



THE

**Spire**

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Website: [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org) E-Mail: [fumcschenectady@yahoo.com](mailto:fumcschenectady@yahoo.com)



Accessible

Vol. 83 No. 12

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

April 2020

## FUTURE SUNDAYS

- 8:30 Community Breakfast—*Take Out*
- 10:00 Sunday Worship—Online
- 11:00 Second Hour Program—Zoom:  
"How Is It With Your Soul?"
- 12:05 Ministry Team Gatherings—Zoom
- 7:00 Sunday Night Study—Zoom

### Worship Text:

- April 5 **Palm Sunday**  
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-26; Matthew 21:1-11  
"Waving Palms in Protest"
- April 12 **Easter**  
Jeremiah 31:1-6; Mark 16:1-8  
"Great Joy!"
- April 19 **2nd Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 2:14a, 22-32; John 20:19-31  
"Meanings of Easter"
- April 26 **Native American Ministries Sunday**  
Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Luke 24:13-35  
"Emmaus"

### Second Hour Events/Programs:

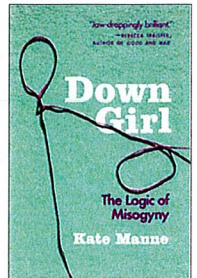
- April 5 *How is it with your soul?* Gathering-Zoom
- April 12 **Easter:** 7th Annual Photo Show-Online  
*How is it with your soul?* Gathering-Zoom
- April 26 Intersectional Justice Committee-Zoom  
*How is it with your soul?* Gathering-Zoom

## Book Discussion Zoom

### "Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny"

by Kate Manne

We have rescheduled the book discussion on *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* to Saturday, April 4th, at 10:00 AM via Zoom. If you are interested, you are welcome to join using the below information. If you don't have a computer/video, you can call in at the appointed time using one of the below phone numbers.



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. Manne examines events that set the stage for the 2016 US presidential election.

Topic: Intersectional Justice Book Club Discussion  
Time: **Apr. 4 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US & CAN)**

### Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/399201575>

Meeting ID: 399 201 575

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,399201575# US

+16513728299,,399201575# US

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 651 372 8299 US

+1 213 338 8477 US (Los Angeles)

Meeting ID: 399 201 575

Find your local number:

<https://zoom.us/j/399201575>

**Next Book Discussion on:** "The Time is Now: A Call to Uncommon Courage" by Joan Chittister.



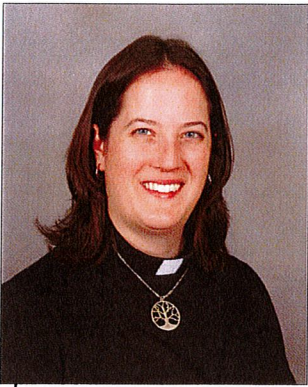
**Holy Week  
begins on Palm  
Sunday, April 5**

**Lenten Photo Show**

**Share your photos!**

**See pages 6 & 7 for details!**





## From Our Pastor

Beloveds of God,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer. In this unprecedented time, it is particularly good to remember that God is with us, and that our spiritual practices are a means of grace and an antidote to anxiety.

It has been an unexpectedly eventful month, and I admit to giggling at the memes on social media that say "I didn't expect to give up THIS MUCH for Lent." At the same time, grace abounds, and the adaptations we've made to our communal worship and our shared life together are helping us through.

If you are not getting worship information via email, it is available on our website. Worship currently exists in two parts: 1. An extended bulletin complete with prayers, scripture, and instructions for at home worship as well as links to music and sermon. 2. An online gathering at 11 AM used to check in with each other and offer our joys and concerns together. The information on how to get on this is on our church calendar on our website. **PLEASE NOTE:** If you want to connect but are not online, please call the church office at 518 374 4403 so we can share information and make sure you are still connected.

I've been thinking recently about Barbara Brown Taylor's Book quote in "An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith":

As important as it is to mark the places where we meet God, I worry about what happens when we build a house for God. I am speaking no longer of the Temple in Jerusalem but of the house of worship on the corner, where people of faith meet to say their prayers, because saying them together reminds them of who they are better than saying them alone. This is good, and all good things cast shadows. Do we build God a house so that we can choose when we go see God? Do we build God a house in lieu of having God stay at ours? Plus, what happens to the rest of the world when we build four walls – even four gorgeous walls – cap them with a steepled roof, and designate *that* the House of God? What happens to the riverbanks, the mountaintops, the deserts, and the trees? What happens to the people who never show up in our houses of God? <sup>1</sup>

We are getting the chance to consider this from another angle these days. I love our beautiful building, in its useful location, full of all the things we need to worship God and care for each other and our neighbors. I yearn to lead worship in our sanctuary again. And yet, there is something inherently good about worshipping at home, and remembering that God is with us wherever we are. It is good to think about the geographical breadth of our current Sunday worship, and it has been a joy to see new faces invited in even on the second time we met.

I am delighted to share that "Bridging the Distance" groups are being created to maintain connections and care within our community. These are another way to remember that God is with us, wherever we are. If you wish to be part of these groups and haven't been invited, please let the office know ASAP and we will make sure you get connected.

The days ahead remain uncharted, but God remains faithful, and we remain together as an expression of God's love in the world. May grace abound in all that you are (and are not) doing.

—Sara

<sup>1</sup> Barbara Brown Taylor, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

## Healing Service on April 2

The Schenectady Clergy Against Hate is hosting a Healing Service Thursday, April 2nd, at 6:30 pm via Zoom. All are welcome. Contact details follow:

Schenectady Clergy Against Hate Prayer Service  
Time: Apr 2, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/199805063>

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,199805063#

For audio only,

Dial +1 646 876 9923 then enter

Meeting ID: 199 805 063 #







## In Memoriam

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

† **Marylois Tupper**, our dear friend and long-time member, who passed away on Sunday, March 22, 2020. Marylois was an active member of our church family for almost 70 years. A Memorial Service celebrating her life will be held at a later date and announced. Please keep her children, Shirley Freeman, Nancy Mullen and Ronald Tupper, and their families in your prayers. Caring cards and notes can be sent to: The Tupper Family, c/o Nancy Mullen, 2825 Rolling View Dr., Waukesha, WI 53188.

† **Alma Polsinelle**, our dear friend and long-time member, who passed away on March 16, 2020. Alma was a member of our church family for over 75 years. A Memorial Service celebrating her life will be held at a later date and announced. Please keep her children, Larry Polsinelle and Lynn Harkness, and their families in your prayers. Caring cards and notes can be sent to: The Polsinelle Family c/o Larry and Lynn, 609 Sacandaga Road, Scotia, NY 12302.

† **Shirley Rivest**, our dear friend and long-time member, who passed away on January 6. Shirley was an active member of our church family for 75 years. A Memorial Service celebrating her life was to be held in April but is postponed to late August or early fall; final arrangements announced. Please continue to keep Shirley's children, Brian, Martha, Rachel, and Ron and their families, in your prayers. Caring cards and notes can be sent to: The Rivest Family, c/o Martha Stanton, 5627 NE 204th St., Kenmore, WA 98028.

Dear Friends of Home Furnishings Prog,  
...Thank you for your financial gifts in support of our program. Your support plays a vital role in our ability to fulfill our mission to provide basic home furnishings to families and individuals in transition and need throughout Schenectady County...We also appreciate your support by providing space in your facility for our operations. We look forward to continue this relationship as HFP helps needy families and individuals...Thank you again, for helping us help others.  
—Wayne J. Brule, HFP Treasurer



Dear Friends...my profound personal thanks for making our vital work possible. Your contributions to the Moon-Catcher Project... help us to remain optimistic and focused on our goal: Keeping girls in school. ...Because of organizations like yours, we have been able to provide MoonCatcher Kits to over 10,000 girls in Africa. ...Here at home we held 36 MoonBees producing kits that have been sent around the world. We also collected over 1000 packages of menstrual supplies for local women and girls who rely on food pantries and shelters. Thank you...with deepest gratitude,  
—Ellie von Wellsheim,  
Founder & Exec. Director

Dear Friends, It was so nice to receive your... contribution to the Chaplain Program at Ellis Medicine. Your support helps us in providing for the spiritual needs of people while they are hospitalized. Chaplains are available at Ellis around the clock...people in and around the Schenectady community are able to have someone present to offer prayer and spiritual comfort in emergency situations. ...thank you. I hope you and all of your church family are happy and healthy.  
—Rev. Anthony W. Green  
Pastoral Care & Volunteer Services Director



## April's "Church Night"

**Tuesday, April 14**

All Ministry Teams can hold their monthly meetings on *Church Night*, held the 2nd Tuesday of each month. And all are welcome at Church Council meetings. The schedule is: 6:30 pm Ministry Teams meet—Online  
7:30 pm Church Council meets—Zoom

## Altar Flowers

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

**3/8 in loving memory of Shirley Rivest**

**We are not ordering Easter or other flowers for the altar at this time but the Altar Guild suggests if you'd like to brighten someone's day, most local florists are still delivering including our local vender, Felthousen Florist.**







# April 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> 7:00 PM Midweek Check-in / Coffee Hour—Zoom	<b>2</b> 6:30 PM Healing Service—Zoom 7:00 PM Small Group Leaders— Zoom	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 10:00-11:30 AM Book Discussion —Zoom 10:00 - 12 noon Flowering Plant Drive-By Sale in parking lot
<b>5</b> <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> <b>10:00 AM Worship at Home</b> —online 11:00 AM Worship 2nd Hour —Zoom 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study —Zoom	<b>6</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor Office Hours —phone or online	<b>7</b> <i>Council Reports due</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting—online	<b>8</b> 7:00 PM Midweek Check-in / Coffee Hour—Zoom	<b>9</b> <b>Maundy Thursday</b> <b>7:00 PM Joint Maundy Thursday Worship at Home</b> —online	<b>10</b> <b>Good Friday</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Holy Saturday</b>
<b>12</b> <b>EASTER</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast—Take Out 8:30 AM Annual Photo Show —online <b>10:00 AM Worship at Home</b> —online 11:00 AM Worship 2nd Hour —Zoom 12:05 PM Annual Photo Show —online 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study —Zoom	<b>13</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor Office Hours —phone or online 7:00 PM Staff Pastor Parish Rela- tions Committee— Zoom	<b>14</b> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting—online  <b>Church Night</b> 6:30 PM Ministry Teams Meet—online 7:30 PM Church Council—Zoom	<b>15</b> <i>Spire articles due</i> 7:00 PM Midweek Check-in / Coffee Hour—Zoom	<b>16</b> 7:00 PM Small Group Leaders— Zoom	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast—Take Out <b>10:00 AM Worship at Home</b> —online 11:00 AM Worship 2nd Hour —Zoom 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study —Zoom	<b>20</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor Office Hours —phone or online	<b>21</b> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting—online 7:00 PM Children & Youth Ministries Team—Zoom	<b>22</b> 7:00 PM Midweek Check-in / Coffee Hour—Zoom	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26 Native American Ministries Sunday</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast—Take Out <b>10:00 AM Worship at Home</b> —online 11:00 AM Worship 2nd Hour —Zoom 12:05 PM Intersectional Justice Committee—Zoom 7:00 PM Sunday Night Study —Zoom	<b>27</b> 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor Office Hours —phone or online	<b>28</b> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting—online 7:00 PM Trustees —Zoom	<b>29</b> 7:00 PM Midweek Check-in / Coffee Hour—Zoom	<b>30</b> 7:00 PM Small Group Leaders— Zoom		

**We are in the season of EASTER (white or purple) -  
Easter and the Sundays following Easter are a time when we celebrate the new life we find through Jesus.**



## Church Calendar

The Church Calendar is updated through April, there are a lot of changes to make it reflect our current social-distancing reality. With many of our regular activities unable to occur, there is more space in our calendar than we are used to.

The Zoom account we have can host meetings of up to 100 people for up to 24 hours at a time (but only one meeting at a time). If you have an idea of a way you'd like to connect with others, feel free to offer it. These could be wide ranging: painting together with cameras aimed at the paintings, prayer groups, book discussions, connections for parents and/or for kids, advocacy organizing to rebuild a more just world, gardening tips... and those are just the tip of the iceberg. Feel free to offer your interest, energy, and/or leadership!

### Weekly All-Church Zooms

We have two all-church Zooms each week! One is on Sundays at 11am, during which we will answer "How is it with your soul?," share joys and concerns, etc. The second is on Wednesday nights at 7, and is just for chatting, like a communal Coffee Hour. Link information is below, please note that the sign-ins are DIFFERENT.

**Topic: Second Hour - Second Hour "How is it with your soul?" Gathering**

Time: **SUNDAYS** at 11am Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Join Sundays Zoom Meeting online here:

<https://zoom.us/j/843378152>

Meeting ID: 843 378 152

One tap mobile:

+19294362866,,843378152# US (NY)

Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 843 378 152

**Topic: Midweek Check-In / Coffee Hour**

Time: **WEDNESDAYS** at 7pm Eastern Time (US & CAN)

Join Wednesdays Zoom Meeting online here:

<https://zoom.us/j/985364929>

Meeting ID: 985 364 929

One tap mobile:

+19294362866,,985364929# US (New York)

Dial by your location:

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 985 364 929



## New Sunday Night Study—Zoom "The Psalms"

The Sunday Night Study—Zoom, led by Pastor Sara, is starting a new series focusing on The Psalms. All are welcome. Meetings are held at 7:00 Sunday nights via Zoom. Contact Pastor Sara or the office with any questions.

### Music Notes

1. A reminder that the final concert of the 2019-2020 Concert Series, organist Isabella Demers, is expected to be here on May 10, 2020. (see pg. 9 for details)
2. Watch this space for exciting news for the 2020-2021 Concert Series

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

## Online Giving & Donations

During this time of change and uncertainty, we know that there are disruptions in many people's incomes as well as the rest of their lives. If you are unable to give because of your own financial situation, we understand. If you are able to give, but haven't yet set up online giving, this would be an ideal time to do so. Our secure giving site is accessible through our church website ([www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org)) or read the QR code below. The website contains a button that will take you to the electronic donations signup page, which will walk you through the process. If you prefer to sign-up on a paper form, contact the office and an authorization form will be sent to you.

We will, of course, still deposit checks, and you are welcome to mail them in.

The church's expenses used in kin-dom building exist even as we change our mode of operation. Your tithes and gifts remain imperative to the work we do. After passing the budget last week, I know we are committed to maintaining it! Thank you for the many ways you give!







## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SCHENECTADY 2020 LENTEN PHOTO SHOW

First United Methodist Church of Schenectady invites you to participate in its 2020 Lenten Photo Show.

### EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE BY:

#### 1. SUBMITTING PHOTOS THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN

For each of five weeks during Lent, First United Methodist Church of Schenectady has chosen a different Lenten theme. During each of these weeks we are accepting one to three photos that you have taken that reflect the weekly theme. The themes are:

**Feb. 26-March 3: STONE ROLLED AWAY**

**March 4-10: THE WOMEN WERE SILENT**

**March 11-17: VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING**

**March 18-24: DO NOT BE AFRAID**

**March 25-31: SEE AND BELIEVE**



Photo by Barbara Armstrong

You may submit your photos either electronically or in hard copy via mail.

- To submit your photos electronically, save them as JPG files of between 300bpi and 3MB, attach them to an email, enter 'Photo Show' as the subject of the email, type your name, address, phone #, a title for the photo, and the theme your photos represent in the body of the email, and send to [fumcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:fumcphotoshow@gmail.com).
- To submit your photos in hard copy, print them out on 8x10 photo paper, enclose them and a completed copy of this form in an envelope, and send the envelope to FUMC Lenten Photo Show, 603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305. Copies of this form may be downloaded from the church's website at [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org) or may be obtained by calling the church office at 518-374-4403.

### First United Methodist Church of Schenectady Lenten Photo Show: ENTRY FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Theme that the photo represents (choose one per entry):

- ☐ Stone Rolled Away    ☐ The Women Were Silent    ☐ Very Early in the Morning  
☐ Do Not Be Afraid    ☐ See and Believe

TITLE OF THE PHOTO: \_\_\_\_\_

Email to: [fumcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:fumcphotoshow@gmail.com)

Mail to: **FUMC LENTEN PHOTO SHOW, 603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305**

By submitting a photo, the photographer gives FUMC copyright privileges to display the photo.  
Photos will not be returned.

#### 2. VOTING FOR THE PHOTOS YOU THINK BEST REFLECT THE THEMES

On a weekly basis, the photos submitted for each of the themes will be posted on First United Methodist Church's website ([www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/fumcschenectady](https://www.facebook.com/fumcschenectady)). You may go to either of these sites to vote for the photo or photos that you think best reflect the themes. You may also vote when we re-gather in person. Please vote only once for any given photo.

#### 3. VISITING THE SHOW on EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 12 (online)

On Easter Sunday, April 12th, the photos will be displayed on our website and Facebook page for viewing, and voting. (When we are able to re-gather in person for Worship, the photos will be on display at church as part of our celebration of being together! Voting will continue until then.)





## † HOLY WEEK †

**As we seek to remember and celebrate Holy Week while also creating safety for the vulnerable, our traditions are going to be adapted. We hope that the offerings will be meaningful for all who participate.**

### **FLOWERING PLANT Drive-By Sale**

**April 4**

On Saturday, April 4th, 10 am – 12 noon, our Children and Youth Ministries will hold a Flowering Plant Drive-by Sale in the church parking lot. Potted flowers to select from will include: hyacinths, tulips, and tete a tete (tiny daffodils). Cost is \$4 for 4" pot; \$6 for 6" pot. Proceeds go to support our Youth Group.



### **PALM SUNDAY**

**April 5**

**Online Worship Service @ 10 AM (or at time of your choice)**

Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and marks the beginning of Holy Week.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**April 9**

**Joint Worship with Emmanuel Friedens @ 7 PM**

According to the Gospels, on Jesus' last night with his disciples, he offered them profound blessings. More information on our shared Worship will be announced as it is decided.

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

**April 10**



### **EASTER SUNDAY**

**April 12**

**Online Easter Worship Service @ 10 AM (or at time of your choice)**

On this holiest of Christian holidays, we celebrate the power of life over even death. Our worship this year will aim to bring celebration directly into your home.

**Second Hour "How is it With Your Soul Gathering" @ 11AM via Zoom**

**Photo Show** — The photos submitted during Lent will be on display after we are able to regather for Worship in person, as part of our celebration of being together. Voting will continue at that time too! People can view and vote for their favorites in each of these five themes: *Stone Rolled Away; The Women Were Silent; Very Early in the Morning; Do Not Be Afraid; See and Believe.*



# The Sunday School Scoop

April 2020



April 4 (Sat.)	Flowering Plant Drive-By Sale in parking lot; supports youth activities
April 5	<b>Palm Sunday</b> — Children's Time in Worship—online
April 12	<b>Easter Sunday</b> — Children's Time in Worship—online Lenten Photo Show—online
April 19	Children's Time in Worship—online
April 26	Children's Time in Worship—online

## SUMMER CAMP for ALL

Several camps are owned and operated by the United Methodist Church and offer wonderful camping experiences for children, youth, adults and families.



Skye Farm camp is located in the Adirondacks, off Northway Exit 24. Another nearby camp is Sky Lake in Windsor,

NY, where our church retreats have been held.

Summer Camp provides endless laughter, meaningful worship, and important friendships; retreats provide a unique experience in a beautiful setting. To learn more and for a complete list of the camps offered at each campground for 2020, go to [www.campsandretreats.org](http://www.campsandretreats.org).

## A Ministry Moment

**"Shared joy is double joy and shared sorrow is half-sorrow."**

Swedish Proverb

## Take-Out Breakfast on Sundays



At this time, our Sunday Community Breakfast will continue by Take-Out only from 8:30-9:30 AM and is free and open to all; available weekly except on the first Sundays of each month.



## Mark your calendar: It's a Baby Shower!

At this time, a Baby Shower is planned for Pastor Sara and her husband, Kevin, Sunday, May 17th, after Worship in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome. The baby is due June 19th; gender surprise at birth!

A baby registry has been setup at Amazon.com and is under: Kevin M. Nelson and Sara Baron, of which, they setup. Gifts from the registry or other gifts for the baby you may choose to give, would be appreciated. The theme for the nursery is primary colors and woodland animals, with an infusion of black cats. They will be using G diapers.

If planning on attending the shower, please RSVP to Jan Lucente at [jslucente3@gmail.com](mailto:jslucente3@gmail.com) or contact the church office.



## Mask Making Project

This week Ellis Hospital reached out to Schenectady clergy to ask for help making masks for staff/patients. Pastor Sara has asked us if we could help with the project. The local effort is being coordinated with QUILT Schenectady. For instructions on how to make masks and more information, visit their website at <https://quiltschenectady.org> then select "Mask Project FAQ's" for printed instructions; video instructions on site as well. Please package masks in groups of 20, each group placed in a clear plastic bag. You can deposit the masks in a large marked covered bin located just outside the Chapel Street entrance at church or in a box inside the Gathering Room at church if you have a key. I will make sure the masks get delivered to Ellis Medicine and other organizations in need. If you can not get to church because of mobility or other restrictions, please let me know and we will arrange for someone to pick them up. You can place them on a covered front porch or hang them from your front doorknob to help limit exposure to others.

Thank you for coming together as a community of love to help our neighbors!

—Sue Learner

## Food Pantry Needs Volunteers

Excerpts of March 19th letter received from Schenectady Clergy Against Hate:

*Dear Siblings in Faith,*

*As we rise up to face the coronavirus....members of our respective faith communities are being called to assist our collective effort in a wide variety of ways. For the vast majority of us the number one thing we can do right now is staying home, keeping calm, and practicing good social distancing as much as possible to slow down transmission of the virus. For others however, especially those of us who are less likely to face serious complications from the virus... may feel called to volunteer and ensure vital services to our neighbors in need remain operational.*

*...Schenectady Community Ministries Food Pantry, our county's largest...food provider, remains fully operational (Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 8:30-11:30 am)...a call has been put out...3-5 more volunteers needed each day...at 839 Albany St. All who are interested in participating...(fill out short form at <https://forms.gle/8etchnyXUDJ4fskbv6> or call church office for a form) and a SiCM staff member will be in contact with you... training will be provided and the pantry is strictly following all public health guidelines..*



## Isabelle Demers Concert Organist Sunday, May 10 3:00 PM

Isabelle Demers, Concert Organist, is scheduled to perform here at FUMC on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. as a part of our 2019-2020 Concert Series. Not only is she the Head of the Organ Department at Baylor University in Texas, but she is also an outstanding organist, playing throughout the United States and Canada. Possessing "bracing virtuosity" (*Chicago Classical Review*), her performances are spell-binding.

Dr. Demers was born in LaChine, Quebec, in 1982, and started piano lessons when she was 6. She entered the Music Conservatory in Montreal when she was 11 and began her study of the organ at the age of 16. She spent a year in Paris at the Normal School of Music, earned her master's degree at the Juilliard School in New York City in 2006 and continued there for her doctoral degree. During all that time, and afterwards, she has received fellowships and scholarships, performed at various American and Canadian Organ Conventions, participated in several competitions, and is regularly invited to play at the Basilique Notre-Dame de Montreal. She has made several highly acclaimed recordings, which have been called "expressive . . . profound and searching" (*RSCM Church Music Quarterly*). Truly a remarkable musician!

As of this writing, we don't know whether the emergency measures surrounding the COVID-19 crisis will still be in place in May. We are announcing this recital in the hopes that restrictions will have been lifted by then, but of course will keep you informed. As always with FUMC's concerts, this one is free and open to all - our church friends, families, and the community at large. We look forward to being together to enjoy some beautiful music on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Please keep this event in mind!

## What's Your Email Address?

Our newsletters, special announcement, and now our Sunday Worship and special gatherings are available online. If you'd like to receive the Sunday Worship service and/or newsletter, etc. by email, please contact the office to confirm we have your email address.



# Your Shut-down/Quarantine Survival Kit

From Erin Belanger, LMHC, of Samaritan Counseling Center

The world has changed. In a matter of a few days, we went from living life as usual and completing our daily routines while our kids completed theirs... to a loss of our sense of routine and grounding. We keep hearing phrases like "abundance of caution" and "unprecedented times." We may feel anxiety, anger, frustration, and fatigue as the world around us comes to a halt. For many of us who have children, there is also the pressure to maintain their routine while finding ways to keep a paycheck coming in, as childcare options close around us. What are we supposed to do with all of this? How do we cope and stay calm when the grocery stores are being emptied out and some of our friends and family are buying guns as they prophesize about the coming pandemonium?

**1. Take some deep, slow breaths...** really... take a few right now. Zaccaro et al. in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, How Breath-Control Can Change Your Life: A Systematic Review on Psycho-Physiological Correlates of Slow Breathing*, tell us that slow breathing improves our emotional control and psychological well-being in measurable ways. Breathe and be still... the anxiety and stress will challenge us and sometimes tip us... re-center... and breathe... and be still.

**2. Focus on good enough.** Listening to your children's teachers, peeking in on social media, or taking in the popular advice about routines can leave you feeling overwhelmed by all the "should." Zoom out. Remember that balancing everything well means not doing anything great right now. Let go and aim for "good enough." This means making sure you know what the basic requirements are for continued survival, so to speak. It also means focusing on the here and now, day by day decisions. No long term planning can happen until we get to the other side of this crisis. Focus, instead, on:

- What you have to do to maintain financial health and career well-being;
- What your children need, at a minimum, to maintain their learning goals and their emotional and physical health;
- What you need to help manage your stress and anxiety so that you can stay focused on the big picture.
- Sitting down with your supports, partners, and children and identifying ways you can all work together to achieve good enough. (Definitely remember to collectively breathe during this process!)

**3. Live in the grey...** our natural tendency is to move toward black and white thinking when we are anxious. We need answers to help us make sense of what we can do. "Flattening the curve" is a good example of this - social media pictures would have us believe that complete shut-down and avoidance of contact is the best

solution. Going too far in that direction, however, could mean that we see the same problem play out again in a few months, requiring another shut down. Read *Flattening the Coronavirus Curve is not Enough* to better understand some of the grey area we need to consider when making these decisions.

**4. Naturally, these points lead to the next... expect that your partner, children, family and friends are going to be more anxious, stressed, and irritable.**

- Know that they are not attacking you, or misbehaving in the case of children. This will help you maintain a calm response and/or walk away for a moment so you don't add anxiety and anger to an already tense situation.
- Be flexible and understanding, and be as patient as you are able. Remember, you and everyone around you are struggling with some level of fear related to powerful themes of the unknown, and a lack of control/powerlessness.
- No one wrestles well with these themes without support... when your supports are also struggling with them, it can get messy. If you have children, remember that you are their support through this. Read guidelines from the CDC for talking with your children.
- Most importantly, breathe, slow down, and focus on what you can control and remain reassuring for those depending on you while you lean on your supports.

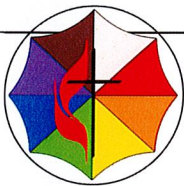
**5. Note if use less healthy coping mechanisms...** As you're taking care to be mindful of the anxiety others are feeling and how that may spill onto you, take care to also note when you begin turning to your less healthy coping mechanisms. Alcohol, drugs, overeating, oversleeping, excessive shopping, etc can all make us feel better momentarily, but they ultimately wear us down more and leave us more vulnerable to the impacts of intense social anxiety. If you are using these outlets to cope, ask for help before it goes too far.

At the end of the day, we are ultimately working to understand and then lead from the grey, middle ground. To do so, we need to:

- Maintain awareness of the situation, without being saturated by the news;
- Manage our anxiety responses so our decision making stays grounded and healthy;
- Lead in our own networks by slowing down reactivity, and focusing on what we know and what we can do.

There is troubling news about this virus everywhere we look... and there is also good news about the successful work that our scientific community is doing to combat the virus and save lives. Take in both...in reasonable doses.





## Mission Moments

Delivered during Worship

### ► Labyrinth

*Delivered on March 8, 2020 by Jean Gustafson*

Good morning! I know that most of you don't come to church to hear a commercial - but today I'd like to give you my sales pitch ..... and I'd LOVE for you to try my product!

What am I talking about? I am talking about the Labyrinth. You may ask - What is a labyrinth? A labyrinth is an ancient symbol that relates to wholeness. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering, but purposeful path. The labyrinth represents a journey to our own center and back again out into the world. Labyrinths have long been used as meditation and prayer tools. We have one available for us to use. It is on canvas - and it will be set up in Fellowship Hall. We all have a wonderful opportunity to walk or skip or crawl or roll along the path of the labyrinth. You can do it with a prayer on your lips, a song in your heart or a concern in your mind.

Some people find that their journey on the labyrinth frees the mind from nagging and perplexing issues, allowing them to enter a calm and peaceful state that renews the sacred space within. The journey seems always to renew, strengthen and deepen prayer. For me, the journey allowed me to listen to the quiet voice within.

As you follow the path, the only necessary guidance is that you pay attention to your experience. There is no right way to travel on a labyrinth. You only have to enter and follow the path.

Once you start, you are on a journey to the center. There is no need to rush. Some will travel fast, others more slowly.

If others are with you, please respect the sacredness of the experience by maintaining a prayerful silence. Because there is just one path, you may encounter someone on your journey. Pause and let your friend pass in their prayer centered meditation. Whatever you experience is part of the journey. Please do not feel that there is a right way to do this. Simply relax and let what happens happen.

So if you are like many of us... and want a bit more instruction before trying something new- here are some basic guidelines.

1. Focus: Pause and wait at the entrance. Become quiet and centered. Give acknowledgement through a bow, nod or other gesture and then enter.
2. Experience the journey: Observe the process. When you reach the center, stay there and focus for a while. Leave when it feels appropriate. Be attentive on the way out.
3. Exit: Turn and face the entrance. Give an acknowledgement of ending - such as Amen, Thank you or Peace.
4. Reflect: After walking the labyrinth, reflect on your experience.



This is truly a gift you can give to yourself!

I hope after hearing this- some of you or all of you are interested! When and where can you do this? The labyrinth will be available Wednesdays from 11-2 and 4-6 for the next five weeks, and Sunday March 15 after our Service. The location is in Fellowship Hall.

I hope many of you can take advantage of this unique experience. If you have questions - you can contact Barb Armstrong or myself.

Thanks so much for your attention.

*Mission Moments Continues on next page....*



## ► United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

*Delivered at Worship online on March 15, 2020 by Jan Huston*

Next Sunday is UMCOR Sunday. We are trying to let you know about United Methodist “Special Sundays” a week in advance so that you will be prepared to use the special offering envelopes that are in the bulletins. If we are still not worshipping together next week, I’m sure you can give another way. Or maybe we’ll save the envelopes for another time.



Most of you have heard that many of us think that UMCOR – the United Methodist Committee on Relief – is one of the best parts of the United Methodist Church. We are aware of the wonderful work they do all over the world to provide relief after disasters. At this church we have participated in making hygiene kits and cleaning buckets which are used by UMCOR. I have a friend who was helping to develop hospices in Africa for people with AIDS. UMCOR donated funds to help provide relief for those patients.

Last week I was in Tucson, Arizona, with a United Methodist Primetimers group. I learned about another activity supported by UMCOR! The week was called “Immigration Immersion.” The week was packed with information, experiences, and opportunities to meet many volunteers in humanitarian groups. One of the groups is Arizona Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON). JFON is an organization with a national network with offices in many states. It started in a United Methodist church in Tucson. We were told that it was started by UMCOR! The national board has many United Methodists. One of the Tucson board members organized our activities for the week.

Arizona JFON (AZJFON) offers a hospitality ministry that welcomes immigrants by (1) providing affordable, high-quality immigration legal services to low-income immigrants, (2) engaging in advocacy for immigrant rights, and (3) offering education to communities of faith and to the public. Volunteers set appointments, welcome clients, conduct interviews with new clients, and much more. There is a bilingual staff attorney who then works with clients. She is a very capable young woman who gave us an excellent presentation.

I was pleased to learn that UMCOR helps to fund this organization!! Our FUMC budget includes a small amount for UMCOR. But we want to highlight this special time for giving to this organization that provides relief and justice to so many at times of crisis. You can either send in a check with UMCOR in the notation or you can wait until we are together again and have the special envelopes available. Whichever way we do it, contributing to UMCOR is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of people in crisis!!

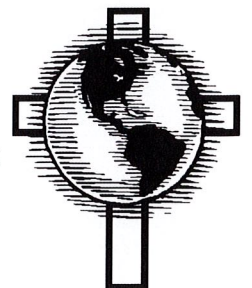
## ► UMCOR Sunday

*Delivered at Worship online on March 22, 2020 by Jan Huston*

Today is UMCOR Sunday – the day we are urged to donate to the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

I encourage you to watch UMCOR videos on You Tube. Two especially good ones are “West Virginia flood relief” and “75 Years of Hope.” There are many others. Watching these videos can make us proud of this work of the United Methodist Church.

A small amount is in our church’s benevolence budget for UMCOR. If you would like to contribute more, you can write a check to FUMC with “UMCOR – special Sunday” in the notation. Or you can wait until we are together again and use the special envelopes designated for this cause.





## KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - February 2020

### PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

#### Our PRAYERS

##### Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of Marylois Tupper, who passed away on March 22nd (see details on page 3)

The family & friends Alma Polsinelle, who passed away on March 16th (see details on page 3)

The family & friends Kevin Van Dunk, who passed away on March 14th (Norm Randolph's brother)

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

Jan Butts	Courtney & Jack McEwan
Eileen Deming	Mary Neville
June Dieffenbach	Rev. Bill Rowe
Liz Fogle	Heather Phillips Sands
Roark Frisoni	Dick Smith
Jen & Merrick Fuller	Joan Townsend
Jan Guzior	Joe & Barbara Waring
Zack Long	Doug Wood

And to: Belinda Forbes, our missionary in Nicaragua; VIM teams; those impacted by tornadoes in TN; those ill, those grieving, & those truly isolated; and all front line & essential workers.

##### Prayers of Joy for:

Work being done to flatten the curve  
 Ways we can still connect with each other  
 Our Communications Box, made by Dick Smith. Thank you!

#### Our PRESENCE

Date	Worship
February 2	54
February 9	65
February 16	64
February 23	79

#### Our GIFTS

Date	Amount
Feb. 2	\$3,394.15
Feb. 9	2,101.04
Feb. 16	6,782.00
Feb. 23	2,292.00



#### Our SERVICE

- | Date |   |
|------|---|
| 2/2  | —Special collection taken on <i>Souper</i> Bowl Sunday for area food pantries (\$433.15)  |
| 2/12 | —Distributed personal care items to those in need through our SUSTIAN Ministry Program  |
| 2/17 | —Gathered for meeting of Welcoming/Reconciling UM Churches @ Scotia UMC   |
| 2/26 | —Joint Ash Wednesday Service held with neighbors @ St. Joseph's Church  |
| 2/29 | —Youth Service Project: Served free community brunch  |
| Feb. | —Continue to prepare & serve Sunday Community Breakfast, free to all: # served=130; # weekly volunteers=12  |
|      | —Communications Box created... <i>thank you, Dick Smith!</i>  |
|      | —Presented <i>Mission Moments</i> during Worship on: "Souper" Bowl Sunday; Update on Nicaragua; and UMW Project: UMCOR Hygiene Kits   |
|      | —Sunday 2nd hour offered: Investment Committee; Forum: <i>Revised Investment Policy</i> ; Music Committee; and Intersectional Justice Committee   |
|      | —Opened our space this month to groups, including: Morning Wakeup AA; Schenectady Amateur Radio Association; Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA); Home Furnishings Program; Catholic Charities |

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





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**NEXT SPIRE MAILED:**

April 25; articles due Apr. 15



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

**Save the date!! CROP Walk on May 3**

Roughly 1000 CROP Hunger Walks happen every year in the United States. The 5K walk symbolizes the daily journey many others must make for clean water. The walk is planned to kick off on Sunday, May 3, at St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish School, 1801 Union St. at 2pm; rain or shine! Registration begins at 1:00. One quarter of the money raised supports local efforts to support hunger and poverty fighting programs. The rest is used by Church World Service, an ecumenical agency, to alleviate hunger throughout the world. More information maybe available from Elaine Troy or Michele Cole. Let's have a good turnout this year! All ages are encouraged to participate. Sometimes dogs walk, too!

Given current realities with large gatherings, please check back closer to the date to ensure event's still on as planned.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**

Coming in early May:

Sunday, May 3

**CROP Walk**

Sunday, May 10

**Concert: Isabelle Demers**

Tuesday, May 12

**Church Night**

**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)