT SUPPORTS IN CARE GIVING
- GET ANSWERS ABOUT MEDICARE AND MEDICAID
- APPLY FOR BENEFITS SUCH AS HEAP AND SNAP
- GET HELP WITH FREE TAX PREPARATION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4
7:00 PM



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

of Rensselaer County

(800) 342-9871 518-270-2767

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1 GILLIGAN ROAD
EAST GREENBUSH, NY

ALL ARE WELCOME REFRESHMENTS DOOR PRIZES

Meet our new Administrative Assistant

Katelyn Flintrop

SPPRC is excited to welcome Katelyn Flintrop to our church community. We can't wait for everyone to meet Katelyn. She will begin her duties on March 2nd. Stop in and say hello, and make her feel at home.

The next Spotlight on Staff is coming in April. Who will it be?

