



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061

We Are A Reconciling Congregation



VOLUME 28 ISSUE 5 - MAY 2026

◆ **8:30 am** Outdoor Chapel Service
July & August

◆ **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

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Martha Deyo, **Organist**

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WORSHIP AT FUMC IN MAY

May 3: 5th Sunday of Easter; Holy
Communion

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth Blinn

Sermon: "Labor Pains of Creation"

Scripture : Psalm 104: 1-4, 10-23, 31-33;
Romans 8:18-25

May 10: 6th Sunday of Easter;
Mother's Day

Preacher: Pastor Jen Williamson

Sermon "Loved"

Scripture: I Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

May 17: 7th Sunday of Easter: CHANGE THE WORLD SUNDAY

Preacher: Pastor May Beth

Sermon: "You Are the Body"

Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-23

May 24: Pentecost Sunday

Preacher: Pastor Jen

Sermon: "Fire"

Scripture: Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23

May 31: Trinity Sunday; Peace with Justice Sunday

Preacher: Pastor Mary Beth

Sermon "Instructions for the Journey"

Scripture: Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13;
Matthew 28:16-20



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JEN



From the first time I read the newsletter, I could tell this is an active congregation where people are investing in their community through service to God. But I was surprised to see, listed among the dinners and children's activities: "Mental Health Matters." I was impressed that there would be a group in the church devoted to mental health awareness and care.

And that is what the group is about. I have been part of this group and have loved the energy, brainstorming and care toward the mental and emotional needs of the church and the community. The group is always looking for ways to promote mental, spiritual and emotional health in the congregation. And there is a meeting point between those areas. I would also add physical to that list as it is all interconnected. And there are a lot of things in this world that can make health (mental, emotional, spiritual and physical) difficult to find.

One of the theories in psychology that I believe meets that intersection of mental, spiritual, emotional and physical health is called Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. This was developed by Dr. Steven Hayes in the world of psychology and is based on the idea that when we try to avoid difficult feelings like anxiety and fear, we actually become more tense, anxious and depressed. The idea is to let ourselves feel the feelings and not push against them, let them wash over us, and continue to live in a way that aligns with our values. For me as a Christian, this is what prayer, meditation and mindfulness can do. In prayer, we become vulnerable, bearing our most difficult thoughts, feelings and worries, but we do so with trust, trusting that God will not leave us there and that the Holy Spirit will sustain us.

My Spiritual Director, Mary Deturris Poust, once suggested to me a prayer put together by Cynthia Bourgeault called "The Welcoming Practice." I have found this to be a very challenging and also meaningful spiritual practice. I have also found it to encompass the ideas behind Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, mindfulness and contemplative prayer. Here is an explanation of the Welcoming Prayer from Wisdom Waypoints (wisdomwaypoints.org). I hope that in these uncertain and stressful times, this might offer you a way to connect with yourself, the world around you and the Holy Spirit all while wrapped in the loving embrace of God who never abandons us, even when we feel like the darkness is closing in.

"The Welcome Practice has three steps:

- **Focus or 'sink in'** to become aware and physically present to the particular experience or upset. Bring your attention to what is happening *as sensation in your body*. Without analyzing or judging yourself or your state, inwardly tune into what is happening as the physical embodiment of the experience.
- **Welcome and lightly name the response** that is being triggered by the difficult situation (such as "fear" or "anger" or "pain"). Acknowledge the response as sensation, and recognize that in this moment, if the experience is not being rejected or repressed, it can be endured. Ever so gently, begin to say 'welcome' (such as "welcome fear", etc...) Though this step is counter-intuitive and the impulse is most likely to try to push away the unpleasant emotion, Cynthia explains,
- **Transition to a 'letting go'**, whereby the intensity of the situation can recede. This enables the natural fluidity of sensation to come and then go. In the classic welcoming practice methodology there are then four statements that you can employ and recite to yourself at this stage:
 - I let go of my desire for security and survival.
 - I let go of my desire for esteem and affection.
 - I let go of my desire for power and control.
 - I let go of my desire to change the situation.



STORYTELLING NIGHT
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 7 PM

REV. MARY BETH BLINN

WAS APPOINTED TO SERVE AS A MISSIONARY PASTOR
IN THE RED BIRD MISSIONARY CONFERENCE FROM
1989-1998. SHE AND HER FAMILY LIVED IN HARLAN
COUNTY, KY FOR 9 YEARS SERVING 3 CHURCHES,
ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY. SHE WILL SHARE HER
EXPERIENCES. PLEASE JOIN US!



ALL ARE WELCOME REFRESHMENTS DOOR PRIZES

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Beginning Sunday, April 25, the United Women In Faith will be collecting used clothes that will be donated through a company in New Jersey to low income people. Please have your items in a plastic “trash” bag tied securely. When we have a sufficient number of bags, we will call the company to pick them up. All money collected will go towards the roof of the church or any other major project the church is in need of. We have decided not to have thrift sales, as our workforce are aging and not able to work the long hours it takes to make a thrift sale possible.



The chicken BBQ was a huge success. We made \$1,296. Thank you to all who helped make our BBQ a success.

There is jewelry left over from our last Thrift Sale. It is displayed in the church's library. Anything you wish to purchase is a donation—whatever you wish to give. We would especially like the children to shop for a gift for Mother's Day.

MADE BY HAND WITH LOVE MISSION

We are winding down for the season. We will meet May 12 to collect all items of Afghans for the VA and Hospice, Shawls for ALS Patients, and Hat/Mitten Sets for Red Bird Mission all, to be distributed in May. Hats for hatsgiving.org will be kept until November. Visit our table at the Food Truck Festival Saturday, May 16. And our last get together for the season is May 26.

Also on May 12 at 10:00 am we will have a speaker to discuss the needs and efforts on behalf of local Refugees and Immigrants. Kenneth Scallon of St. Mary's Nassau and his wife Mary from the UMW at Grace United Methodist Church have been collecting sewing machines, personal goods, diapers etc., which are delivered to US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants through R.I.S.S.E. Kenneth will let us know about other ways to reach out to help these new neighbors. Everyone is welcome to join this conversation.



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The CoNCERNS-U food pantry is in need of the following items - Jar spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, condiments, coffee, shampoo, conditioner, bath soap/wash laundry soap.

Please place your donations in the designated bin under the table in the foyer of the church. Thank you.

The MoonCatcher Project seeks to remove barriers related to menstruation. In Africa we fight period poverty by funding sewing cooperatives where women earn an income producing “MoonCatcher” Menstrual Management Kits. These kits are given free of charge to schoolgirls who might otherwise miss school during their periods because they don't have access to menstrual products. Here in our community many people struggle to afford period products. Our “Period Pantries” (think little free libraries only stocked with menstrual supplies) are located around the region and provide free menstrual supplies to anyone in need. No one should have to miss school or work because they cannot afford menstrual products. Visit us at www.mooncatcher.org

Please see the flier on page 3 for information on how you can help make these kits during our Change The World Sunday on May 17.



The MoonCatcher Project
Removing Barriers for Girls

JOIN US FOR A MOONBEE!

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

THE MOONCATCHER PROJECT MAKES REUSABLE, WASHABLE MENSTRUAL MANAGEMENT KITS TO HELP GIRLS IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES AVOID A DISRUPTION IN THEIR EDUCATION. MOONBEES ARE SEWING BEES WITH JOBS FOR EVERYONE TO HELP. KITS ARE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. ALL MATERIALS ARE PROVIDED AND NO SEWING EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY. IF YOU CAN SPARE AN HOUR, WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU JOIN US. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT MOONCATCHER.ORG.

SUNDAY, MAY 17 **10 AM-NOON**

ALL ARE WELCOME NO ADVANCE REGISTRATION NECESSARY

DID YOU KNOW THAT WE'RE CHANGING THE WORLD?!

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NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION

**JOIN OUR YOUTH MAKING BIRDHOUSES FOR
COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON SUNDAY, MAY 17, 10 AM
SEE LAUREN LEHMANN
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1 GILLIGAN ROAD, EAST GREENBUSH, NY
518.477.9693**



Your paragraph text here

Did you know that We're Changing the World?!

LET'S HELP
EACH OTHER
WITH OUR
**FOOD
DRIVE**



**SPREAD LOVE &
KINDNESS TOGETHER**

Imagine the smiles you'll create by providing nourishing meals to families and individuals who are facing difficult times. Let's contribute to our event!

MAY 1 - MAY 17

**NON-PERISHABLE FOODS,
ESPECIALLY SOUP, CANNED
TUNA AND CHICKEN, PEANUT
BUTTER AND JELLY, AND COFFEE.**

Drop-off Location:

First United Methodist Church, 1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, NY

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

A heartfelt thank you to Steve, Bobby, Katelyn, Robert, Marty, Lauren, Colleen, Robin, Kaitlin, Pastor Jen, and Pastor Mary Beth for your dedication and faithful service during Lent and Holy Week. Your time, talents, leadership, and care help make our worship services and church community so meaningful, and we are deeply grateful for all you do.



Spotlight on Staff

With gratitude,
Deb Rubenstein, SPRC Chair

