



THE

Spire

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305 (518) 374-4403 / (Fax) 374-6060

Website: www.fumcschenectady.org E-Mail: fumcschenectady@yahoo.com



Accessible

Vol. 82 No. 9

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

January 2019

FUTURE SUNDAYS

- 8:30** Community Breakfast Fellowship
9:00 Books available for Children & Adults
9:00 Sunday School for Children
10:00 Sunday Morning Worship
—*Infant & Toddler Care available*
11:00 Coffee Fellowship
11:30 Second Hour Programs/Events
—Forums
—Orff Instrument Playing
—Ministry Team Meetings
—Luncheons
5:45 Confirmation Class
7:00 Bible Study: "Book of Luke"

Worship Text:

- Jan. 6 **Epiphany**
Youth Group leads Worship
Jan. 13 Isaiah 43:1-7; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
"Do Not Fear, Beloved"
Jan. 20 **Human Relations Day**
1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
"One and Many, Many and One"
Jan. 27 Isaiah 61:1-4; Luke 4:14-21
"God's Favor"

Second Hour Programs/Events:

- Jan. 6 **Epiphany Celebration**
Jan. 27 **Intersectional Justice Committee**



Epiphany Sunday January 6, 2019

On January 6th, we'll celebrate Epiphany Sunday during the 10:00 AM Worship Service, led by our youth. Then following Worship, our celebration will continue during coffee hour with traditional Epiphany cakes from several countries.

Orff instrument practice will not be held that day.



Calling all Women: Enjoy Luncheon!

The next Women's Fellowship Luncheon will be on Wednesday, January 9th, at 12 noon at the Glen Eddy in Niskayuna. (Please note that this is the second Wednesday of the month, not the usual third.) All church women – friends as well as members – are encouraged to attend, so come if you can and let's enjoy time together. Lunch costs \$16 and there is no tax or tip. So that we can let the Glen Eddy staff know how many people to expect, please try to RSVP by January 7th, (although even at the last minute is ok) to Carolyn Micklas at cmicklas@twc.com or 518-374-7742. Be sure to put the date on your calendar and plan to come. Hope to see you there!





From Our Pastor

I recently attended a workshop with the Samaritan Counseling Center about change. The basic premise of the workshop was that we cannot simply will ourselves to change with exertions of self-control and discipline. Rather, we have to see why we do what we do now, and what benefits we gain from the current situation so that we can take that into consideration as we think about how to create sustainable change.

For example, we were asked to think of something we wish we did differently and then consider why we don't! I chose the fact that my desk is a MESS. There are piles of paperwork in every direction from my computer. However, I realized there are two perfectly good reasons for this: 1. Pretty much everything else I do takes priority over cleaning my desk because it all feels more important. 2. Cleaning my desk requires making many (many!) decisions about what to keep and how. Most of the time, I've already used up my decision making energy on other things I find more important before I get to the desk.

Before you worry about my desk too much, please know that one among you often helps me out, and once in a great while I find it cathartic to sort despite the above. This most often happens before Holy Week when I'm procrastinating more difficult tasks.

Back to the main point though, chance doesn't happen by force of will. It does happen organically at times though. Chance is one of those forces of life that comes whether we are ready or not, and when things change around us, we adapt. This is true in our individual lives as well as in our life together as a Body of Christ. I've been thinking about this because starting January 1st we have some significant leadership transitions. This means that we have a chance to express our gratitude to those who have served our community well in leadership, and offered their gifts and their presences to us (often for a LOOOONG time). It also means we have the chance to celebrate the willingness of those taking on new roles and their gifts and presences in our midst.

We are experiencing transition in the roles of:

- Co-Lay Leader: Jean Gustafson is finishing her term and Sylvester Doyer is starting his.
- Trustee's Chair: Anne Phillips is finishing her term and Trustees will elect a replacement in January.
- Staff Pastor Parish Relations Chair: Mary Ann Marshall is finishing her term and Beth Bonacquist is starting hers.
- Welcoming Ministries Co-Chair: Kristen Johnson is finishing her term and Mary Ann Marshall is starting hers
- Banking Team: Lois and Bill Isles are finishing a "term" of several decades and Ernie Readdean is starting a new term.

In addition, we reconstructed our Children and Youth Ministries Team to fit our current realities. These are real changes. They're the changes of organic life together, many things will stay the same, little things may change, and those little things may lead to bigger change. We have also been briefed by the Finance Committee that the ways we have been doing ministry are not financially sustainable and we are going to need to be creative and careful in finding ways to continue God's work in this place in some new ways.

Change doesn't come by the force of will, but it can come through careful listening or by changing circumstances. Thanks be to God who is always with us, and guiding us in our lives together. May we find ways to make changes that are necessary and hold on to what shouldn't be changed – yet.

— Sara

Membership News

Updates to our church directory:

New Members—

We welcome our newest church members, who joined during Worship on December 23rd:

Beth Greenwood
John Greenwood
Mike Greenwood
Nancy Mohammadi

Friends on the Move—

Warm wishes are extended to members of our church family, who recently moved:

Jan Butts

Capstone Ctr. For Rehab. & Nursing
302 Swart Hill Rd.
Amsterdam, NY 12010

Nancy Oldow

204 Glen Eddy Dr.
Niskayuna, NY 12309

Unknown Addresses—

Please call the office if you know how we can contact the below members. Thank you.

Class of 2019: Andrew Baker
Amy Ganje
Daniel Ganje

Class of 2020: Willie Balkum
Cheryl (Bealer) Franklin



Programs Resume

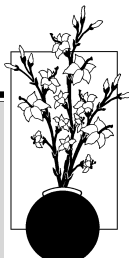
Here's some January program dates:

- **Chancel Choir Rehearsal**—Jan. 3
- **Youth Group**—Jan. 5
- **Confirmation Class** —Jan. 6
- **Sunday Bible Study**—Jan. 6
- **Church Night**—Jan. 8
- **Handbell Choir Rehearsal**—Jan. 9
- **Book Discussion**—Jan. 12
- **Sunday School**—Jan. 13
- **City Mission Meal** —Jan. 23

Stephen Ministry Program



Our Stephen Ministers are trained to help provide the emotional and spiritual care we need when faced with a crisis or difficulty, such as the loss of a loved one, chronic illness, unemployment, divorce, hospitalization, loneliness. Stephen Ministers provide one-on-one caring for about an hour each week to those facing a life crisis. It is a ministry of presence and is strictly confidential. Their job is to listen to you, to help you express and understand your feelings, and to help you find solutions or come to terms with your problem(s). If you are facing a crisis and might want a Stephen Minister or know of someone who might benefit from this program, contact the office.



Altar Flowers

We are grateful for the Sunday Altar Flowers given in December:

12/2 in celebration of the birth of
Griffin Alexander Phillips
12/16 in celebration of Christmas
12/23 in celebration of Christmas

To give altar flowers for Sunday Worship, please see the signup poster on the hallway bulletin board, or contact the office.

E-Newsletter available!

If you receive *The Spire* newsletter in hard-copy and would prefer to get it by email, which does save valuable resources, please contact the office with your email address. Thank you.



Church Night resumes

Tuesday, January 8

All ministry work teams are invited to hold their monthly meetings on Church Night, held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. And everyone is welcome to attend the monthly council meetings. The evening schedule is:

6:30 pm Ministry Teams meetings

7:30 pm Church Council meets

Notices will go out to teams scheduled to meet.

Book Discussion

Saturday, Jan. 12

On Saturday, January 12th, from 10:00 a.m.—12 noon, we will be sharing our thoughts on our current book choice entitled, "Out of Many Faiths" by Eboo Patel. It is a book that explores religious diversity and the American promise. Robert Wuthnow writes that it is "A passionate response to the anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, racist white nationalism that so deeply afflicts our nation."

We are hoping the extra time over the holidays will allow more of us to pick up this book and read it, and join us as we gather to discuss this timely defense in support of religious diversity in our nation at a time when there is so much division between one another.



Enjoy Fellowship... before & after Worship

- **Downtown Community Breakfast** is served 8:30-9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall weekly except on the first Sunday of each month, free of charge.
- **Books for Children & Adults** available during breakfast from 9-9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall.
- **Coffee Fellowship** is held in Wesley Lounge following Worship. Come gather among friends!

Like to do Needlework?

The Needlework Ministry program (knitting, crocheting, sewing) creates hats and scarves for various causes as well as prayer shawls/blankets. If you wish to participate and want to learn more, including how to knit or crochet, please contact Eileen Deming or Alice Nash.



From the Finance Committee

♦ **2018 Contributions and Statements**

2018 Contributions Statements will be distributed in January. However, if you'd like to know where you currently stand on your 2018 commitment, please contact the office and a Contribution Statement will be mailed to you.

♦ **2019 Stewardship Campaign**

Our Stewardship Campaign is underway for 2019. If you haven't yet filled out a form to pledge prayers, presence, witness, service and/or monetary donations for 2019 and would like to, forms are available in the narthex and from the office. Together we can continue to bring God's words and actions into our community and our world.

♦ **2019 Offering Envelopes**

Boxed Offering Envelopes for 2019 are available in the Narthex. If you do not find a box with your name on it and want envelopes, please use the signup sheet on a Sunday or contact the office.

♦ **Electronic Giving Available**

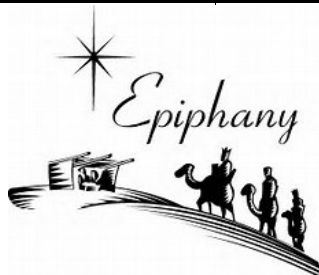
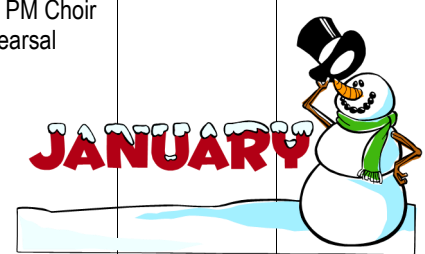
If you're interested in using the electronic donation system to make pledge payments, to make donations to church benevolences, to repay student loans or for other purposes, go to our church website (www.fumcschenectady.org) or read the QR code here. The website contains a button that will take you to the electronic donations signup page. The signup page will walk you through the process of signing up. If you prefer to sign-up on a paper form, you may pick up an authorization form from Linda in the church office.





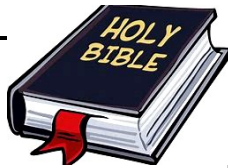
January 2019

First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Happy New Year! Church Office Closed Council Reports due <div>Public Schools Closed</div>	2	3 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	4	5 12:00 noon Youth Group
6 Epiphany / Family Sunday 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program —Epiphany Celebration 5:45 PM Confirmation Class	7 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours	8 2:00 PM Staff Mtg. <hr/> Church Night 6:30 PM Ministry Teams Meet 7:30 PM Council	9 9:00 am Stephen Ministers 12:00 Women's Luncheon 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	10 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	11	12 10:00 AM Book Discussion 12:00 noon Youth Group
13 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program 5:45 PM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM Bible Study	14 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 4 - 8 PM SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting 7:00 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee	15 Spire articles due 2:00 PM Staff Mtg.	16 11:30 AM-1:30 PM SUSTAIN Ministry 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	17 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	18	19 12:00 noon Youth Group
20 Human Relations Day 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program 5:45 PM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM Bible Study	21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Church Office Closed Public Schools Closed	22 2:00 PM Staff Mtg. 7:00 PM Trustees	23 8:30 AM Men's Fellowship Breakfast 5:00 pm Serve Meal at City Mission 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	24 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	25 5:00-7 PM MLK, Jr. Community Shabbat & Dinner @ Congregation Gates of Heaven	26 9:15 AM Youth Service: Serve Community Brunch @ Emmanuel Friedens 12:00 noon Youth Group
27 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs 11:45 AM Intersectional Justice Committee 5:45 PM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM Bible Study	28 Public Schools Closed: Staff Develop. Day 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 4 - 8 PM SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting	29 10:30 AM Altar Guild Meeting 2:00 PM Staff Mtg.	30 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	31 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal		

We are in the season of EPIPHANY (green) - During Epiphany, we celebrate the ways God is revealed through Jesus.

Sunday Bible Study resumes Jan 6



A weekly Bible Study on "The Book of Luke" is being offered Sunday nights from 7:00-8:30 in Wesley Lounge, led by Pastor Sara. All are welcome to join our young adults for this study.

Men: Enjoy Breakfast!

The Men's Breakfast Fellowship meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Blue Ribbon Diner on upper State Street. And all men are welcome. The next gathering will be held on January 23rd at 8:30 AM. Contact Bob Coppola with any questions.



Serve Meal at City Mission

Wednesday, January 23

It's our church's turn to serve a meal at the City Mission. They have a new software signup process. Each individual volunteering to serve at City Mission is asked to create an account at the mission and sign-up in advance for each meal date they will be attending.

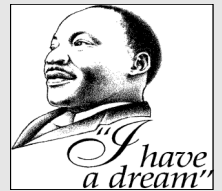
To signup 5 days or more ahead, go to: <http://firstumc.citymissionofschenectady.volunteerhub.com>

To signup within 5 days prior of serving, go to: <http://www.schenectadycitymission.com> then click "volunteer" and find FUMC's dates to serve, e.g., Wednesday, Jan. 23. Other volunteers may be solicited to sign-up during this time as well.

If you don't have a computer or have a problem signing up, please call Lori at 518-346-2275 ext. 301; give your name and date(s) you want to serve. Upcoming 2019 Wednesday dates assigned to our church to serve are: January 23, March 27, May 22.

Arrival time is no later than 5 p.m. A hair net is required to wear if you are not wearing a hat. Please let Mary Ann Marshall (518-355-1733) know if you have signed up for an upcoming meal. Thank you.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Shabbat and Dinner *Proceeds go to SiCM*



When: Friday, January 25, 2019

Where: Congregation Gates of Heaven
852 Ashmore Ave., Schenectady

Time: 5 pm Shabbat Service
6 pm Soup Dinner
7 pm Community Conversation

Guest Speaker: Dr. David Harris
President of Union College

RSVP: by January 18
Kathy at klaaws@cgoh.org or
518-374-8173

Everyone is welcome. Attendees are asked to bring a school supply item to donate, and for the Soup Dinner, which will include hearty soups, crusty bread and dessert, to donate the amount you would pay to go out to eat.

This event is sponsored by Schenectady Clergy Against Hate (SCAH).

A Stephen Ministry Moment

*Life loves to be taken by
the lapel and told:
"I am with you, Kid.
Let's go."*

~ Maya Angelou ~

The Sunday School Scoop

January 2019



January 6	Epiphany <i>No Sunday School</i> 10:00 am —Our youth will lead Worship as we celebrate Epiphany together 11:30 am —Epiphany Celebration
January 13	Baptism of the Lord 9:00 am —Sunday School
January 20	Human Relations Day 9:00 am — Sunday School
January 27	9:00 am — Sunday School

Youth News



All youth (ages 13-18) are invited to:

☉ Youth Group Fellowship—

Come enjoy fun and fellowship together each week in the Roof Lounge on Saturdays starting at 12:00 noon.

☉ Youth Lead Worship Service—

On Epiphany Sunday, January 6th, we'll be leading the 10 am Worship Service. Then gather for the annual Epiphany Celebration held after the service in Fellowship Hall.

☉ Youth Service Project—

On Saturday, January 26th, plan to gather at 9:15 am to serve a free community brunch meal at Emmanuel Friedens Church.

SAVE THE DATE!!! Intergenerational Volunteers in Mission Trip!!

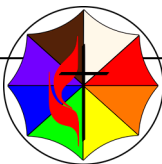
FUMC will sponsor a second annual (?) intergenerational VIM trip to Mission Central in Mechanicsburg, PA, during the schools' Easter vacation. Dates will be Mon. April 22 – April 26 or 27 (to be determined). Everyone who went last year came back enthused about what they had learned and accomplished and about the facility where they stayed.

Mission Central (<https://missioncentral.org>) is a United Methodist depot near Harrisburg, PA. Supplies are collected there and then distributed to those who need them, usually after a disaster. Supplies include flood (cleaning) buckets, hygiene kits, school kits, layettes, and more. Volunteers help to prepare the kits for distribution.

The group will stay at The Silver Spring Retreat Center in Mechanicsburg (www.silverspring.org/silverspringretreatcenter). A "tourist" event will be included in the trip with a visit to either Gettysburg National Military Park or Steamtown National Historic Site.

More information and applications will be available soon. If you are interested in this mission trip, please contact Sylvester Doyer or Jan Huston.





Mission Moment

Delivered during Worship

► Alternative Gifts

Delivered on December 2, 2018, by Jan Huston

Many of us have way too much stuff. Many others don't have what they need. So the idea of giving alternative gifts was conceived. You know the basics – Instead of giving a material thing to someone who really doesn't need it (and might not even want or like it), we can give an alternative gift. We can give a monetary gift in honor of the person who doesn't need more stuff!

There are many worthwhile causes needing financial help. I was amazed at the number of requests I got on Giving Tuesday. The Intersectional Justice Committee has chosen 6 which we hope you will consider using to honor some people on your gift lists.

Heifer International gives animals and training to people all over the world. The recipient of an animal is expected to give the first offspring to someone else. So it is "the gift that multiplies." I recently read a book named "Half the Sky." It describes the terrible lives of women in some parts of the world. The last chapter lists ways we can help. Heifer is one of them.

Church World Service is another organization that works in many ways in many countries. Mary Anderson and I met one of their agricultural program people when we were in rural Nicaragua! One of their programs is to give blankets to people who are suffering from disasters. Only \$10 will provide a good warm blanket to someone who needs it. A sample blanket is in the narthex.

Home Furnishings Program is a Schenectady program that was started over 30 years ago by Church Women United. It's an ecumenical program with a small staff and many volunteers. People donate good used furniture and other household items. People who need them are screened and referred by community agencies. Our church houses the office and Elsie's room. Elsie's room is where smaller items like kitchen supplies and linens are kept and distributed. There is a warehouse in Schenectady for larger items.

We've chosen 3 of our own church's programs to highlight, too.

The Community Breakfast Program offers a free breakfast to anyone in the community every Sunday except the first Sunday of each month. The number of people served ranges from about 65 to more than a hundred on any given Sunday. The program is supported by grants, a small amount in our church budget, donations, and many volunteers.



FUMC's Sustain Ministry grew out of our former Soap and Toilet Paper ministry. Soap, diapers, toilet paper, and basic hygiene items are not covered by food stamps. These basic supplies are given to approximately 120 families every month. This program also receives a small amount in our church budget and benefits from donations and many volunteers. When I was finding out how many people were served, I was asked to also say that there is a need for more volunteers. You might consider spending a few hours sorting diapers or other supplies as an alternative gift instead of or in addition to giving money.

We are glad that our Babyfold and Pre-K Ministry is growing! The babyfold room is getting painted and spruced up and we are asking for donations for some new items and toys to help children be more able to enjoy their first church experience.

There is a table in the narthex with a display about all of these projects with cards that you can give to someone to let them know of a donation you have given in their honor. Our church secretary, Linda Smith, made all of the cards except those for Heifer and Church World Service. We're pleased with the results!!

You can give to any of these programs by making out a check to the church and putting the name of the program in the notation. Or you can give directly to an organization if that would enable GE matching.

We hope you will celebrate this season of giving by considering one or more of these worthwhile programs.

KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES—November 2018

PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

OUR PRAYERS

Christian support is extended to:

Andrea Bailey	Emily Hart
Jan Butts	Jack & Courtney McEwan
Ross Corbett	Mary & Roy Neville
Ron Cromer	Claire Racicot
Shirley Daniels	Shirley Rivest
June Dieffenbach	Rev. Bill Rowe
Liz Fogle	Rev. Jan McClary Rowell
Jen & Merrick Fuller	Bob Slater
Jan Guzior	Lee & Marylois Tupper

We celebrate with:

Janet Collis, who welcomed her 2nd great-grandchild,
Noah Jameson Petlinski, born in November. Congratulations!
Our newest church members, who joined during Sunday
Worship on December 23rd. Welcome! (details on pg. 3)

OUR PRESENCE

Date	Worship
November 4	73
November 11	61
November 18	80
November 25	67

OUR GIFTS

Date	Amount
November 4	\$17,404.50
November 11	5,070.00
November 18	4,142.90
November 25	3,151.00



OUR SERVICE

- 11/4 —New intergenerational program began: Orff Instrument Playing
- Participated in SiCM's Concert of Thanksgiving fundraiser @ First Reformed Church, Schenectady
- 11/7 —Hosted Solidarity Fellowship event after Election Day, sponsored by Schenectady Clergy Against Hate
- 11/10 —Hosted Racial Justice Training event
- 11/17 —Offered hospitality and hot chocolate to the public at the downtown Christmas Parade
- 11/20 —Held "Holiday Giveaway Day," sponsored by our SUSTAIN Ministry & the Home Furnishings programs
- 11/24 —Youth Service Project: Served free community brunch
- 11/25 —United Methodist Student Day celebrated with special offering collected
- New Members Class held after Worship with all welcome
- Participated in Thanksgiving Service @ Islamic Center, sponsored by Schenectady Clergy Against Hate
- Nov. —Continue to prepare & serve the Community Breakfast; # served=233; # volunteers each week=15
- Distributed items through our SUSTAIN Ministry to those in need
- Mission Moments presented: Union College Protestant Ministry; and Coffee Fellowship program
- Distributed books to children & adults on Sundays to help improve literacy in our community
- Sunday's 2nd hour events/programs offered: Orff Instruments; Forum—Youth VIM Trip to Kentucky; New Members Class; and Ministry Team Meetings

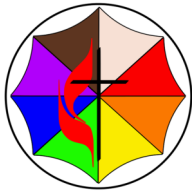
~ **Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors — Be Invitational!** ~



**Happy
Birthday!**

Warm wishes are extended to our **JANUARY**
birthday celebrants: *(contact the office with your birthday!)*

January 1 Shirley Daniels	12 Shaun Brennan	20 Marylois Tupper
3 Jennifer Fuller	13 Andrea Bailey	21 Pat MacKinnon
4 Sean McCullough	14 Cliff DaVis	22 Emily Burnell
7 Janis Butts	14 John Haley	22 Christian Waring
7 Barbara Haverly	14 Ashley McGowan	23 Bob Bailey
8 Eileen Deming	14 Cody Nguyen	24 Francesca DiMezza
8 Linda Smith	16 Alyce Lyons	29 Daniel Collins
8 Jane Wilson	16 Barbara Waring	29 Beth Waring
10 Dana Lane	17 Lois Isles	30 Liz Mosier



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Serving Schenectady for over 200 Years

NEXT SPIRE MAILED:

January 30; articles due Jan. 15

*We are a church that
loves to learn and
yearns to be a gift of
God to our communities.*



‘Like’ us on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/FUMCSchenectady>
Website: www.FUMCSchenectady.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Coming in early February:

Sunday, February 3

Family Sunday

“Souper” Bowl Sunday
Orff Instrument Playing

Tuesday, February 12

Church Night

Play Orff instruments!

On Family Sundays, the first Sunday of the month, our Sunday School program is not held, but following Worship, an intergenerational activity is! Everyone of all ages is invited to gather to play Orff Instruments in our Music Room on the 2nd floor. No experience necessary. Instruction in sacred music is inherently good and fun!



WEBSITES AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

First United Methodist Church—

E-Mail: fumcschenectady@yahoo.com

Website: www.fumcschenectady.org

Upper New York Annual Conference—

Website: www.unyumc.org

Albany District of the United Methodist Church—

E-Mail: albanydistrict@unyumc.org

Website: www.unyumc.org/districts/detail/2