



THE

*Spire*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Accessible

Vol. 83 No. 10

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

February 2020

### FUTURE SUNDAYS

- 8:30** Downtown Community Breakfast  
**9:00** Books available for Children & Adults  
**9:00** Sunday School for Children  
**10:00** Sunday Morning Worship  
—Infant & Toddler Care available  
—Children's Music Time (monthly)  
**11:00** Coffee Fellowship  
**11:30** Second Hour Programs/Events  
—Forums  
—Luncheons  
—Intergenerational Activities  
—Ministry Team Gatherings  
**7:00** Sunday Night Study: *Living the Questions 2.0*

### Worship Text on Sermon Series

- Feb. 2 ***Souper Bowl / Family Sunday***  
Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12  
"Requirements"  
Feb. 9 Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 5:13-20  
"The Work of the Kindom"  
Feb. 16 Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Matthew 5:21-37  
"High Standards?"  
Feb. 23 Exodus 24:12-18; Matthew 17:1-9  
"Mountaintop Views"

## ***Souper Bowl*** **Sunday**



Super Bowl Sunday has become the 2nd most popular day for eating in our culture (behind Thanksgiving) and is a wonderful time for all of us to remember that there are many in our community who face food insecurity for part of each month. The Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM) Emergency Food Program is once again participating in the national *Souper Bowl Sunday* appeal. 100% of the money raised will help the SiCM Emergency Food Pantry feed those who are hungry in Schenectady County. The challenge of hunger for many people in our county continues. SiCM can purchase food from the Northeastern Regional Food Bank for \$.16 per pound, so monetary donations go a long way toward providing food for those in need.

On Sunday, February 2nd, "soup" cans will be available for your donations. Come prepared with either cash or a check so you will be ready to help fill the cans! Make donations by check payable to FUMC with "souper bowl" in the notation.



**February 26**

## **Welcome our New Sexton**

We are pleased to announce that Zach Long has accepted the job as part-time sexton for our church. He will be working 20 hours a week. Please know that he is learning on the job. Please help him if there is something you see or know that he needs to know. Thank you for making Zach feel welcome as he learns the ins and outs of FUMC.

—Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee

An ecumenical Worship Service will be held Wednesday, February 26, at 7pm at St. Joseph's Church, just across State Street.

This service is jointly supported by these churches: Emmanuel Friedens, St. Joseph's and First United Methodist. Plan to gather with our neighbors for this special service and receive ashes as the season of Lent begins.



## From Our Pastor

One of the assumptions of Nonviolent Communication is that all of our words and actions are motivated by an attempt to get our needs met. This reality can be seen very clearly when someone is in turmoil – they often switch rapidly between various tactics, hoping desperately that one of them will work. Once you see this, you can't really un-see it. It can make me a bit squirmy to notice what I'm saying, and not saying, doing, and not doing and what it tells me about my own current state of needs.

A similar assumption is now made at our Upper New York Camp and Retreat Ministries (for whom registration is now open!!), where it goes under the title "Success Counseling." Under this model of caring for God's beloveds, what might have once been seen as "misbehaving" is now understood as a way of expressing a need that the person wasn't otherwise able to express. This doesn't mean all behavior is acceptable, but it does impact how it gets responded to.

This past week, an article by Brené Brown came past my eyes that said to "assume others are doing the best they can."<sup>1</sup> Somehow, despite the information I offered you above, this was a bit of a relief to me. I particularly like this phrasing of it, because it doesn't assume that everyone is behaving well, simply that they're doing the best they can. Now, the best someone has to offer can be bad. It can be harmful, hurtful, and even abusive. This doesn't negate that reality, nor the need to hold people accountable for such actions. This is most useful in situations that are closer to neutral.

Over the course of the past year, we have been struggling together to respond to the reality of finite resources and more great ministries that we want to do than funding to support them. This created an anxious time in our midst, and the realities of the world and the denomination swirling around us made it even harder. Right now, we are relieved to say that we are going to be able to support the same level of staffing through 2020, which has been the source of the greatest dis-ease.

One of the side effects of this increased anxiety and struggle has been a decrease in the amount of "benefit of the doubt" that has been given around here. This makes perfect sense – it is natural, human, and to be expected. It is, however, pretty awful! One of the characteristics of a healthy community is one where there is trust and people give each other the benefit of the doubt. It is a lot more FUN to be in a community where your motives aren't being questioned, and your personhood is accepted and delighted in. This church has been that kind of community, and has the skills and relationships to be that kind of community. The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) is doing active thinking about how to help all of us heal and regain trust together. I'm deeply grateful for the seriousness with which they are taking that work. Ideas are welcome if you want to contribute some – with your name attached. (One of the minor changes already being made is that feedback needs to come with people's names.)

In the meantime, I think we can all work within ourselves to listen to our inner voices, notice when they make assumptions about other people, and to reframe our thinking to "assume others are doing the best that they can." This makes a lot of space for grace in our midst, and I suspect we all want to be people of grace.

It has been said that one can be spiritual alone, but to be religious requires dealing with people with whom you disagree – and that's the POINT! We grow as people of faith when we become better at disagreeing with grace, and not letting disagreements harm relationships. May God help us find grace, and remember that everyone is doing the best they can, including ourselves.

- Sara

<sup>1</sup> (<https://www.thegrowthfaculty.com/blog/BrenBrownoptipassumeothersaredoingthebesttheycan>)

## In Memoriam

*We extend our Christian support to the families and friends of:*



† **Carol Brumbaugh**, a longtime friend & former church member of over 65 years, who passed away on January 8th. Memorial service arrangements will be announced. Please keep her children, Pamela, Mark and Jill, & their families in your prayers. Cards/Notes of sympathy can be sent to her daughter, Pam & the family at: 6 Cotton Ct., Clifton Park, NY 12065.

† **Shirley Rivest**, a longtime friend & church member of almost 75 years, who passed away on January 6th. Memorial service arrangements will be announced. Please keep her children, Martha, Rachel, Brian and Ronald, and their families, in your prayers. To send a card or note of sympathy, contact information for each of Shirley's children is in our Membership Directory, or contact the church office.



† **Robert Mackeown**, a longtime friend & church member of almost 65 years, who passed away a couple years ago. Bob had been living in CT for the past 15 years. Please keep his children, Doug Mackeown and Karen Evertson, and their families in your prayers. Cards / notes of sympathy can be sent to Douglas and the family at: Box 72, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

## ALTAR FLOWERS

**We are grateful for the altar flowers given in January:**

1/5 in loving memory of Jim Farrell  
1/26 in loving memory of Ruth Weber Angus

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



## Cards/Letters Received



*FUMC of Schenectady,  
Happy New Year 2020! May God grant you peace and happiness with best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year!*

*—Ahmadiyya Muslim Community: Women's Auxiliary  
River Road, Rotterdam*

*To the Congregation of FUMC,  
My name is Nancy Spencer. I am a member and youth leader at Emmanuel Friedens Church just up the hill. I am writing this letter to you today as a testament to the wonderful youth program you have supported. A few years ago our church set out to create a community activity in order to help the folks in our neighborhood engage with our church. We were inspired by your program and studied the success. When we needed some additional help, I reached out to Sylvester and boy did he deliver. He showed up month after month with a group of young men that got right to work. They not only served, cooked and cleaned but they did what the brunch was intended for, and that was engage the guests.*

*This is a very special group that you have supported. I was blessed to accompany them on their last mission trip and several church sleep overs. With the exception of the "pepper spray and the Tenor," there has never been a behavior problem. This is one we will wait a few years and have a good laugh at. Working with Sylvester and Cliff has been a highlight of my year. Their patient way with kids and ability to just have fun is an inspiration. I would be amiss if I did not mention Jan, her meticulous planning made the mission possible.*

*This letter serves as both a thank you to your congregation as well as a congratulations. It does take a village, and you are part of the village that raised these wonderful young men. Bravo!*

*—Sincerely yours, Nancy Spencer*

*Greetings from Akwesasne. We hope all is well. We think of you often. We are always grateful to you and the Mission team for all your dedicated work (ramp) still standing strong at Akwesasne. May God bless you all. With love, prayers, and gratitude.*

*—Dan Cook and the  
Hogansburg UM Church Family—PEACE  
(FUMC sent a VIM Team to Hogansburg UMC in 2015)*



## From SPPRC

The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee has started its new year. One question we are working on is how can we be as healthy and whole as possible? The SPPRC team suggests that we need to enhance the Sunday morning experience to include worship *for all*. We are requesting that the congregation allow Worship to be Worship through Coffee Hour. That entails discussing NO church business during that entire time. We would like to start that trend on Sunday, February 2nd. It was suggested that church business be emailed between parishioners and the staff to facilitate efficiency. Please help SPPRC follow through on this request.

—Anne Phillips, SPPRC Chair

## Music Notes

1. The bell room is officially completed, and the Bell Choir is having a wonderful time rehearsing in their new practice space, which has more heat than the one they've used for the last 20 years!
2. The next concert in our series is on Sunday, March 29th, at 3:00 pm when we welcome the celebrated violin virtuoso, Elizabeth Pitcairn. Elizabeth will perform on her legendary 1720 "Red Mendelssohn" Stradivarius violin. More details can be found on page 7. Please make plans to attend this exciting event!

—Diane Kingsland & Shirley Readdean  
Co-chairs of the Music Committee

## Like to do Needlework?



Our Needlework Ministry program creates hats and scarves for various causes as well as prayer shawls/blankets. To learn more, please contact either Eileen Deming or Alice Nash.

## From Church Council

January 14th at the Church Council meeting, we opened our conversation as we always do - with prayer and discernment. We meditated on the ways in which our church embodies the characteristics of God's Kingdom. We realized how caring the congregation is by providing supportive ministries such as Sustain and Community Breakfast. Many were proud to be part of such a loving and inclusive congregation; one that welcomes all of God's children with both open arms and an open-mindedness not commonly found in other churches. We marveled at the tender and compassionate work done by the Caring Ministries and at events such as the Holiday Parade Hot Cocoa.

While I heard those I hold most dear to me in my church family purport such values as belonging to First United of Schenectady, I have become painfully aware that the expression of these values did not match the dialogue surrounding them. For three years I have discerned, prayed, and worked alongside leaders in this church I deeply respect. These leaders embody what they enumerated on that night, and have done so since the day I first walked through the doors of FUMC. Recently, I have noticed significant difference. I have seen this allegedly inclusive group fracture off into factions with personal agendas. I have been personally accused of acting out of hubris, of being dishonest, and have publicly been insulted and berated numerous times. I have witnessed those claiming to serve Christ, serve only self. This is not an example of the embodiment of the caring, loving, compassionate, and inclusive group of which its members claim to be.

What I am about the share is not a sentiment that I have made public: I have chosen to take a hiatus from attending worship. This difficult decision I arrived at is due to that which I have just named, the duality I have seen between the discernment we claim and the actions we take. I was, until recently, at a very low point in my faith journey. I could not comfortably bow my head in prayer amongst a body that had filled me with such heartache.

As all my hope was seemingly lost, the very family that had driven me to this point of despair had even more rapidly raised me up. Later in the same meeting, Staff Parish came to the Church Council with a suggestion: that Sunday worship be for just that - worship, and that the "business" of the church not be conducted therein. Though the details of the SPPRC conversation that led to the suggestion are sealed, it was apparent during the explanation of the suggestion that others had felt, to varying degrees, the same angst I had surrounding Sunday Worship.

My take away from the Church Council that I wish to leave you with is twofold. Firstly I would like to say that I am never anything less than astonished by the value that can be gained from heartfelt and prayerful discernment; an act I admittedly found trite and frivolous when I first assumed the chair. It is my hope and prayer that whatever your opinion of me and my work, you take the work of Church Council to heart and meditate on the ways that you can not only name the characteristics of the Kingdom, but also on ways and measures that embody those same characteristics. Your leaders have done you a tremendous service by dedicating their hearts and minds to this level of spiritual discernment. Lastly I wish to offer everyone a chance in this new year to engage in a new and fresh outlook on Sunday worship; and leave the Sunday morning politics to the Sunday morning pundits.


—John Daniel Falotico, Church Council Chair



# February 2020

## First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Calendar updates on website: [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> 11:00 AM Youth Group
<b>2</b> “Souper” Bowl / Family Sunday  <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study	<b>3</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor “Drop-in” Office Hours	<b>4</b> <i>Council Reports due</i> 1:30 PM Staff Meeting	<b>5</b> 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	<b>6</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 10:00 AM UMW Meeting 11:00 AM Youth Group
<b>9</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program —Investment Committee 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study	<b>10</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor “Drop-in” Office Hours  7:00 pm Staff Pastor Parish Rela- tions Committee	<b>11</b> 1:30 PM Staff Meeting  <b>Church Night</b> 6:30 PM Ministry Teams Meet 7:30 PM Council	<b>12</b> 11:30 AM-1:30 PM SUSTAIN Ministry: Distribution 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Small Group Leaders	<b>13</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> <i>Spire articles due</i>	<b>15</b> 11:00 AM Youth Group
<b>16</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:40 AM Children’s Music 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program —Revised Investment Policy 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study	<b>17</b> <b>President’s Day</b> Church Office Closed 6:30 PM Joint Church Gathering @ Scotia UMC	<b>18</b> 1:30 PM Staff Meeting  7:00 PM Children & Youth Ministries Team	<b>19</b> 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	<b>20</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 11:00 AM Youth Group
	Public Schools Closed					
<b>23</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Program 11:45 am Intersectional Justice Committee 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study	<b>24</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor “Drop-in” Office Hours	<b>25</b> 1:30 PM Staff Mtg. 7:00 PM Trustees	<b>26 Ash Wednesday</b> 8:30 AM Men’s Fel- lowship Breakfast 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Joint Ash Wednesday Service @ St. Joseph’s	<b>27</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:15 AM Youth Service: Serve Free Community Brunch 11:00 AM Youth Group

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

## ► “Church Night” February 11

All Ministry Teams are invited to hold their monthly meetings on *Church Night*, held the 2nd Tuesday of each month. And all are welcome to at the Church Council meetings. The schedule is:

6:30 pm Ministry Teams meet

7:30 pm Church Council meets

## ► Annual Meeting March 8

Everyone is invited to gather after Sunday Worship on March 8th for our annual Church Meeting held in Fellowship Hall. We will celebrate the ministries of the past year and look to the future! Reports will be presented and the 2019 Annual Reports booklet will be available.



### Sunday Study:

### “Living the Questions 2.0”

The Sunday Night Study is entitled, "Living the Questions 2.0." LtQ2 is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers and instead strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity. Featuring thirty acclaimed scholars, theologians and other experts, LtQ2 consists of 21 sessions in 3 sections: "Invitation to Journey"; "Honoring Creation"; and "Call to Covenant." The course is truly full of great questions, and multiple potential answers. Meetings are held in the Conference Room, as the series includes a DVD with those acclaimed scholars, at 7pm Sunday nights.

Participants are encouraged to come through the Administrative Building door, located on the porch behind the parking lot garage.

## UMW meets Feb. 8



The United Methodist Women will meet on Saturday, Feb. 8, at 10 am in the Gathering Room to decide this year's activities and missions. All women of First UMC, Schenectady, are invited to attend.

All men are invited to gather for the next Men's Breakfast Fellowship, which will be held on Wednesday, February 26th, at 8:30 am at the Blue Ribbon Diner on State St. Contact Bob Coppola with any questions.



## Early Response Trainings

We have all heard of various natural disasters which have occurred across the country such as floods, tornadoes, and other severe storms. What we often don't hear about is how survivors struggle to recover during the following days, weeks and often months after the disaster. We don't think of people who have no power, no heat, no water, even though it is during winter months. We don't think of those who can't live in their home due to mold, or because the house is off its foundation. Instead we watch the news, see the destruction, and then sit down to eat dinner or go about our business the next day.

To bring this closer to home, in our own Conference, in the Utica area, there was a massive flood event on Halloween which damaged some 800 homes. People are still suffering, cleaning, repairing, replacing furnaces a full 2 months later. Most of us didn't hear about this flood, or have already forgotten about it.

But we can still help. Our Conference has a program to send people almost immediately into disaster areas to quickly, effectively, and appropriately provide a caring, Christian presence to assist survivors in recovery. It is called ERT. It stands for Early Response Team. Early Responders are trained by UMCOR during an 8 hour session with all the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How answers to the typical questions willing volunteers are apt to ask when they feel called to provide help. What do we do? We listen to survivors, we hold trembling hands, we hand out bottles of water, and listen some more. We give hugs, we assure that people care, and then we wash walls, remove wet carpet, wet wallboard, shovel mud, carry out ruined appliances, cover holes in roofs, and make homes secure again. But we don't do repairs. That happens later with rebuilding teams who are often the very same people on the Early Response Team.

So where can you receive more information and training to become an Early Responder? Attend one of two Basic Early Response training events:

—**Saturday, Feb. 8, Broad St. UMC**, Norwich, NY, which is northeast of Binghamton and east of Cortland. Registration details at <http://bit.ly/20ERTNorwich>;

—**Saturday, Feb. 29, N. Chatham UMC**, N. Chatham, NY, near Albany. Registration details are at <http://bit.ly/20ERTNChatham>.

The Conference Disaster Response Team:  
Mike Block, Conference Disaster Response Coord.  
Donna & Roger Cullen, UMCOR Co-Chairs  
Carl Shepard, ERT Trainer  
MaryBeth Ingalls, Missions Hub Assistant  
Brian Greenwald, ERT Trainer

# The Sunday School Scoop

February 2020



February 2	<b>Family / Souper Bowl Sunday</b> — No Sunday School
February 9	9:00 am—Sunday School
February 16	9:00 am—Sunday School 10:40 am—Children's Music Time
February 23	9:00 am—Sunday School



## Youth Group

All youth (ages 13-18) are invited to gather on Saturday mornings starting at 11:00 in the Roof Lounge to enjoy fun fellowship together.

On Saturday, February 29th, we'll meet at 9:15 am to help serve a free community brunch at Emmanuel Friedens. All youth are welcome.

## 🎵 Children Making Music 🎵

Our next music group meets on Sunday, February 16th. Come have fun and make music with us! We meet at 10:40 am in the Gathering Room, right after the Children's Time in Worship.

## Enjoy Breakfast on Sundays

Plan to come early to church for these free programs:



● Community Breakfast served 8:30-9:30 in Fellowship Hall weekly except 1st Sunday of month.

● Books available for children & adults during the breakfast from 9:00 - 9:30 in Fellowship Hall.

## Intergenerational VIM Trip in April

FUMC's youth group hopes there are enough interested people to have an intergenerational Volunteers in Mission trip April 13th--15th or 16th during the school vacation. The group would stay at Camp Casowasco which is one of Upper NY Conference's camps. It is on Owasco Lake about an hour southwest of Syracuse. The team would work at our mission hub on the way to the camp. The second day would include a visit to Harriet Tubman's house and maybe to the women's suffrage exhibits. Then on Wednesday or Thursday the group would work again at our mission hub on the way home. Housing would be in a large house at the camp. Meals would be provided. It is necessary to make a deposit as soon as possible. If you are interested in participating in this event, please let Sylvester Doyer or Jan Huston know.

## Summer Camp, etc. for kids & adults!



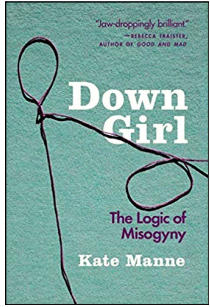
Upper New York Camp & Retreat Ministries (CRM) is excited to announce that registration is now open for its 2020 Summer Camp & Retreat programs. CRM offer a wide variety of programs, including classic favorites and new adventures. We're excited to share our 2020 summer camp and retreat programs with you! Summer Camp provides endless laughter, meaningful worship, and important friendships; retreats provide a unique experience in a beautiful setting. To learn more and for list of all the camps, go to [www.campsandretreats.org](http://www.campsandretreats.org).



## February/March Book Discussion

Sponsored by our Intersectional Justice Committee, the next recommended book is entitled, **“Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny”** by Kate Manne. All are welcome to pick up a copy of the book, read it and join the discussion March 14th at 10am in the Gathering Room.

Online description: Misogyny is a hot topic, yet it's often misunderstood. This book is an exploration of misogyny in public life and politics by the moral philosopher and writer Kate Manne. It argues that misogyny should not be understood primarily in terms of the hatred or hostility some men feel toward all or most women. Rather, it's primarily about controlling, policing, punishing, and exiling the "bad" women who challenge male dominance. And it's compatible with rewarding "the good ones," and singling out other women to serve as warnings to those who are out of order.



Manne examines events that set the stage for the 2016 US presidential election. Not only was the misogyny leveled against Hillary Clinton predictable in both quantity and quality, Manne argues it was predictable that many people would be prepared to forgive and forget regarding Donald Trump's history of sexual assault and harassment. For this, Manne argues, is misogyny's oft-overlooked and equally pernicious underbelly: exonerating or showing "himpathy" for the comparatively privileged men who dominate, threaten, and silence women.

### Ministry Moment

*My religion is very simple.  
My religion is kindness.*

The Dalai Lama

## Joint Church Meeting

On Monday, February 17th, everyone is welcome to gather with other United Methodist Churches at 6:30 pm for a joint meeting at Scotia UMC, 201 N. Ten Broeck St., as churches in welcoming all of God's people into the United Methodist Church.



## Elizabeth Pitcairn - Concert Violinist to Perform

Celebrated violin virtuoso Elizabeth Pitcairn will perform in partnership with the legendary 1720 "Red Mendelssohn" Stradivarius violin Sunday, March 29, at 3pm as the second concert in First United Methodist Church's 2019-2020 Concert Series. Ms. Pitcairn has earned a stunning reputation as one of America's most beloved soloists. Her performances have taken her around the world as a recitalist, as well as solo performer with numerous orchestras. The instrument she plays is said to have inspired the Academy Award-winning film "The Red Violin." Ms. Pitcairn is featured on the 10th Anniversary edition of "The Red Violin" DVD in a special called "The Auction Block."

In conjunction with our concert, Proctor's Theater will be hosting two showings of "The Red Violin" on Thursday, March 26th, at 12 noon and at 7:00 pm. Elizabeth Pitcairn will be present only at the 7 pm showing for a brief Question and Answer period and a demonstration of the instrument. Tickets can be purchased from Proctor's Theater for \$9 adults, \$6 for seniors and students for the 12:00 noon show, or \$9 each for the 7:00 pm show. Seating will be limited to 80 people so advance ticket sales are suggested.

Passionate about youth and education, Elizabeth serves as President and Artistic Director of the Luzerne Music Center which provides training for gifted young musicians from ages 9 to 18 in the summers in Lake Luzerne.

Please mark your calendars and tell your friends and family about this wonderful opportunity to hear Elizabeth Pitcairn and this extremely rare violin!

For more details, call the office at 518-374-4403.

## E-Newsletter Available

If you'd like to receive *The Spire* via email instead of a hard-copy, which does save resources, please contact the office with your email address.



# KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - December 2019

## PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

### Our Prayers

#### Christian support is extended to the:

- Family & friends of Carol Brumbaugh, our friend & longtime former member, who passed away on January 8 (details on pg. 3)
- Family & friends of Shirley Rivest, our friend & longtime member, who passed away on January 6 (details on pg. 3)
- Family & friends of Robert Mackeown, our friend & longtime member, who passed away a couple years ago (details on pg. 3)

#### Our Christian support is also extended to:

Jan Butts	Mary Neville
Rudy Dehn	Nancy Oldow
Eileen Deming	Rev. Bill Rowe
June Dieffenbach	Heather Phillips Sands
Liz Fogle	Dick Smith
Roark Frisoni	Marylois Tupper
Jen & Merrick Fuller	José Velasquez
The Greenwood Family	Joe & Barbara Waring
Jan Guzior	Doug Wood
Courtney & Jack McEwan	

And to: Belinda Forbes, our Nicaragua Missionary; our home-bound; those who are grieving; and Volunteer in Mission Teams

#### We celebrate with:

- Lois Isles, who celebrated her 90th birthday on January 17th. Happy Birthday!

### Our Presence

Date	Worship
Dec. 1	69
Dec. 8	74
Dec. 15	75
Dec. 22	117
Dec. 29	55

### Our Gifts

Date	Amount
Dec. 1	\$ 5,606.00
Dec. 8	27,766.36
Dec. 15	9,013.40
Dec. 22	2,353.00
Dec. 29	1,958.00

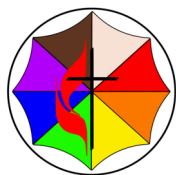


## OUR SERVICE

#### Date

- 12/1 —Special collection received during Worship on United Methodist Student Day (\$61)
- 12/4-6 —Opened sanctuary for all to see sunlight shine through the Rose Window and encircle altar cross
- 12/11 —Distributed personal care items to those in need through our SUSTAIN Ministry
- 12/22 —Musical offerings at Worship included guest musicians, The Emery String Quartet
- 12/28 —Youth Service: Served free Community Brunch
- Dec. —Holiday services held & open to all: *Long Night Advent Service*; *Service of 'Lessons & Carols'*; *Christmas Dawn*
- Mission Moments presented during Worship: *PrimeTimers VIM*; *Heifer International*; *CWS Blanket Program*; and *UMC Social Principles*
- Participated in *Alternative Christmas Gifts* for: CWS--*Blankets* (\$515); Community Breakfast (\$910); SUSTAIN Ministry (\$735); Acción Médico Cristina (\$155); and Heifer International (\$305)
- Continue to prepare & serve Sunday Community Breakfast, free to all: # served=192; # volunteers weekly=12
- Created 2019 Advent Booklet with reflections on the theme "Waiting in Hope"
- Sunday 2nd Hour offered: Extended Coffee; Christmas Caroling to Shutins; Carol Sing around Fireplace

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



*The Spire*

**First United Methodist Church  
603 State Street  
Schenectady, New York 12305**

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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***Serving Schenectady for over 225 Years***

**NEXT SPIRE MAILED:**

February 26; articles due Feb. 15

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

**‘LIKE’ us on FACEBOOK!**

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**Coming Soon: It's our 7th  
Annual Lenten Photo Show!**



This year our photos are going to interpret phrases rather than individual words. Can you picture these five themes:

**STONE ROLLED AWAY  
THE WOMEN WERE SILENT  
VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING  
DO NOT BE AFRAID  
SEE AND BELIEVE**

They are the weekly themes for the 2020 Lenten Photo Show. This will be our 7th Annual Photo Show and you can help make it our best. During the 6 weeks of Lent, which begins on February 26<sup>th</sup>, you are encouraged to submit photos that relate to the weekly themes. Then on Easter, we will all have the opportunity to see how our photographers view the themes. Watch for full details...and happy picture taking!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Early March programs/events:

Sunday, March 1

**1st Sunday in Lent /  
Family Sunday**

Sunday, March 8

**Annual Church Meeting**

Tuesday, March 10

**Church Night**

Saturday, March 14

**Book Discussion**

**WEBSITES AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

**First United Methodist Church**

E-Mail: [fumcschenectady@yahoo.com](mailto:fumcschenectady@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org)

**Upper New York Annual Conference**

Website: [www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

**Albany District Office**

E-Mail: [albanydistrict@unyumc.org](mailto:albanydistrict@unyumc.org)

Website: [www.unyumc.org/districts/detail/2](http://www.unyumc.org/districts/detail/2)