

THE

*Spire*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Accessible

Vol. 80 No. 12

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

April 2017

## FUTURE SUNDAYS

- 8:30** Downtown Community Breakfast  
**9:00** Children's Storytime  
**9:30** Second Cup Café  
**10:00** Sunday Morning Worship  
*Infant & Toddler Care available*  
*Sunday School begins (10:20)*  
**11:00** Coffee Fellowship  
**11:30** Second Hour Programs:  
     —Needlework Ministry  
     —Adult Forum  
     —Intergenerational Activity  
     —Sermon 'Talk-Back'  
**7:00** Study: *Subversive Women of the Bible*

### Worship Text:

- April 2 **Family Sunday**  
 Matthew 26:6-13  
 Mark 14:3-8  
 April 9 **Palm Sunday**  
 Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16  
 Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14—27:66  
 April 16 **Easter Sunday**  
 Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
 Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-18  
 April 23 **2nd Sunday after Easter**  
 Luke 10:38-42  
 April 30 **Native American Ministries Sunday**  
 Genesis 30:1-19

### Second Hour Events/Programs:

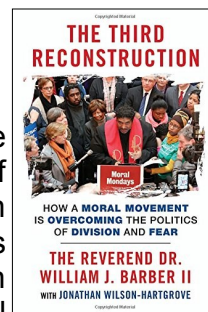
- April 9 Ministry Team Meetings  
 Flowering Plant Sale  
 April 16 **Easter:** Creation of Floral Cross  
 Photo Show  
 Children's Egg Hunt  
 April 23 Spring Spectacular Potluck Luncheon



## April's Book Discussion

The Intersectional Justice Committee (IJC) continues to invite members of the congregation to participate in book discussions in order to discuss and broaden our knowledge base on a range of justice matters. The April book is *The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear* by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, and our next discussion will be Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 AM. Rev. Dr. Barber is the founder of the Moral Mondays Movement in NC and is one of Pastor Sara's personal heroes and most compelling preachers she has ever heard. In this book, he tells "the stirring story of how he helped start a movement to bridge America's racial divide." Over the summer of 2013, Rev. Dr. Barber led more than a hundred thousand people at rallies across NC to protest restrictions to voting access and an extreme makeover of state government. This is a movement that has spread around the country, including being emulated here in NY State. This book tells the story of this movement (plus, it's relatively short!). Please join us in this important discussion that can help to inform our own resistance efforts today.

All are invited to join in this conversation. You can look for *The Third Reconstruction* at your favorite library or bookstore, or talk to Kevin Nelson who can provide you with a copy for \$11. You can reach Kevin by email at [kmichael07@yahoo.com](mailto:kmichael07@yahoo.com). Also, for those interested in reading ahead, the following book (discussion on June 10<sup>th</sup>) will be *What We Are Fighting For Now Is Each Other: Dispatches From the Front Lines of Climate Justice*.



**See Holy Week Schedule  
and Photo Show (final 2 weeks!)  
inside...free & open to all!**



Photo by Terry Phillips

## From Our Pastor

There is an often told story of “fiery sermon” preached by a camp counselor to a young person who had been isolating themselves from the group. The counselor took and moved a brightly burning log from the center of the fire off to the side. Quickly the log's fire was extinguished. The counselor then returned the log to the rest of the burning logs, and it was again quickly reignited. This story is told to indicate that faith works best in community, or at least that's how I've always heard it.

I love a good campfire, but I've spent much more time contemplating the impact of one thing on another while I've sat on ski lifts watching how snow accumulates and melts. One of my favorite phenomenon occurs when a person has walked up the mountain under the ski lift in the middle of winter. The condensing that happens under that person's feet, the tighter connection of snowflake to snowflake becomes visible as the snow around it melts, leaving elevated, inverted foot prints that continue to exist after the snow around it has melted. While that could also preach to the importance of community, I've often thought it also speaks to the unexpected power of adversity. The untouched snow melts at a normal rate. The stepped on snow has more resilience because of being pressed together and more tightly bonded. That doesn't make the adversity good, but it does mean that the adversity CAN strengthen those impacted by it.

A mentor once suggested that there are two kinds of clergy: those who understand grace from their own lives and those who don't. As much as I hate binary thinking, and as limited of a model as that is, there are ways that it rings true. Struggle and adversity often have the unexpected impact of opening a person to God's grace, softening the parts that are hard, and helping a person let go of control. (I am told there are lots of people in the world who don't struggle with control, but that's so profoundly different from my natural way of being that I don't quite understand.) In letting go, and in being lifted up by grace, it is possible to trust God more deeply and then to love God more deeply and then it is easier to love neighbors with deeper grace. Struggle and adversity aren't inherently good, but God is so creative that they can have a positive impact in the long run anyway.

As we all know, however, struggle and adversity can also have the opposite impact. They can harden us and close us off. I have no intention of romanticizing struggle.

Instead, I simply seek to offer observation. It seems more common for grace to find its way in when a person chooses to be vulnerable with trusted people in their lives. It seems more common for grace to find its way in when a person is honest, and transparent, and admits that nothing is going right. It seems that commonly other people are able to be means of grace when they can listen to someone's struggles without judgement or competition. That is, it seems like adversity can be transformed to grace when it is shared. I'm pretty sure that one snowflake smashed into a mountain by a footstep melts FASTER than an unsmashed snowflake. It is only when the pressure is shared that it's resiliency is built.

All of this is a very longwinded way of encouraging you to be open, honest, vulnerable, and present. Our studies, worship, and even our committees are spaces for people to connect to one another and share our struggles. The Body of Christ is functional because of its diversity, and we are able to be gifts to each other. I hope we will each give each other the opportunity to be of support in our lives.

Peace, Sara

## Letter of Gratitude

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace! I write today to gratefully acknowledge your gift to the Methodist Federation of Social Action (MFSA)...Your generosity helps to fund the work of our organization as we seek to mobilize progressive United Methodists for the work of peace and justice. The MFSA is telling the story of what lived faith looks like by mobilizing United Methodists to be agents of sacred change in the church and the world. It hasn't always been the sweet story of a Hallmark movie but, it is our story. A messy story filled with struggle, community, hope and justice-seeking. It is a story that changed and is changing the course of the church and the world. Your story and your gift make sacred change possible.

Now is the time to embolden our work on racism, white privilege, economic justice, and reproductive rights. We will continue to educate, witness and work for justice.

Thank you for your support of MFSA as we work to help the Church and world overcome racism, colonialism, sexism, and homophobia. It is because of you that we can make the Church a place that is more welcoming, more loving, and more just. We are justice-seeking, people of faith!

Thank you for your kindness, compassion and generosity.

Seeking Justice Together,  
Deaconess Darlene DiDomineck,  
Interim Exe. Director of MFSA



## Wedding Gifts for Pastor Sara & Kevin



We are putting together a quilt and "Words of Wisdom" tree for Pastor Sara and Kevin in celebration of their marriage!

Quilt squares are available to be signed in the office or by contacting Barb Haverly at: barbh010755; 872-2682.

And/or, if you'd like to share guidance or words of wisdom for the tree, you can pickup a "plume-line" from the office or by contacting Ally Klein at: allycatblu@gmail.com.

## UMW Meeting

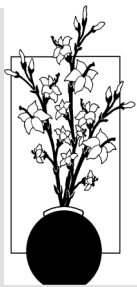
The United Methodist Women  
will meet **SATURDAY, APRIL 22**  
at 10 AM in Wesley Lounge.  
All women are welcome...*join us!*

## Spring Spectacular Potluck Luncheon



On Sunday, April 23rd, following Worship, our Welcoming Ministries Team will be hosting a Spring Spectacular! This celebration will be a potluck meal of soups, salads, breads, and desserts. Please sign-up in advance on a Sunday or contact the office so we can ensure that there is sufficient food. If you have any questions, contact Alice Nash.

We look forward to celebrating spring with our church community!



## Altar Flowers

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

## Enjoy Fellowship before Worship

Come early on Sundays for these free programs:

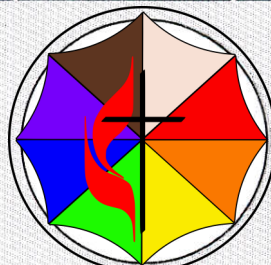


- **Community Breakfast** —Served 8:30-9:30 am weekly except on the first Sunday of each month.
- **Children's Storytime** —Held 9-9:30 am when breakfast is served. All children & parents welcome.
- **Second Cup Café** — Held 9:30-9:50 am; enjoy coffee and/or read the newspaper before Worship!





# April 2017

## First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> 11:00 AM Youth Outing: Trip to the Movies
<b>2</b> <b>Family Sunday</b> 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Extended Coffee Fellowship 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>3</b> 7:00 PM -8:30 Lenten Book Study	<b>4</b> 2:00 PM Staff mtg.	<b>5</b> 5:00 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Handbell Rehearsal	<b>6</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> 3:30 AM -5 pm Youth Service: Glen Eddy Retirement Community	<b>8</b> 11:30 AM -2 Youth Group
<b>9</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Storytime 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:20 AM SS Class 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM Team Mtgs. 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>10</b> 7:00 PM -8:30 Lenten Book Study 7:30 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee	<b>11</b> 2:00 PM Staff Mtg. <b>CHURCH NIGHT</b> 6:30 PM Ministry Teams meet 7:30 PM Council	<b>12</b> 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry 2:00 PM Music Committee 5:00 PM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>13</b> <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 7:00 PM Ecumenical Worship Service @ Emmanuel Friedens Church	<b>14</b> <b>Good Friday</b> Public Schools Closed 12:00 PM Stations of the Cross Walk	<b>15</b> <b>Holy Saturday</b> 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 11:30 AM -2 Youth Group 3:00 PM Worship Service in Sanctuary (sponsored by our Youth)
<b>16</b> <b>EASTER</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 8:30 AM Photo Show 9:00 AM Storytime 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee 11:00 AM Floral Cross 11:00 AM Photo Show 11:15 AM Easter Egg Hunt 7:00 PM Youth Sleepover				<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
Youth Group Service: VIM Trip to New Jersey for Hurricane Sandy Relief Work						
Public Schools Closed						
<b>23</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Storytime 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:20 AM SS Class 11:00 AM Coffee 11:15 AM Spring Spectacular Potluck Luncheon 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>24</b> 7:00 PM -8:30 Lenten Book Study	<b>25</b> 2:00 PM Staff mtg. 7:00 PM Trustees	<b>26</b> 8:30 AM Men's Breakfast Fellowship 9:00 AM Stephen Ministers 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry 5:00 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Handbell Rehearsal	<b>27</b> 6:00 PM (The) Connection: Gathering 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>28</b> 3:30 AM -5 pm Youth Service: Glen Eddy Retirement Community	<b>29</b> 9:30 AM Youth Service: Serve free Community Brunch @ Emmanuel Friedens 10:00 AM Book Discussion 11:30 AM -2 Youth Group: VIM Discussion
<b>30</b> <b>Native American Ministries Sunday</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Storytime 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:20 AM SS Class 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM 2nd Hour 7:00 PM Bible Study						

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



# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SCHENECTADY 2017 LENTEN PHOTO SHOW

The First United Methodist Church of Schenectady invites you to participate in its 2017 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 16 (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

**March 5-11: STRONG**

**March 12-18: SUPPORT**

**March 19-25: WHOLE**

**March 26-April 1: CONNECT**

**April 2-8: BRIGHT**

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, phone 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](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: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check here if under 18 yrs. old

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

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

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

☐ Strong

☐ Support

☐ Whole

☐ Connect

☐ Bright

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

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](http://www.fumcschenectady.org)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/fumcschenectady](http://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 on EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16 (8:30 – 10 AM and 11:00 - 12 NOON)

On Easter Sunday, April 16, 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 11:00 to 12 noon on Easter. Voting will be open during viewing hours. Light refreshments will be served.



## Update on Intersectional Justice Work

We have several updates and opportunities to share with you this month. First, due to the recent passing of Bishop Felton May and the timing of his memorial service, **our conversation with Bishop Webb has had to be postponed until Sunday, October 8th at 2:00 pm**. After considering a variety of options for rescheduling this conversation, we have decided to work with the bishop's office to reschedule for October.

At the February 26th Annual Church Meeting, the IJ committee was asked to examine ways that FUMC can support immigrants and refugees during the current state of persecution of such individuals, particularly those without adequate residency/citizenship documentation. We are in the process of carefully studying this matter. Our first steps are educational in nature and include reaching out to a variety of knowledgeable individuals and organizations serving refugees and immigrants so that we can learn about and evaluate the best ways of plugging into the various efforts to provide support.

While that is taking place, we have joined a movement led by Citizen Action NY that is pushing for the Schenectady City Council to hold a formal conversation about whether or not Schenectady should adopt a sanctuary city designation (meaning that it wouldn't use city resources, including the police department, to do Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers' work for them and question the citizenship status of Schenectady residents, workers or visitors, and wouldn't send such information to federal authorities if they come across it).

The City Council meets every 2nd and 4th Monday at 7 PM, and we are seeking to have 1-2 FUMC members there every meeting to join with other community members in publicly speaking, naming their membership at FUMC, and calling on the City Council to hold this conversation and move toward designating Schenectady a sanctuary city. Speaking is as simple as signing up before the meeting starts and, when called upon, calling on the City Council to do this and stating why you think it should, including naming our Christian/personal values that inform why we believe this is the right thing to do (like "love of neighbor" or "human dignity") or sharing a personal story or something like that in the gospel of Matthew where Jesus' parents sought refuge in Egypt for a few years during his infancy and toddler years in order to escape King Herod's slaughter of the male babies. See Kevin Nelson about participating in this effort.

Other upcoming events include:

- April 4th: Healthcare is a Human Right Advocacy Day (lobbying at the Capitol for a single-payer, universal healthcare system in NY; see Kevin about participating)
- April 29th: Book Discussion
- May 7th: Crop Walk (see page 6 for details)
- June 10th: Book Discussion
- June 11th: Capitol Region Gay Pride Parade in Albany
- Oct. 8th: Conversation with Bishop Webb

### New Dossal!

The Dossal (fabric behind the altar) that hangs on the Reredos (the wooden structure behind the altar) in the chancel area of the sanctuary was installed in 1977. It is showing its age. The Trustees have requested through the Annual Church Meeting to replace the Dossal, spending up to \$14,000 for the work including the protection of the organ pipes. The Trustees are so thrilled to let the congregation-at-large know that the vote was unanimous. The Trustees are grateful to Dominick Giaquinto for his research on vendors. We have chosen to work with BMI out of Queensbury. Junice Wusterbarth has agreed that most of the financing will come from the Harold Wusterbarth Memorial Fund. If you are interested in making a contribution to the Wusterbarth Memorial, please let the office know.

The Annual Church Meeting also agreed that balance will come from the Bouton bequest. The installation of the Dossal will begin the last week of April.



# † 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

April 9



### ***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

April 13

### ***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'll gather at 7:00 pm at our neighbors at Emmanuel Friedens Church on Nott Terrace to worship together in community.

## GOOD FRIDAY

April 14

### ***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'll stop at community buildings and churches, including FUMC. Shuttle service back to Christ Episcopal.

## HOLY SATURDAY

April 15

### ***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 16

**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: *Strong, Support, Whole, Connect* and *Bright*.

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



## Interfaith News

The April Gathering of the Interfaith Community of Schenectady will be held at the Dominican Retreat and Counseling Center, 1945 Union St., Thurs., April 27th; dinner at 6:30 pm; program at 7:30. Presenter: Imam Genghis Khan, Imam at the Schenectady County Jail & Union College Office of Religious and Spiritual Life will focus on "A Qur'anic Immigration Story." The Abrahamic Faiths share a common epic about the Children of Israel's migration and their ensuing experiences in Ancient Egypt. This is the most frequently mentioned story in The Qur'an, occurring in over seventy-five places including some near-entire chapters. It is chock-full of timeless, poignant lessons for minorities living in foreign lands, for majority peoples living with minorities, for tyrannical leaders and the people who support them and for just about everyone else. Discussion, questions and comments to follow. To register, call 370-2150.



### CHURCH NIGHT Tuesday, April 11

All Ministry Teams are invited to hold their monthly meetings on *Church Night*, held the second Tuesday of each month. After the team meetings, the Council will meet and are open to everyone. Schedule is:

6:30 pm Ministry Teams meet  
7:30 pm Church Council

### A Stephen Ministry Moment

**"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."**

Anne Frank

## Youth Schedule & News

All youth ages 13 to 18 are invited to these upcoming youth group activities:

### ● Saturday, April 1

12:00 noon: Outing to the Movie Theater

### ● Friday, April 7

3:30 pm: Service Project @ Glen Eddy Retirement Comm.

### ● Saturday, April 8

11:30 am: Youth Group Meeting

### ● Saturday, April 15

11:30 am: Prep for Worship Service & VIM Trip to NJ

3:00 pm: Holy Saturday Worship Service

### ● Sunday, April 16

7:00 pm: Sleepover at church

### ● Monday, April 17

6:30 am: Leave for VIM Trip to New Jersey

### ● Saturday, April 22

Afternoon: Returning from VIM Trip

### ● Saturday, April 29

11:30 am: Talk about mission experience in New Jersey



Our youth continue to amaze me with their energy and unselfishness in wanting to serve others within their community. This is visible in their commitments to be involved visiting and spending time with seniors at Glen Eddy. They've formed mutual friendships with seniors they interact with on a weekly basis at Glen Eddy. Their interaction with them involves just sitting and talking, engaging with them in various games such as bingo to wii bowling and golf.

Our youth have committed themselves to serving breakfast every 3rd Sunday of the month at FUMC and every last Saturday of the month helping serve breakfast at Emmanuel Friedens. The youth on March 18th, prepped and cooked the breakfast. Some members of the congregation spent time with our youth assisting them with the prepping. This was also an opportunity for some of the adults from our congregation to meet and interact with our youth. The experience for the adults and our youth was both positive and fun. The youth came in early Sunday morning to finish up with minor things that had to be done and served breakfast with our usual volunteers for the community breakfast. Our youth are again planning a service for Easter Saturday like they did last year. This service will be on April 15 at 3 pm.

The youth are looking forward to their upcoming VIM Trip to the New Jersey Shore to help with the hurricane recovery work still being done from Hurricane Sandy. Again, an example of their commitment to others is their willingness to give up their spring break and go to the Jersey Shore. I have to say I'm proud to know such a terrific group of young people and their parents.

—Sylvester Doyer, Youth Leader



# The Sunday Scoop



April 2	<b>Family Sunday</b> 10:00 am—Children and youth remain for the full service to Worship with their families.
April 9	<b>Palm Sunday</b> 10:20 am—Sunday School following Children's time Theme is <i>Story and Art</i> : "Nail Crosses" 11:00 am—Flowering Plant Sale
April 16	<b>Easter Sunday—No Sunday School</b> —Easter Photo Show held before and after Worship in the Gathering Room —Easter Egg hunt will be held after Worship with all younger children invited to participate in this event held on the church lawn (weather permitting)
April 23	10:20 am—Sunday School following Children's time Theme is <i>Science</i> : "Sand Dollar Shell Symbols"
April 30	10:20 am—Sunday School following Children's time Theme is <i>Cooking</i> : "Let's Eat a Symbol"



## Signup for SUMMER CAMP!

Several camps are owned and operated by the United Methodist Church and offer wonderful camping experiences for children, youth and adults. Skye Farm camp is located in the Adirondacks, just off Northway Exit 24. Another nearby camp is Sky Lake, located in Windsor, NY. Pastor Sara serves as a camp counselor at a special needs camp at Sky Lake each summer. Both camps will hold an Open House: Sky Lake on May 21st and Skye Farm on July 8th.

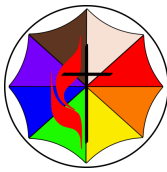
If you have a child or grandchild, plan to enroll them for a week at summer camp at either camp. There are several camps to select from including: Anglers; Music & Visual Arts; Campolodean: sport...tech...animals; Slides and Rides; Minecraft Adventure; Aquasphere; Adirondack Peaks; Performing Arts; Bike the Trail.

For a full list of camps and to register, pick up a colored brochure in the narthex/lobby, or go to: [www.skyefarmcamp.org](http://www.skyefarmcamp.org) or [www.skylakecenter.org](http://www.skylakecenter.org). Discounts available if register by May 1st, and camp scholarships may be available.

### ♦ Family Camp Weekend at Skye Farm—Friday-Monday, May 26-29

You won't want to miss this great get-away time at Skye Farm with family and friends. Great food, fun and fellowship! Come for the weekend or just a day! Stay in a cabin or bring your own tent or camper. For more information, see camp brochure or go to [www.skyefarm.org](http://www.skyefarm.org).





## MISSION MOMENTS

Delivered during Worship

### ► Schenectady Clergy Against Hate

*Delivered on February 19, 2017, by Paul Uppal, guest speaker*

- Thank you to Rev. Sara Baron, Kevin Nelson, and the entire congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Schenectady for the invitation to talk about the “Schenectady Clergy Against Hate” coalition and the Sikh religion’s perspective on the current political climate.
- Background of the start of the coalition – toxic political and social climate across our land. People not respecting each other. Intolerance toward minority groups.
- America has had periodic times of such intolerance and rancor – Civil War, early 20<sup>th</sup> century during immigration wave from Europe, immediately after the 9/11 attacks.
- America’s strength lies in its resiliency, reflection and ability to bounce back once citizens think over what is happening.
- Need re-kindling of that American spirit, never more than now.
- The coalition seeks to spread love, understanding and brotherhood across the Schenectady and surrounding areas.
- The coalition has the ultimate weapon to fight against the current climate – the Lord’s love and teachings.
- Approximately 15 houses of worship represented in the coalition. Religions represented are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Islam.
- Rev. Baron is a very important and key member of the coalition. Very dedicated and energetic.
- Events organized to date include: Visit and work at the Regional Food Bank, A Soup Sabbath Dinner at the Congregation Gates Of Heaven and interfaith discussion and perspectives on the current climate, Blood donation drive, candlelight community walk. Other events planned.
- The Sikh community is a proud member of the coalition.
- Sikhism founded in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century by Guru Nanak in Northwestern India.
- A synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, forged into a new religious philosophy.
- Sikhism is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest religion, with about 30 million Sikhs worldwide. Locally, about 300 families. Temple in Niskayuna at intersection of Route 7 and St. Davids Lane.
- Sikhs believe in one God, absolute equality of gender and social class, social activism for justice and equality.
- In current climate, all faiths offer valuable insights on how to cope and revive our spirits.
- In Christianity, the Book of Psalms is generally considered a valuable place to go when one is hurting.
- Psalms 34:18 – The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and Saves the crushed in spirit.
- The Book of Romans also offers great insights. Such as how a person can stay on right path.
- Romans 12:12 – Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.
- In Sikhism, there are also key passages and compositions in our Holy Scripture on these areas.
- The central philosophy of Sikhism is contained in our omnibus prayer:

There is One Universal Creator God  
His name is the Truth  
He is a Creative Being Personified  
He has no Fear  
He has no Hatred  
He is Undying  
He is beyond Birth  
He is Self Existent

- Saint Kabir, who lived in the same period as the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, composed a passage that is in our Holy Scripture.
- Saint Kabir, born a Hindu, abandoned at birth on the banks of the River Ganges in Varanasi and raised by a Muslim family. Grew to reject both faiths in favor of a “blended” thought and set of values.



*continued on next page....*

- Composed the following passage.

First, Allah created the Light  
 Then, by His Creative Power,  
 He made all mortal beings.  
 From the one Light, the entire universe welled up  
 So, who is good, and who is bad?  
 O People, O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt  
 The creation is in the Creator, and the Creator is in the creation,  
 Totally pervading and permeating all places.  
 The clay is the same, but the Fashioner  
 Has fashioned it in various ways.  
 There is nothing wrong with the pot of clay  
 There is nothing wrong with the potter.  
 The One True Lord abides in all;  
 By His Making, everything is made.  
 Whoever realizes His Command,  
 Knows the One Lord, He alone is said  
 To be the Lord's slave.  
 The Lord Allah is Unseen. He cannot be seen.  
 The Guru has blessed me with this sweet teaching, sweet as molasses.  
 Says Kabir, my anxiety and fear have been taken away.  
 I can see the Immaculate Lord permeating everywhere.

- Kabir also wrote: Do not say the Vedas, the Bible, and the Quran are false.  
 False are those who do not contemplate them.
- Sikhism, like all other religions, believe essentially that the true path to salvation lies in: making an honest living, remembering the Creator at all times, and treating everyone with respect and humility at all times.
- Thank you to the audience.

## ► Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County

*Delivered on February 26, 2017, by Jennifer DeMarco and Karen McLane, guest speakers*

Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County builds safe, affordable homes for working-class families in our community.

### Habitat Homeownership

If you are interested in homeownership please visit our website and download our preliminary application at <http://schenectadyhabitat.org/homeownership/application/> or email [familyselection@schenectadyhabitat.org](mailto:familyselection@schenectadyhabitat.org) or call 395-3412 ext. 108

### **Requirements:**

Willingness to partner with Habitat for Humanity  
 Steady income that falls within HUD guidelines (40%-80% of median income of the county)  
 Possess decent credit with good payment history  
 Currently living in substandard housing

### Restore

The ReStore is located at 115 N. Broadway in downtown Schenectady; offering items that have been donated and available to the public at highly discounted prices. All purchases go towards continuing our mission of building homes and building communities. You can also donate your gently used items to the ReStore.

### Volunteering

Areas to volunteer: Construction (must be 16 yrs old), ReStore (must be 14 yrs), Committees (family selection and Family Support; special events), and Administrative (data entry, filing, phone calls). Please visit our website at <http://schenectadyhabitat.org/>

For questions or additional information, please contact Karen McLane at 518-395-3412 ext.103 or at [kmclane@schenectadyhabitat.org](mailto:kmclane@schenectadyhabitat.org)





## ► Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson

*Delivered on March 5, 2017, by Rev. Sara Baron*

In this moment I'm wearing my "Board Member for Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson" hat. Mohawk Hudson has 10 health centers: Amsterdam, Clifton Park, Cobleskill, Glens Falls, Johnstown, Oneida, Rome, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Utica. It is a large area, although New York State has 9 Affiliates. All the affiliates work together in advocacy and education through a new shared group: Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts.

The mission of Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson is "to provide quality health care, to educate individuals to make informed sexual and reproductive decisions, and to advocate for reproductive rights." In particular, we provide "quality, nonjudgmental reproductive medical care and supports those affected by sexual violence; promotes healthy sexuality through education; and advocates for reproductive justice."



That happens on a large scale with our 10 health centers. Each year more than 20,000 women and men receive health care in those centers. For many (most?) of our patients, we are the only health care provider they see in a year. Our medical services include annual exams, birth control, cancer screening, abortion care, HIV testing, and sexually transmitted infections testing/treatment. Recently we have expanded into offering transgender care, starting a few years ago in our Saratoga Springs center and now we are expanding into other centers.

Here in Schenectady, PP does some of its most awesome educational work, because of the support of the Schenectady School System. Schenectady had unusually high rates of teen pregnancy, until the School District allowed our educators to have office space in the high school, and we staffed it full time. Now students have easy access to accurate information, answers to questions, and ways to get referrals for any care they need. The teen pregnancy rate is dropping!

At our local fundraiser two years ago some of the staff mentioned how annoying the protestors are, especially during their 40 day protests in fall and spring. Apparently they sing loudly and off-key, and there are often clergy men in black robes chanting in Latin. I laughingly suggested that I could have clergy WOMEN in WHITE ROBES show up and do a rally to counter balance it, and we did! Better yet the clergy all showed up with rainbow stoles. The second time we did it we let our clergy brothers play too, and it was awesome! The third time we did it non-clergy wanted to play too and it was even better.

Once spring comes (back?) we're likely to do more rallies. Our staff need to know they're appreciated, and people need to know that access to medical care is an imperative part of reproductive justice and that we TRUST WOMEN to make the best choices for their lives and the lives of their family. I'll let you know when those get planned.

Mostly though, thank you for all the ways you share me with PPMH. I believe FUMC Schenectady and PPMH enhance each other, and I'm so glad to get to be a part of that reproductive justice work.

## ► The Nurturing Father's Program of Schenectady

*Delivered on March 12, 2017, by Wales Brown, guest speaker*

Hello, myself (Wales Brown) and Muhammad Harris are leaders in the Nurturing Fathers Program of Schenectady. The Nurturing Fathers Program is a strength based psycho-educational group program that helps dad's learn how to strengthen attachment and connection with their children and whole family. We are very grateful to the church for allowing us to meet and hold the group which occurs on Thursday nights from 6-8. The Nurturing Fathers Program began as a way to connect and help Walter Simpkins from the Community Fathers Program, to strengthen his ability to demonstrate positive outcomes that Parent Education with Fathers provides so he can apply for grants. What has been learned in the start of this work is that there are many fathers that are required (by Courts) to get "parenting education" however there are no classes available to fathers to get this help if they are not being served by the local Department of Social Services. The only other alternative is the Community Fathers Program that primarily works with fathers that are involved in domestic violence. This results in a "block" for fathers to proceed with re-connecting with children. The class is also highly evidence based with dads re-entering the community from incarceration. This class is being offered for free and there is no cost to the fathers. This is a volunteer effort in the community meeting a social justice need.



## ► The Caring Ministry Program

Delivered on March 19, 2017, by Lisa Lane

Good morning.

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Lisa Lane and I have been a member of First United Methodist Church since 2001. After a rather extensive search for the “right” church, Jean and I decided that First was the perfect fit for us. What impressed me greatly was the number of mission opportunities available for folks to serve on... the Soap Ministry, UMCOR, the support of Belinda Forbes in her mission work in Nicaragua, shared ideas of supporting the Church World Service blanket program, Heifer and the list continued to grow as I spent more time here. I have become so impressed with the efforts of congregants in working on such projects as Reconciling Ministries which works alongside Church, Society and Mission and the combined committee is called The Intersectional Justice Committee, Home Furnishings, Elsie’s Closet and three projects very near and dear to me, the Stephen Ministry, the Community Breakfast Program and the Sustain Ministry (formerly called the Soap Ministry). I have not even mentioned all the mission projects that First is involved in. I continually see members of First United Methodist working so hard to help out folks locally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

As I spent more time with folks in the congregation, I became increasingly aware that, yes, we are a church who loves to learn and yearns to be a gift to our communities. We continue to do a great job at those tasks. There was an important part missing, however... and that was taking care of some of our own congregation. It is true that Pastor Sara and Linda receive important information each week regarding happenings, good and challenging, with our congregants. At other times, messages are conveyed from one member of our congregation to another, and not everyone who might be concerned receives that information. Under such circumstances, the congregants in need may not receive the love and prayers and assistance that their church family would like to offer to them. (It is also recognized that not everyone wants information shared and of course, that wish will be honored.)



A way to address some of these needs had been addressed by Lois Atkinson and Kendra Boyden. After a bit of time, Jan Guzior and I were asked to co-lead the Caring Ministry team...right up my alley. We put our heads together and we offer note writing, card sending, and the coordination of meal deliveries for those in need during times of a personal crisis, as well as arranging for transport to and from the Sunday Worship Service under special circumstances. At times, we celebrate the “good things” such as a baptism, special birthday or anniversary...and our messages convey a feeling of caring to the recipients, which of course, also includes the home-bound members. We have had some positive feedback from folks we have reached out to. Jan and I are always open to listening to suggestions of how we can provide loving and caring support to those here at First.

I’d like to end with a quote from Little Things:

*Look around you, first in your own family, then among your friends and neighbors, and see whether there be not someone whose little burden you can lighten, whose little cares you may lessen, whose little pleasures you can promote, whose little wants and wishes you can gratify.*



## Calling all men: Gather for Breakfast!

The next Men's Breakfast Fellowship will be held Wednesday, April 26th, at 8:30 am at the Blue Ribbon Diner, State St. All men are welcome to meet for breakfast each month.



## Save the date!!! Schenectady's CROP Walk Sunday May 7, 2017

The walk kicks off at Emmanuel Friedens Church at 1:30 after a brief opening ceremony (no long speeches!). In 2016 Schenectady's walk was one of the top 20 in the United States.

One quarter of the money raised supports local efforts to combat hunger. The rest is used by Church World Service, an ecumenical agency, to alleviate hunger throughout the world. A slogan used by walkers is "Because they walk, we walk." This refers to the distances that some people need to walk to get basic needs like water and food. More information and envelopes to use to raise money will be available at FUMC soon. Let's have a good turnout this year! All ages are encouraged to participate. Sometimes dogs walk, too!

This year for the first time in several years there will not be a concert at FUMC at 3:00 after the walk. So come in comfortable clothes and enjoy a springtime walk with friends for a good cause!!

To signup to walk or sponsor a walker, contact Elaine Troy (lanie600@nycap.rr.com or the office.

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## 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 church office with your email address.



## The Westminster Concert Bell Choir

*Sunday, May 14...mark your calendar!*

One of the finest handbell choirs in the country, the Westminster Concert Bell Choir will perform in the sanctuary at FUMC on Sunday afternoon, May 14<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 pm. Whether you have or haven't had the pleasure of hearing FUMC's bell choir on Sunday mornings you will be absolutely thrilled with this virtuoso ensemble. It performs on the largest range of handbells in the world – 8 octaves (our bell choir has five octaves). Most of the bells are made of bronze and range in weight from four ounces to 11 pounds. The Choir also uses the large "Basso Profundo" aluminum-cast bells, and supplements its handbells with a six-octave range of chimes, the widest range in existence.

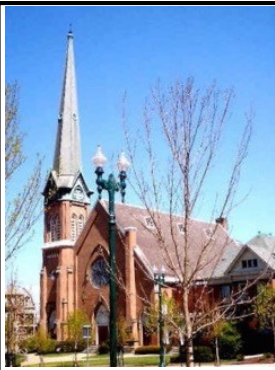
The Choir is composed of students at Rider University's Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. Kathleen Ebling Shaw, director, has conducted the Choir for 26 years. She is a member of the sacred music department at the College, where she teaches classes in handbell training and conducts a second handbell choir. She is well known as a handbell clinician and has conducted sessions for handbell musicians and educators in this country and abroad.

The Choir has appeared several times on Public Television and has been heard annually on National Public Radio. It has performed at Carnegie Hall, and recently was featured on New Jersey Network's *State of the Arts* program. It has made 11 solo recordings and is included on an NPR Christmas recording. The ensemble joined Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, Charlotte Church and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for a 15-city North American tour entitled "A Royal Christmas."

We are very fortunate to have this group perform as a part of our Concert Series and hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to come to the concert. As always, it's free and the public is invited.

—Nancy Walden for the Music Committee





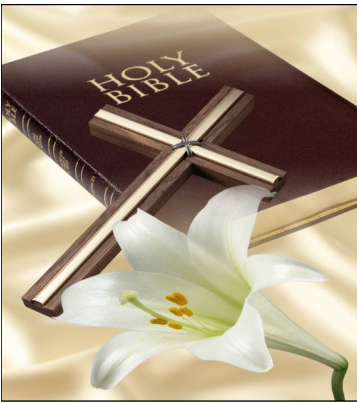
## Electronic Giving Available

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 Flowers



One of the lovely observances of Easter morning is the tradition of gracing our altar with beautiful white Easter lilies (and chrysanthemums). These living symbols of elegance and purity are enjoyed not only by those fortunate in health to attend the Easter service but may later be given to those friends who are sick or hospitalized.

Anyone wishing to share in this worthy custom may complete the form below and return it with payment to the church office by Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. If you prefer you may email your request to [fumcflowers@gmail.com](mailto:fumcflowers@gmail.com). You may submit your donation electronically, if you prefer, use the tab Electronic Giving at [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://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 374-4403.

## Easter 2017

If you would like to give an Easter lily, or chrysanthemum, or both, please fill out the form below and return it by **April 7<sup>th</sup>**. Please make checks payable to First United Methodist Church. Mail check and form to:

FUMC Altar Guild, 603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305-2111

After the Worship service, you may take the plant(s) with you or share the joy of Easter by having them available for a homebound member of our congregation.

✂

Name of Donor _____		Phone No. _____	
In Memory of _____			
or			
In Celebration of Easter _____			
Number of lilies _____	Donation \$ _____	Number of mums _____	Donation \$ _____
(A suggested donation of \$12 per plant would cover the cost of the plant.)			
Will pick up plant after 10:00 am Worship Service _____		Please take plant to a homebound member _____	
(Please select a choice for each plant)			
Would be pleased to deliver a plant to a homebound member after the service _____			

# KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - FEBRUARY 2017

## PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

### Our PRAYERS

#### Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of John Hughes, who passed away recently (Dick & Darlene Smith's close friend)

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

Rev. George Bailey	Susan Oldow Patterson
Ross Corbett	Lily Quickenton
Sandy Buschak-Jackson	Clare Racicot
Joe LaNigra	Shirley Readdean
Courtney & Jack McEwan	Shirley Rivest
Carolyn Micklas	Bob Slater

And to: Belinda Forbes, our missionary in Nicaragua; the homebound; those who are grieving; Volunteer in Mission teams; and to Rev. Sylvia Barrett & the congregation of Milford UMC, and Rev. George Richards & the congregation of Fonda-Fultonville UMC, both churches suffered massive fires.

#### We celebrate with:

Our Pastor, Sara Baron, and Kevin Nelson, who were married on March 18th in the sanctuary. Congratulations!

Tony Turner and his new smile. Congratulations!

### Our PRESENCE

Date	Worship
February 5	73
February 12	62
February 19	83
February 26	86

### Our GIFTS

Date	Amount
February 5	\$2,981.00
February 12	2,059.00
February 19	4,037.00
February 26	2,766.00

### COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

#### Those served this month:

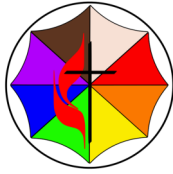
Children (infant-17)	22
Adults (18-64)	146
Seniors (65+)	<u>35</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>



### Our SERVICE

Date	
2/5	—Special collection taken on <i>Souper</i> Bowl Sunday for area food pantries (\$254)
2/4	—Outing with Youth to neighbors at Al Hidayah Mosque for Open House
2/17	—Youth Service Project: Assisted at Glen Eddy Retirement Community
2/25	—Book Club Discussion on <i>Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race</i>
	—VIM Team to Nicaragua: <i>Packing Day</i>
	—Youth Service Project: Served free community brunch
Feb.	—Distributed items to those in need through our SUSTAIN Ministry program
	—Continue to prepare and serve the Community Breakfast on Sundays, free and open to all
	—Presented <i>Mission Moments</i> during Worship on: Damien Center's PAWS Program; Schenectady Clergy Against Hate; Methodists in New Directions (MIND); and Habitat for Humanity
	—Collection held for our Children & Youth Ministry Program: easels, canvas, and tempera paints
	—Sunday 2nd hour offered: Conversation with Leesa Perazzo, Schenectady City Council Chair; Needlework Ministry; <i>Methodists in New Directions</i> (MIND); Sermon 'Talk-Back'; and our Annual Church Meeting

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



*The Spire*

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

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**NEXT SPIRE MAILED:**

April 26; articles due Apr. 15



**'Like' us on Facebook !**

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

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



**Enjoy  
Needlework?**

The Needlework Ministry program (knitting, crocheting, sewing) gathers most Sundays after Worship in Wesley Lounge. Everyone is invited to join in anytime. To learn needlework or join in on a project, stop in on a Sunday!



**Invitation**

Would you simply enjoy a visit or 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, please call 374-4403.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Coming in early May:

Saturday, May 6

**Reconciling Summit  
(tentative date)**

Sunday, May 7

**Family Sunday  
CROP Walk**

Tuesday, May 9

**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)