

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@gmail.com



Accessible

Vol. 81 No. 11

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

March 2018

Future Sundays

- 8:30** Downtown Community Breakfast
- 9:00** Books for Children & Adults available
- 9:30** Second Cup Café
- 10:00** Sunday Morning Worship
—*Infant & Toddler Care available*
- 11:00** Coffee Fellowship
- 11:15** Sunday School
- 11:30** Second Hour program:
—Adult Forums
—Intergenerational Activities
—Sermon 'Talk-Backs'
—Ministry Team Gatherings
- 7:00** Bible Study: Isaiah

Worship Text:

- March 4 **2nd Sunday in Lent**
Family Sunday
2 Samuel 12:1-9
- March 11 **3rd Sunday in Lent / UMCOR Sunday**
Daylight Savings Time begins
Matthew 20:1-16
- March 18 **4th Sunday in Lent**
Luke 23:32-43
- March 25 **Palm Sunday**
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Mark 11:1-11

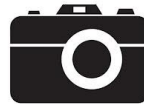
Second Hour Events/Programs:

- March 4 UMW Program: *Human Trafficking*
Youth Soup & Sandwich Luncheon
- March 18 Sermon 'Talk-Back'
- March 25 Flowering Plant Sale
Intersectional Justice Committee

It's our 5th Annual Lenten Photo Show!

POWER! LIGHT! GRACE! LIMITLESS! WE!

Can you picture these wonderful concepts? They are the five weekly themes of the 2018 Lenten Photo Show. This will be our 5th Annual Photo show and you can help make it our best.



During Lent, you are encouraged to submit photos that relate to the weekly themes, and on Easter, April 1st, we will all have the opportunity to see how our photographers picture the themes.

Photos, along with a theme and title, can be emailed to fumcphotoshow@gmail.com or sent to the office. For full details, please see the enclosed flyer.

Happy picture taking!



Youth Soup & Sandwich Lunch Fundraiser

The youth will be having their 3rd fundraiser to raise money for their mission trips. They are having a Soup and Sandwich luncheon on Sunday, March 4th, after morning worship in Fellowship Hall; eat-in and carry out. Everyone is welcome.

Signups, helpful but not necessary, can be made by contacting the Church Office.



L E N T



Photo by Diane Kingsland

From Our Pastor

At the request of Intersectional Justice, Kevin Nelson and I wrote this Op-Ed piece explaining our symbolic response to the school shooting in Parkland, Florida. Kevin's name and my name will be attached to it, because we know that in this – as in all things – there is not universal agreement in the church. It isn't particularly theological, as it is aimed at a wider audience. To be honest, I dearly hope that God will keep working with and through the Parkland survivors and their fellow students around the nation to create the changes we need. May these ribbons remind us to do our part.

- Sara

At this time of year, churches drape black cloth symbolically over crosses, serving as a reminder of the death of Jesus. The black cloth is later removed, sometimes replaced with white, to remember the resurrection on Easter morning.

This year, at our church, we hung 17 black ribbons on a tree in the front of our property. They won't be coming down at Easter, and they won't be replaced with white ribbons later. These 17 ribbons are acknowledgements of the 17 lives lost in the school shooting in Parkland, FL. They help us remember 3 teachers and 14 school children who should be alive today. They keep us from forgetting or becoming complacent.

Mass shootings are such a regular part of life in the United States that it is tempting to think of them as “normal,” but they are not normal. Mass murder is not normal, and it cannot be allowed to become normalized. We can't as a society prevent the mass murder of our school children unless we are willing to tackle the problem of mass shootings in our society.

We hear a lot of arguments about how to best change our society so that this doesn't happen anymore. In fact, social media seems to be filled with such arguments, and they seem to strike deep at some core identity issues among us. For instance, some think that the problem is guns while others think it is mental illness; some are concerned about toxic masculinity and others about lack of security measures at schools. Other countries are using troll accounts to try to deepen the divide in our nation, at exactly the time our nation needs to be coming together to create change, not passing the blame.

Other countries don't have mass shootings at the same rates we do. Such shootings are far more common in our society, both proportionally and in total. Americans make up about 4.4 percent of the global population but own 42 percent of the world's guns. From 1966 to 2012, 31 percent of the gunmen in mass shootings worldwide were American, according to a 2015 study by Adam Lankford, a professor at the University of Alabama. That means that this problem is solvable.

The fact that other countries have fewer mass shootings means that our mass shooting problem is not primarily due to people struggling with mental health. According to a 2015 analysis of 235 mass killings by Dr. Michael H. Stone, Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, 22% of the perpetrators could be considered mentally ill; 78% were not. Criminalizing persons who struggle with mental health will not prevent mass shootings. It does further harm to those who suffer with mental illness though, and we need to stop putting blame where it does not belong.

Mass shootings are overwhelmingly perpetrated by men and boys. *Overwhelmingly*. As Michael Ian Black recently wrote in the *New York Times*, the outdated model of defining masculinity by strength, aggression, competitiveness, and by having power over others has failed us. While women have undergone a 50-year odyssey of redefining feminism and what it means to be a woman in today's world, we have not done a similar redefinition of masculinity and how to be a man in today's world. We don't teach boys and men to experience the full range of human emotion, and we don't prepare them for a world where we increasingly recognize that defining masculinity by aggression and power over others, especially women, often leads to causing harm to others. We too often don't teach boys and men how to navigate this world; instead, we just thrust them out into it, and while a majority are able to figure it out along the way, others are left with feelings of withdrawal and rage, and a minority of those will turn to violent expressions of those feelings. We have to do better, and we have to be willing to talk about it with each other.

The various states in our country have different gun laws, and those laws allow us to see the impact in society of regulations. What they show us is that gun regulations can be very effective. We're also able to see by

Continued on back page....

peer reviewed scientific measure that more guns do not make people safer. Reasonable gun regulations do. Furthermore, Americans know this. As a whole, we strongly support basic gun regulations. **A February 20th, 2018, Quinnipiac University poll showed that 67% of Americans support a ban on assault weapons, 97% support universal background checks, and 83% support mandatory waiting periods.**

The most common argument we hear against reasonable gun regulations comes back to the Second Amendment, “A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” The primary purposes for the Second Amendment when it was ratified in 1791 are commonly thought to include the organization of a militia, participating in law enforcement, deterring tyrannical government, repelling invasion, suppressing insurrection including slave revolts, and facilitating a natural right to self-defense. Today, the U.S. military performs the functions of militias and repelling invasions. Law enforcement officers are provided with service weapons. The abhorrent institution of slavery is no longer legalized. Furthermore, in a world in which no other military force on earth, much less any personal arms arsenals, can stand directly against the force of the U.S. military, the best way we have to keep our government from turning our military against us is through the strength of our democratic institutions, including exercising our right to vote. Only the natural right to self-defense remains relevant in today’s world, and the Supreme Court has established that the Second Amendment right to bear arms is not unlimited, and it does not prohibit all regulations of firearms.

More importantly, as a society we are ready to stop **people** from accessing guns designed solely for mass murder. An assault rifle is not a hunting rifle used in deer hunting, nor is it a pistol used in personal protection. Guns designed to shoot large amounts of ammunition quickly from a significant range exist to kill people, and to do so efficiently on a mass scale.

And they do.

And many, many of our citizens are dead. This time, once again, there are schoolchildren and their teachers among the dead.

We have black ribbons tied to trees to help us remember. We have black ribbons tied to trees so that we remember to be part of changing our society from what it is to what it should be.

The young survivors in Parkland, FL, have invited us to “March for Our Lives” on March 24th. There are marches in DC, NYC, and Albany, to name a few. We'll be marching, we hope to see you there. (MarchForOurLives.com or #marchforourlives) March for Our Lives is a student-led movement, and we will support their work and their requests. They're unwilling to let things remain as they are, and we're grateful for their leadership.

In the meantime, we hope you will join us in requesting from our federal government reasonable gun regulations:

1. Require and enforce universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods on all gun sales.
2. Institute a clear ban on all future sales, transfer, importation and manufacture of military-style semi-automatic weapons, high-capacity ammunition magazines and high-impact ammunition, except for the use of military and law enforcement agencies.
3. Ban the importation and manufacture of full-auto conversion kits, such as bump stocks, that convert semi-automatic weapons into fully automatic weapons.
4. Make gun trafficking a Federal crime, increase penalties for those who engage in "straw purchases" of firearms for ineligible persons, make serial numbers harder to remove, and adopt microstamping of cartridges so that they can be traced to the gun that fired them, which is useful for solving crimes.
5. Prohibit persons from purchasing guns without evidence of gun safety training and require safe storage of guns in order to reduce theft, suicide, and accidents by children.
6. Prohibit the purchase or possession of guns by those with a domestic violence protection order or a history of domestic violence.
7. Impose an age limit of 21 on gun purchases. This is already the law for handgun purchases in many states and it mirrors the law on buying alcohol.
8. Invest in research to see what interventions will be more effective in reducing gun deaths, so we can base our policies on robust evidence.

Those 17 lives represented by the black ribbons haunt us. Even more so, we are haunted by the knowledge that before they are removed, more will need to be added. We invite you to join us in changing this reality.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your support of outstanding healthcare with your kind gift....to the Foundation for Ellis Medicine. The gift will support pastoral care services at Ellis.

Your thoughtful generosity makes you a partner with Ellis as we work with our physicians and community partners to 'reinvent healthcare, one patient at a time.'
...Thank you again for your support and wonderful gift.

Warmly, Marcia M. Steiner, Executive Director



Dear Diane Kingsland and Bob Long (coordinators), Kathleen and I want to take this opportunity to "Thank-you" and your church for helping again this year with the 2017 Christmas Bureau, with 24 gifts.

This year we helped out 300 seniors in Glendale Home, Long-Term Care, MHA, and Home Delivered meals. All these agencies really enjoyed seeing their clients receive the gifts you helped provide. Our Sincere thanks and God Bless,

Kathleen Vanlderstyne and Amy Davis, Christmas Bureau

Dear Friends of HFP,

On behalf of the Board of the Schenectady Home Furnishings Program, thank you for your financial gift in support of our program, and for all the support FUMC provides to HFP in addition to the generous donations.

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....Thank you again, for helping us help others.

Sincerely, Wayne J. Brule, Treasurer

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous gift to the CWS Blankets program. As families and communities around the world recover from emergencies and struggle in the face of challenges, you are standing with them. You are providing relief and hope. Your contribution provides hope to neighbors near and far, from migrant families facing cold and wet conditions to refugees who have just arrived in the U.S. to build a new future, to guests at homeless shelters. Around the world, your support of this program means vital supplies and support for those in need. Because of you, Church World Service is able to respond when disasters occur and support is needed. We thank you!

May God bless you for your support,
Rev. John L. McCullough, President/CEO, CWS



Altar Flowers

We are grateful for the altar flowers given in February by:

2/11 Junice Wusterbarth

To give altar flowers for Sunday Worship, contact Ann Farrell (867-7654).

FUMC's Intergenerational VIM Trip



Our church's Intergenerational Volunteers In Mission (VIM) Trip to Mission Central, Mechanicsburg, PA, is planned for April 2-6. For those who signed up to go, here's just a friendly reminder:

- applications & \$25 deposit due
- VIM Team meets Sat., Mar. 10; 10:30 am
- full payment/cost is due by Mar. 11

If you have any questions, please contact one of our VIM Team Leaders, Sylvester Doyer or Jan Huston.

Daylight Savings Time

Spring forward! Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 10th. Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 am March 11th.

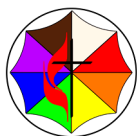
Greeting Cards Needed



Our Caring Ministry needs greeting cards, especially get well and sympathy cards. If you have some to donate, please place them in the narthex box or drop them off in the office. Thank you.

Invitation

Would you enjoy a visit or would like to talk and have someone listen to your concerns? If for any reason you would like a personal visit from the pastor or a lay caregiver, call 518-374-4403.



March 2018

First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	2	3 10:30 AM Youth Group & Prep for Fundraiser Lunch
4 Family Sunday 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs —UMW Program —Youth Soup & Sandwich Luncheon Fundraiser 7:00 PM Bible Study	5 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 7:00 PM Lenten Book Study Series	6 Agendas due for Church Council 2:00 PM Staff Meeting	7 8:45 am Stephen Ministers 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	8 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	9	10 10:30 AM Youth & Intergenerational VIM Team Meeting
11 UMCOR Sunday Daylight Savings Begins 2am — set clocks ahead 1 hour 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Sunday School 3:00 PM Concert: Cantus, Male Vocal Ensemble 7:00 PM Bible Study	12 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 7:00 PM Lenten Book Study Series 7:00 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee	13 9:30 AM SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting 2:00 PM Staff Meeting Church Night 6:30 PM Ministry Teams Meet 7:30 PM Council	14 12:00 - 1:00 PM SUSTAIN Ministry 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	15 Spire articles due 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16	17 10:30 AM Youth Group with Shirley Readdean 
18 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs —Sermon 'Talk-Back' 7:00 PM Bible Study	19 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 6:30 PM Adult Education/Carl Lecture Team 7:00 PM Lenten Book Study	20 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 50th Anniversary Celebration of Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM)	21 12:00 Women's Luncheon @ Glen Eddy 2:00 PM Music Committee 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	22 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	23	24 10:00 AM Book Discussion 11:00 AM Youth Group 12:00 PM "March For Our Lives" incl. a march in Albany
25 Palm Sunday 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs —Flowering Plant Sale 11:45 AM Intersectional Justice Committee 7:00 PM Bible Study	26 2:00 - 4:00 PM Pastor "Drop-in" Office Hours 7:00 PM Lenten Book Study Series	27 9:30 AM SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Trustees	28 8:30 AM Men's Fellowship Breakfast 12:00 - 1:00 PM SUSTAIN Ministry 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	29 Maundy Thursday 7:00 PM Joint Ecumenical @ FUMC, Sanctuary	30 Good Friday Public Schools Closed	31 Holy Saturday 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM Youth: Serve Free Community Brunch @ Emmanuel Friedens 3:00 PM Worship Service, Sanctuary (Youth sponsored)

We are in the season of LENT (purple) -
Lent is a time when we practice repentance—turning away from wrong and toward God.

UMW Program: *Human Trafficking*

Sunday, March 4

FUMC Schenectady's United Methodist Women will be welcoming Debbie Fowler, founder of Eyes Wide Open NENY, Inc., Sunday, March 4th, to discuss human trafficking; this is a Second Hour program.

Human trafficking is a 32 billion dollar criminal industry that exploits women and children. Debbie learned of the atrocities while living in Kuwait. Quite by accident, she learned of maids who were deceived into believing they were headed to another country for jobs and education, only to have their passports taken from them upon arrival. They were bought and then made to work as maids with little or no pay, beaten, and, many, sexually assaulted. (<https://www.eyeswideopenneny.org/AboutUs> section).

Debbie Fowler is the author of "Fragrance in the Desert," and, with her friend Patty Carley, owns *Her Treasure Box*, a volunteer run thrift store that sells arts and craft supplies, whose proceeds go toward funding awareness of human trafficking and establishment of homes where victims can start the healing process.

We hope you can attend this program held on Sunday, March 4, after Worship in Fellowship hall.

NEW: Bible Study on Isaiah

Sundays 7:00-8:30 PM



The Youthful Adults Bible Study, led by Pastor Sara, is taking on 2nd Isaiah (Isaiah 40-55) Sunday evenings from 7-8:30! These 16 Chapters can be titled "The God of All Comfort." They are the prophets words of comfort, hope, and possibility to a people in turmoil. Our goal is to work through 2 chapters a week.

Everyone is welcome, and those with a lot of questions are especially appreciated.



Cantus in Concert

**Sunday, March 11
3:00 PM**

Cantus, an eight-member men's vocal ensemble, will perform here in our sanctuary Sunday, March 11th, at 3:00 pm and, as

with all our concerts, this one is free and open to the public. Cantus is an a cappella group, which means that the musicians sing unaccompanied, and their singing is led by the artists themselves; in other words, they study the music thoroughly and sing without a conductor.

Cantus performs worldwide, presenting music ranging from the Renaissance to the 21st century, and it has been hailed as "the premier men's vocal ensemble in the United States" (*Fanfare*). The ensemble gives more than 60 concerts each year in the United States and abroad as well as in its home of Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. Past performances have taken Cantus to the stages of Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, UCLA, San Francisco Performances, Atlanta's Spivey Hall and Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival. Seventeen albums have been released on the Cantus label, and Cantus has an extensive educational outreach, in which each year its artists share their own love of singing with thousands of students through workshops and master classes to ensure the future of choral arts.

The program here on March 11th is called ***Discovery of Sight***; it explores light as an integral part of life and revels in the mystery, the science and the poetry of what it means to truly "see." The music will include Richard Strauss' *Dream Light* and Schubert's *The Night*, as well as modern works by Eric Whitacre, Einojuhani Rautavaara and Gabriel Kahane. The next day, Monday, March 12th, as a part of its educational outreach, Cantus will present two workshops for selected area student choral groups. The morning workshop will be held at the Schenectady County Community College and the afternoon one will be at the College of St. Rose. The public is invited to attend these workshops; if you would like more information about the concert or the workshops, please call the church office at 518-374-4403.

Be sure to come, at least to the concert. Bring family and friends and look forward to a time of beautiful music!



“Church Night”

March 13th

All Ministry Teams are invited to hold their monthly meetings on *Church Night*, held the second Tuesday of each month. And everyone is invited to attend the Church Council meetings. The schedule is:

6:30 pm Ministry Teams meet

7:30 pm Devotions & Church Council

Enjoy Fellowship before Worship

Come early to church for these free programs held before we gather for Sunday Worship:

● **Community Breakfast** is served 8:30 - 9:30 in Fellowship Hall weekly except on the first Sunday of each month.

● **Second Cup Café** is held in the Library 9:30 - 9:50, and offers coffee and a chance to read the Sunday newspaper!



Like to do Needlework?

The Needlework Ministry program (knitting, crocheting, sewing) welcomes all to participate in this program, which creates handmade items for various causes including donating items to those in need in our community. To learn more including how to knit or crotch, contact Eileen Deming or Alice Nash, program coordinators.

A Stephen Ministry Moment

**You must be the change
you want to see in the world.**

Mahatma Gandhi

Lenten Book Study

Everyone welcome

Coordinated by:

Rev. Sara Baron and
Rev. Bob Long

Held here at:

**First United Methodist Church
in the Gathering Room**

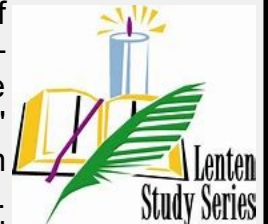
When:

**Monday evenings during Lent
February 18—March 26
Time: 7:00 to 8:30 PM**

Book:

**“Simplicity: The Freedom of Letting Go”
by Richard Rohr**

Richard Rohr is a teacher of Centering Prayer, and a modern day wisdom teacher. There are many forms of "letting go" in the world, and most of them are hard for human beings. Rohr's premise is that our goal is to live out joy, build relationships, and find inner peace. If that isn't a good motivation for letting go, we don't know what is! Everyone is welcome.



For more information and to register, contact Pastor Sara, Bob Long or the Church Office.

Calling all men—

Breakfast Fellowship!



The next Men's Breakfast Fellowship will be held Wednesday, March 28th, at 8:30 am at the Blue Ribbon Diner, State St.! All men welcome.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SCHENECTADY 2018 LENTEN PHOTO SHOW

The First United Methodist Church of Schenectady invites you to participate in its 2018 Lenten Photo Show.

You can participate in any or all of three ways:

1. SUBMIT PHOTOS THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN
2. VOTE FOR THE PHOTOS YOU THINK BEST REFLECT THE THEMES OF THE SHOW
3. VISIT THE SHOW ON EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 1 (8:30 - 10 AM and 11:00 - 12 NOON)

1. SUBMIT 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 will be accepting one to three photos that you have taken that reflect the weekly theme. The themes are:



Photo by Barbara Armstrong

February 18-24: POWER February 25-March 3: LIGHT
March 4-10: GRACE March 11-17: LIMITLESS March 18-24: WE

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

- 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, telephone number, a title for the photo, and the theme your photos represent in the body of the email, and send the email to 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 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: _____ ☐ Check here if under 18 yrs. old

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

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

☐ POWER

☐ LIGHT

☐ GRACE

☐ LIMITLESS

☐ WE

TITLE OF THE PHOTO: _____

Email to: 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. VOTE FOR THE PHOTOS YOU THINK BEST REFLECT THE THEMES OF THE SHOW

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) and Facebook page (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 if you visit the show in person. Please vote only once for any given photo.

3. VISIT THE SHOW EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 1 (8:30 - 10 AM and 11:00 - 12 NOON)

On Easter Sunday, April 1, as many of the photos as possible will be on display at First United Methodist Church of Schenectady. You are invited to view the photos from 8:30 to 10 am and from 11 am to 12 noon on Easter. Voting will be open during viewing hours. Light refreshments will be served.

The Sunday School Scoop

March 2018



March 4	Family Sunday— 10:00 am—Children remain for the full service to Worship with their families. 11:30 am—Youth Soup & Sandwich Luncheon Fundraiser
March 11	11:15 am—Sunday School: Theme is <i>Story and Art</i> —“Stained Glass Windows”
March 18	11:15 am—Sunday School: Theme is <i>Music</i> — “Bible Books Rap”
Palm Sunday March 25	11:15 am—Sunday School: Theme is <i>Science</i> — “Printing/Stamping” 11:30 am—Flowering Plant Sale

Signup for Summer Camp!

The 2018 United Methodist Church Summer Camp colored brochures will soon arrive, which lists all the wonderful camps available for children, youth, and families. Keep an eye out for them in the narthex/lobby, or you can view it on-line at www.campsandretreats.org.



Youth Schedule for March

All youth (ages 13-18) are welcome to participate in these March gatherings:

Saturday, Mar. 3 @ 10:30 am: Youth Fellowship and prep for the soup & sandwich luncheon fundraiser

Sunday, Mar. 4 @ 9:30 am: Youth meet in the kitchen to setup for the Soup & Sandwich Luncheon fundraiser to be held after Worship in Fellowship Hall.

Saturday, Mar. 17 @ 10:30 am: Youth Fellowship with Shirley Readdean.

Saturday, Mar. 24 @ 11 am: Youth Fellowship.

Saturday, Mar. 31:

9:15 am: Youth Service—Serve Community Brunch at Emmanuel Friedens.

2:00 pm: Youth meet to prepare to lead the Holy Saturday Worship Service at 3 pm.

Supplies needed

Our Sunday School program needs supplies and would like your help. If you have or would like to buy any of the supplies listed below, please place them in the narthex basket or bring them to the office. Thank You!

Items needed for March:

—Hebrew alphabet letters

Items needed for April:

—small 3½” pocket mirrors

—clean quart milk cartons



E-Newsletter

This newsletter is available electronically and in hardcopy. If you would prefer to receive it by email, which does save valuable resources, please contact the office with your email address.

† HOLY WEEK †

Everyone is welcome to gather for the following special services and events, which offer an opportunity to experience the meaning, struggles and joy of the most powerful week in the lives of the disciples and Christ.

PALM SUNDAY

March 25



Worship Service

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

Flower Sale

Following the Worship Service, our Children and Youth Ministries Team will hold a potted flowering plant sale to raise funds for activities and needed supplies.

Estimated cost will range from \$4 to \$6, depending on the size of the plant.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

March 29

Ecumenical Worship

According to the Gospels, on Jesus' last night with his disciples, he offered them profound blessings. Some say this was the start of the Communion Tradition. In remembrance of these blessings, we will gather at 7 pm in the Sanctuary and our neighbors from Emmanuel Friedens Church will be joining us to worship together in community.

GOOD FRIDAY

March 30

Ecumenical Cross Walk

The Stations of the Cross Walk, with hymns and Scripture that recall the passion of Jesus Christ, begins at 12 noon at Christ Episcopal Church, 970 State St. and ends at City Mission. We will stop at community buildings and churches, including First UMC, Schenectady. Shuttle service is available back to Christ Episcopal.

HOLY SATURDAY

March 31

Worship Service

Our youth are thrilled to invite you to an innovative experience of Worship at 3:00 pm on Holy Saturday. Holy Saturday is a time of waiting, a time after remembering the death of Jesus and before remembering the power of life. The holy time of waiting and being in-between will be the focus of this unique Worship.



EASTER SUNDAY

April 1

Easter Service—While worship is scheduled to begin at 10:00 am, please consider coming a little bit early. Not only will the Floral Cross start blooming to life during the Prelude but you will certainly want to be there to hear wonderful prelude music by the Schenectady Brass Quintet, our guest musicians! Also please bring a fresh cut flower or one will be provided, for all to place in the floral cross.

Floral Cross—After worship, our floral cross will be set out for all to see and enjoy.

Photo Show—The photos submitted during Lent will be on display before and after Worship (8:30-10 & 11:00-12) for everyone to view and vote for their favorites in each of these five themes: *Power, Light, Grace, Limitless* and *We*.

Easter Egg Hunt—Calling all kids...enjoy this fun event, held outside on the lawn!

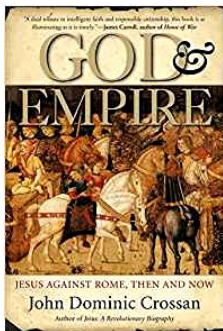


Gather for Book Discussion

Saturday, March 24 at 10:00 AM

The February/March book study will be on the book entitled *God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now* by renowned biblical scholar John Dominic Crossan, who was the Carl lecture series lecturer here at First UMC this past fall.

From the divine punishment and promise found in Genesis through the revolution-



ary messages of Jesus and Paul, John Dominic Crossan reveals what the Bible has to say about land and economy, violence and retribution, justice and peace, and, ultimately, redemption. In contrast to the oppres-

sive Roman military occupation of the first century, he examines the meaning of the non-violent Kingdom of God prophesized by Jesus and the equality advocated by Paul to the early Christian churches.

The first-century Pax Romana, Crossan points out, was in fact a "peace" won through violent military action. Jesus preached a different kind of peace—a peace that surpasses all understanding—and a kingdom not of Caesar but of God. The Romans executed Jesus because he preached this Kingdom of God, a kingdom based on peace and justice, over the empire of Rome, which ruled by violence and force. For Jesus and Paul, Crossan explains, peace cannot be won the Roman way, through military victory, but only through justice and fair and equal treatment of all people.

If you don't have a copy of the book from the fall lecture, you can try your local library or see Kevin Nelson (kmichael07@yahoo.com), who will order a copy for \$11. The discussion will take place on Saturday, March 24th at 10 AM at church.



Calling all Women: Enjoy Luncheon!

A Women's Luncheon has been planned, at which the women of the church can get together for a time of fellowship and lunch, and if it's successful we hope to do it on a regular basis. Several women have said they would enjoy doing that, so let's give it a try. We plan to have the first one at the Glen Eddy in Niskayuna and see if that works for us.

Date: Wednesday, March 21

Time: 12:00 noon.

Cost: \$16.00 per person; cash preferred (no taxes will be charged and tips are not permitted).

All women from church are invited, so here's a chance to make some new friends. We hope YOU can join us. You will need to RSVP so that the kitchen staff can be prepared, so please email Nancy Walden before Tuesday the 20th at nwalden@gleneddy.com or phone her at 518-280-8065. Let's hope for a big turnout, so come!

Scholarships Available

Our Upper NY Annual Conference (UNYAC) has the following two scholarships available for college-bound students:

1. Conference Merit Award is funded by the United Methodist Student Day Special Offering (typically held in November or December). Awards are given to United Methodist students who are enrolled in an institution of higher education recognized as United Methodist by the University Senate (see list at <http://www.gbhem.org/education/university-senate/list-approved-schools>.) Merit is evaluated in terms of academic scholarship, church involvement, financial need. Applications are due March 5th.

2. Lottie Brown Grant: Preference is given to those entering some form of Christian service. A statement of your faith journey and philosophy of life is given high consideration. Application materials must be postmarked by April 10th.

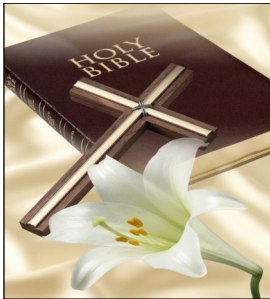
For an application and more information, you can go to the conference's website at: www.unyumc.org.



Electronic Giving Available

Electronic Giving is a convenient, consistent way to help our church grow. Using this option to make donations is totally voluntary. Both one-time donations and scheduled periodic donations may be made electronically. You will no longer need to write out checks and prepare envelopes every week. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, your electronic contributions will continue to be received on an uninterrupted basis. If you're interested in using our electronic system, please go to our church website or Facebook page to link to signup, or read the QR code on right. Or, you can pick up an authorization form at the office.

This electronic giving capability is provided through Vanco Payments Solutions which has been endorsed by the United Methodist Church.



EASTER ALTAR FLOWERS

Donation & Order Form

Spring flowers will be ordered to help beautify our Altar for Easter Sunday. **You can participate by giving a donation**, or by ordering plants to take with you after Worship.

All donors' names will appear in the Easter bulletin.
Please use the form below.

Last day to respond: Friday, March 23, 2018

Easter Flowers 2018

Spring flowers will be ordered to help beautify our Altar for Easter Sunday. You can participate by giving a donation, or by ordering plants to take with you after Worship. All donors' names will be in the Easter bulletin.

Your Name _____ Phone: _____

In Celebration of Easter _____ **OR** In Memory of _____

A. I would like to donate \$_____ to the Altar Guild to use as they see fit in decorating the Altar.

OR

B. Please order only the plants you intend to take with you.

of Lilies _____ (\$11 each)

of Mums _____ (\$12 each)

Total \$_____ donation

Last day to respond: Friday, March 23, 2018

Please make checks payable to First United Methodist Church, with the notation, "Easter Flowers." Mail check and form to: FUMC Altar Guild, 603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305-2111.

If you prefer, you may email your request to fumcflowers@gmail.com. You may also submit your donation electronically, by using the tab Electronic Giving at www.fumcschenectady.org (please select "Another Purpose" and write in "lilies.")

If you have any questions, please contact Ann Farrell or call the church office at 518-374-4403.

KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - January 2018

PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

OUR PRAYERS

Our Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of Patty LeRoy, who passed away January 28th (longtime friend of Bob Long & his family)

The family & friends of Elaine Mackey, who passed away on January 17th (mother of our former pastor, Rev. Doug Mackey; notes/cards of condolence can be sent to Doug at: 5872 Meetinghouse Rd., Tully, NY 13159)

Leon Adkins, Jr.	Sandy Buschak-Jackson
Jan Butts	Robyn Lonergan
Janet Collis	Jack & Courtney McEwan
Ross Corbett	Mary Neville
June Dieffenbach	Terry Phillips
Jen & Merrick Fuller	Claire Racicot
Jan Huston	Shirley Rivest

And to: Belinda Forbes, our Nicaragua missionary; VIM Teams; and Parkland, FL, and those dramatized..

OUR PRESENCE

Date	Worship
January 7	59
January 14	57
January 21	66
January 28	86

OUR GIFTS

Date	Amount
January 7	\$5,209.00
January 14	1,362.00
January 21	1,655.00
January 28	2,579.00

Community Breakfast

Those served this month:

Children (infant-17)	22
Adults (18-64)	118
Seniors (65+)	<u>63</u>
Total	203



OUR SERVICE

Date

1/3 —Sorting and packing of collected items for UMCOR: 6 Flood Buckets and 15 Hygiene Kits

—Served supper at the City Mission of Schenectady

1/7 —Youth Service: Led Epiphany Worship Service

—New Bible Study series started: *Abundance*

1/14 —Celebrated *Human Relations Sunday* which included special collection (\$180)

1/15 —Youth Service: Volunteered at Northeast Regional Food Bank

1/20 —Participated in Women's March held in Albany

1/24 —Distributed extra personal care & household items through SUSTIAN Ministry & Home Furnishings Program

1/27 —Youth Service: Served free Community Brunch

—Book Discussion held on book entitled *Crazy Love*, by Leslie Morgan Steiner

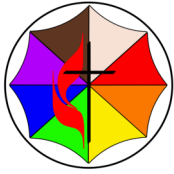
Jan. —Distributed personal care items through our SUSTAIN Ministry to those in need

—Continue to serve the Downtown Community Breakfast on Sundays, free and open to all

—Mission Moments presented during Worship on: *Human Relations Day*; *VIM & FUMC's Intergenerational VIM Trip*; *United Methodist Women*; and *Needlework Ministry*

—Sunday 2nd Hour offered: Ministry Team Meetings; Sunday School; and Church-wide Scavenger Hunt

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



The Spire

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

Serving Schenectady for over 200 Years

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NEXT SPIRE MAILED:

March 29; articles due Mar. 15



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FUMCSchenectady](http://www.facebook.com/FUMCSchenectady)

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



**SICM'S
50th Anniversary Celebration**

When: Tuesday, March 20, 2018
Where: Glen Sanders Mansion
Program: Honoring our Past, Embracing our Future
Remarks by founding and current members of SICM
WNYT/News Channel 13's Subrina Dhammi, Emcee
Doors: Open at 4:45 pm; cocktails (cash bar) at 5:00 pm
Dinner: 6:00 pm
Cost: \$75.00 per person
Music: Mike Lawrence Jazz Trio
**Reservations required; contact Laurie Bacheldor, Development
Director at 518.374.2683 x103; email: LaurieB@sicm.us.**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Coming in early April:

Sunday, April 1

**Easter / Family Sunday
5th Annual Photo Show
Flower Cross Created
Easter Egg Hunt**

Monday-Friday, April 2-6

FUMC's VIM Trip

Tuesday, April 10

Church Night

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 Office

E-Mail: albanydistrict@unyumc.org

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