



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061

We Are A Reconciling Congregation



VOLUME 28 ISSUE 7 - SUMMER 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

Phone: (518) 477-9693

Fax: (518) 477-4336

Church Summer Office Hours:

9:00 am to 12:00 pm M-F

Email: office@fumceg.org

BELL (only) Email:

editor@fumceg.org

Announcements Email:

office@fumceg.org

Rev. Deb Earthrowl

Pastor

Katelyn Flintrop,

Administrative Assistant

Lauren Lehmann,

Sunday School Coordinator

LLehmann@fumceg.org

Martha Deyo,
Organist

Robert Thomsen,
Choir Director

Steve Green and Bob Rumsey
Custodians

We had a busy Sunday worshipping together! It was Children's Sunday and we celebrated our two wonderful Pastors—Mary Beth and Jen—as they end their ministry with us. Thank you both so much for your leadership and friendship these past 10 months!



SUMMER LECTIONARY

July 5: 6th Sunday after Pentecost: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30



July 12: 7th Sunday after Pentecost: Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19: 8th Sunday After Pentecost: Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 2-24; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26: 9th Sunday After Pentecost: Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

August 2: 10th Sunday After Pentecost: Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21

August 9: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b; Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33

August 16: 12th Sunday After Pentecost: Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133; Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

August 23: 13th Sunday After Pentecost: Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124; Romans 12:108; Matthew 16:13-20

August 30: 14th Sunday After Pentecost: Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

MADE BY HAND WITH LOVE OUTREACH MISSIONS

SUMMER JULY/AUGUST 2026

Our group will meet Tuesdays July 14, 24, August 11, 25 from 10:00-11:30. Looking for a small project?? We will be making Sesame Street Hats and Bluey Hats for hatsgiving.org for kids with cancer. All of our hats will be delivered locally in early November before Thanksgiving. As always we continue to make afghans 48"x48" for Hospice and Veterans at the VA Hospital, and shawls for ALS patients.

If you or someone you know would like to learn to knit or crochet, contact us and we can make arrangements over the summer. Materials will be supplied. We would love to introduce a new skill to students/parents.

aschweigert@fumceg.org or rwheeler@fumceg.org



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Saturday, July 11th from 8:30-1:00

Save the date and give your gift of life. Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.

1-800-RED CROSS or redcrossblood.org sponsor code: Eastgreenbush



**American
Red Cross**

CHANGE THE WORLD 2026

Our thirteenth annual Change the World was very successful. Once again, we filled the month of May with many activities all designed to share God's love. We were blessed to have several project coordinators who willingly donated their time and effort. We are also grateful to have a Church Council, Pastor, and congregation that eagerly support this event each year. Our projects included: a food drive that supported the VA Center in Albany, a Moonbee that created washable, reusable feminine hygiene kits for girls in third world countries, potting and distribution of plants for residents of Van Rensselaer Heights, assistance in developing a garden area with and for residents of Van Rensselaer Heights, making and donating hats, mittens and scarves for our Red Bird Missions Shoebox Project, filling and donating 43 shoeboxes for our Red Bird Missions Project based in Kentucky, making 6 bluebird houses which are being distributed to church members and residents of senior housing facilities, providing a concert by our sanctuary choir for residents of Hawthorne Ridge, providing a Food Truck Festival for community members, providing a delicious brunch for Change the World Sunday participants, and decorating pots for plants.

Project coordinators included: Lorraine Beals, Carrie Larson, Aleta Schweigert, Regina Wheeler, Lauren Lehmann and Kim Gattie.

We spent \$693.31 on supplies and expenses with a budget of \$700. It should be noted that our project coordinators provided financial assistance for projects without requesting reimbursement.

A donation of \$100 was made to the Endwell United Methodist Church for their generous gift of picking up our shoeboxes for storage at their church until delivery to Kentucky in the fall. Cost of mailing the shoeboxes ourselves would have been prohibitive.

Submitted by John Schmidt, CTW Event Coordinator



CHANGE THE WORLD 2026

OUR GRADUATES



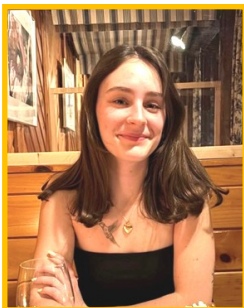
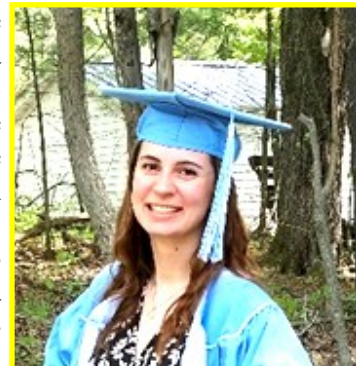
Bobby Rumsey is graduating from Columbia High School and is the son of Kevin and Colleen Rumsey. He was the starting goalie for the Section 2 Champs Columbia Boys' Varsity Soccer team this past fall. Bobby has spent the past few years as the Assistant Custodian at Church. In the

fall, Bobby will be attending SUNY Oneonta, majoring in Political Science. He plans on attending law school after finishing his undergraduate studies.

Emily Clark graduated from UNC Chapel Hill in December 2025 with

a Bachelor's Degree in Neuroscience and a minor in chemistry. She has since moved back to the Capital District and was hired by Eurofins Professional Scientific services as a Quality Control Microbiologist. She is engaged to Tyler

Long and they are planning to be married at Skye Farm in September 2027.



Elizabeth (Libby) Daly of Averill Park graduated summa cum laude from SUNY Plattsburgh in May, majoring in Ecology. She is working as a Stewardship Technician this summer, marking the boundaries of Hudson Taconic Lands properties and helping with other projects such as invasive species management and research. Libby is the daughter of Jennifer Schmidt and Scott Daly. Her grandparents are Janet and John

Kevin Clark graduated from HVCC on Saturday, May 16, 2026. He graduated with an Associates Degree in Biotechnology with a 4.0 GPA. While at HVCC, he was employed as a teacher's assistant with the program he was studying. Kevin will be working as a staff supervisor this summer at Skye Farm Camp. In the fall, Kevin is excited to announce he will be attending Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore! He will major in Molecular Biology.



Grace Naef, granddaughter of Susan and Henry Naef and niece of Justin Naef and Robert Thomsen, graduated from Russell Sage College with a Master's Degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

She will be certified as a registered Dietician after completing a 12 month internship.

Claire Elizabeth Naef, granddaughter of Susan and Henry Naef and niece of Justin Naef and Robert Thomsen, graduated summa cum laude from the University of Tennessee with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Animal Science. She was accepted into the University of Tennessee Veterinary College and will continue her studies there for the next four years pursuing her DVM degree.





LOOKING FOR HOSTS!

Would you be interested in hosting a small gathering to welcome and meet our new pastor? The Transition Team is seeking volunteers to host small groups of parishioners, neighbors, family, and friends to spend time getting to know Pastor Debbie. These gatherings are intended to complement — not replace — the larger congregation-wide “Quick Connect” event on July 14.

Gatherings may take place at the church, in your home, at a park, or at a café — evenings, weekends, or daytime, whatever works best for you. Pastor Debbie has requested that gatherings be kept to 5–7 people or up to 3 families with children.

We hope to schedule these gatherings throughout July, August, and September. Once we have a list of volunteers, we will coordinate dates and times with Pastor Debbie.

If you are interested in hosting, please contact Katelyn Flintrop, Administrative Assistant, by email at office@fumceg.org or by phone at 518-477-9693. Katelyn will work with you and Pastor Debbie to arrange a date and time. A sign-up sheet will also be available in the foyer during the summer months.

Thank you for helping us warmly welcome Pastor Debbie into our church community!

Submitted by: Transition Team: Deb Rubenstein, Justin Naef, Kaitlin Morton-Bentley, Jean Sheviak and Colleen Rumsey



Upper New York Annual Conference Report

Annual Conference was held in Syracuse from May 28 - May 30, 2026. The theme of this year's conference was Rise Up!

Love Boldly! The focus was on loving each other, our neighbors, and the world and that through love we can heal wounds and transform lives. It was a wonderful three days of worship, work, singing, dancing, and celebrating and loving God all together!



Bishop Burgos-Nunez highlighted several themes in his Episcopal Address including resilience, innovation, and generosity. He challenged us with these truths – small does not equal weaker, fewer does not equal not enough, and different does not equal less than. He stated that “healthy, impactful ministry is possible at every

church size.”

He highlighted challenges that he has seen in our Conference. The first is the loss of Spiritual Vitality. We have forgotten what matters the most – loving God and loving our neighbors. He noted that prayer is foundational and we must rekindle our focus on it. He next spoke about Paralyzing Nostalgia. We look backward at the way we remember “how things used to be” instead of looking forward. We need to let go of what is no longer working but carry the wisdom of what we have done in the past forward. The third challenge is Insularism. We turn inward during challenging times to protect what’s left instead of turning outward. Avoiding the world’s pain is not faithful discipleship and Jesus is sending us outward. The fourth challenge discussed was Missional Humility. We need to surrender to the mission and that it belongs to God and not us. We are stewards of the mission, not the owners of it. We need to have the vision to impact generations, not just right now.

Conference also highlighted the report of the Visioning Task Force. This project sought input for clergy, laity, conference leaders, staff, ministry partners, and community members. The report had several immediate recommendations, including: working to rebuild trust between local churches and Conference; streamlining Conference communications and access to resources; reducing the administrative burdens on local churches due to Conference forms; and strengthening connection and support for clergy and congregational leaders by prioritizing pastoral care for clergy and congregational leaders and re-instituting district or sub-district gatherings.

For longer term goals, the report highlighted strategic adaptive shifts, like moving to a Collaborative Parish model. A network of churches would work together, sharing resources, missions, and possibly facilities. Another long-term goal is to encourage leaders to experiment with innovative forms of church to connect with people who do not participate in traditional church. A third long-term goal discussed is potential coordination and collaboration with the Susquehanna Conference in Pennsylvania.

We also adopted resolutions during the Plenary Sessions. Those resolutions include the closing of 15 churches in our Conference; increasing the minimum clergy salary by 3% and changing how the increments for years of service are calculated; and reducing the number of districts from 12 to six, with the boundaries of the districts to be set by the cabinet at a later date.

Thank you for trusting me to be our representative at Annual Conference this year. It was a great opportunity to see our larger Church in action, make connections, and be part of a large group of people coming together to worship Jesus.

Thanks,
Colleen Rumsey
Church Council Chair and Lay Member to Annual Conference

What is Quick Connect? This conference initiative is designed to encourage positive and effective communication between a newly appointed pastor and the congregation. The event will be held on **Tuesday, July 14, from 5:30–8:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.** Pastor Nick Buffano of Newtonville United Methodist Church will serve as facilitator alongside SPRC Chair Deb Rubenstein. During the evening, Pastor Debbie will share her goals and vision for the coming year. Congregation members will also have the opportunity to ask questions and share their experiences, hopes, and gifts for ministry. All are welcome to attend! Refreshments will be served during the Quick Connect gathering. Please join us as we warmly welcome Pastor Debbie.



BELL RINGERS NEEDED



The EmBellishments, our wonderful handbell choir, are looking for new members or substitutes. No experience is necessary, we would be happy to teach you. Practice begins on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm in September. We usually play once a month at church. Please contact Robin Uhr if you are interested, her number is 518-766-3225 or email is JUhr@nycap.rr.com or Robinwuhr@gmail.com

CORNERSTONE CAMPUS MINISTRY

For many, many years members of our church have participated in Food and Faith where we bring a meal to SUNY Albany on the first Tuesday evening in August when the students return from the summer break. We would bring the meal for 6:00 pm, set it up and the students start trickling in shortly after. George Herrick was a Board member for many years and always encouraged our participation.



We are looking for people who would like to continue this tradition. A meal can consist of pizza or a roast beef dinner, anything you wish to make. This is a good time to use your crock pot. Sometimes we would stay and participate in their program, but that is not required. If this is something you think you would like to do please see Mary McIntosh or Kathy Van Buren. It's a very rewarding event, meeting the students and hearing where they hail from. I was always amazed at the number of students who come from other countries.