

THE

Spire

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Accessible

Vol. 81 No. 8

The Reverend Sara E. Baron

December 2017

## SUNDAYS

- 8:30 Community Breakfast Fellowship  
9:00 Books for Children and Adults  
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  
7:00 Bible Study: "Book of James"

### Worship Text:

- Dec. 3 **1st Sunday of Advent**  
Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37
- Dec. 10 **2nd Sunday of Advent**  
Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
- Dec. 17 **3rd Sunday of Advent**  
**Service of Lessons & Carols**  
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28
- Dec. 24 **Christmas Eve**  
**—10:00 AM Worship Service**  
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
- Dec. 25 **Christmas Day**  
**— 6:30 AM Dawn Service @ FUMC**  
Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98  
Hebrews 1:1-4; John 1:1-14
- Dec. 31 **First Sunday after Christmas**  
Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

### Second Hour Events/Programs:

- Dec. 3 Annual Church Conference  
Dec. 10 Luncheon & Caroling to Shutins  
Dec. 17 Carol Sing around the Fireplace

## Annual Church Conference

Sunday, December 3

Everyone is welcome to gather after Worship in Fellowship Hall on December 3rd to attend our annual Church Conference. The Reverend Holly Nye will preside over this special meeting.



## Let's go Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 10

Young and old alike - come gather to bring some joy and Christmas music to those members of our church family who are not able to get out often.

After church on Sunday, December 10th, we will get together for lunch then go out to visit and sing carols with the homebound. If you have ever had the pleasure of being visited by our church carolers, or if you have been one of the carolers in previous years, you'll know what a wonderful experience this can be. If you have never sung with us before, come try it. You'll be filled with the Christmas spirit!

In order that we may know how many carolers we'll have and to plan for lunch, please sign-up on a Sunday using the bulletin slip or contact the church office.



*We wish you a blessed and joyous  
holiday season!*

From the Staff

Allison

Dominick

Linda

Sara

Martin



On December 3<sup>rd</sup> we will enter the season of Advent, a season of yearning and waiting for God to act in the world. It is the beginning of the liturgical year, each and every time we start with yearning and waiting. This Advent we will be offering our very own Devotional, with reflections from within our church themed on “Enough.” The Devotionals will be available at worship on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, and personally I can't wait to read them.

We've been talking about “Enough” a lot recently, and sometimes even about “Abundance.” In Church Council in November, we discussed the question “What if we (this church) are already enough?” I get to ask those questions, but I don't usually think about them before we are in conversation. As we discussed, there was a whole lot of honesty and wisdom. There was also, as expected, some resistance to the idea that we are already enough. That's practical and real! We have fewer people than we did in our heyday, and that is real. The generous gifts of our current congregation (and they truly are generous) no longer pay the costs of our ministry. That's real, and it doesn't feel like enough. We are doing such wonderful ministry, and there are reasonable concerns about how sustainable this will be over the long run. That creates some worry, and that worry is justified, and it stands in opposition to my theme of “enough.”

Like others, clergy often learn what we think when we say it. In the midst of the ways the Spirit was present in the room, I heard myself say something along the lines of, “I believe the purpose of life as Christians (individually and together) is to build the kin-dom of God. That means the purpose of the church is to enable us to build the kin-dom of God. The kin-dom is the point. Everything else supports it – the building, the community, the financial and other resources we have – those are all for the building of the kin-dom. But they aren't the only resources we have! God has gifted us with MANY ways to build the kin-dom, and we are to use all that we have as good stewards. The building, the community, and our shared resources are fantastically useful in building the kin-dom, but they're only tools, not the point! The kin-dom is the point, and God has gifted us with enough to build the kin-dom.” After it came out of my mouth, I realized this is part of what I've been trying to get my mind around for months. (Thanks Church Council, for listening me into understanding.)

God is with us, God works with us, God works in us, and as Julian of Norwich said, “All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.” There are many things in the world and in our communities that are profoundly broken, but God is not at peace with that, and God will keep working with us (or despite us) to fix them!

This Advent season of waiting culminates with Christmas, when we celebrate God breaking into the world in new and wonderful ways. It serves to remind us of “Emmanuel” that “God is with us” and we are not doing any thing we're doing alone!! Thanks be to God. God's own self is the most important resource we have in building the kin-dom.

Furthermore, we have a lot more resources, and they're wonderful! We are part of an incredible community, with a stunningly beautiful building, and faithful financial gifts from those who have gone on before us. Also we have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gifts of the Spirit). Finally, we have a vision of a better world and a calling to help bring that world into being.

At the end of this season of waiting, we celebrate God's in-breaking in the world, and that it happens time and time again. There really are an abundance of gifts from God for the building of the kin-dom to celebrate! Thanks be.

Peace, Sara

***JESUS...***  
***HOPE IS BORN***





Christmas season provides a great opportunity to remember FUMC members and friends who can not be as actively involved in our church as they once were. They're listed below and would love to hear from their church family! Addresses

are in the Membership Directory.

**Janis Butts**  
**Stewart Hettig**  
**Mary Neville**  
**Shirley Rivest**  
**Fran Summerville**

In Saratoga Springs—Wesley  
**Jim Norton**



## Gifts for Seniors Program

Our church has participated in the annual Christmas Gifts for Seniors program through social agencies under the leadership of Pam and Bill Bird for many years, of which, we are very grateful....THANK YOU, Pam & Bill!

At this time, the Birds no longer wish to continue serving as the program coordinators...want more time to spend with their growing family (new grand-babies!)

At this time, we are happy to report that Diane Kingsland and Bob Long have stepped in to serve as our new coordinators, along with others willing to help run this community outreach program. Thank you!

Through this program, we're offered the opportunity to reach out anonymously to older people in our community, who are in nursing and residence homes with no local family members by giving them gifts at Christmas. Tags for requested gifts are on the table-top tree in Wesley Lounge.

To participate, choose a tag(s) and indicate which tag(s) you have by signing the sheet. Gifts, unwrapped, need to be returned to church no later than Sunday, Dec. 10th. If you have any questions, contact Diane or Bob, or the church office. Thank you.

## Greeting Cards

Do you get greeting cards – such as Christmas cards, Happy Birthday cards, Thank You cards or blank notes – in the mail which you don't need or don't want (and didn't order)? Or perhaps you have some extras which you bought but won't use after all? Rather than throw them away, bring them in to the church office. They will be made available in the church library for anyone who might like to use them.

## Gather for Sunday Breakfast

Come early to church for the following:

- **Community Breakfast** served free 8:30-9:30 am in Fellowship Hall on all but 1st Sunday of the month.
- **Books available** for children and adults from 9-9:30 am in Fellowship Hall during the breakfast
- **Second Cup Café** is held in the Library 9:30-9:50 and offers coffee & a chance to read the newspaper.



## Rose Window Reflections

Come one, come all to the Sanctuary between Wednesday, December 6th, and Friday, December 8th, from 2:00-3 pm to see the sunlight shine through the beautiful Rose Window and encircle the cross on the Altar. Everyone is welcome. To learn more about the Rose Window, located above the balcony, including what each color symbolizes, see page 9.

## Altar Guild



**We are grateful for the altar flowers & the Thanksgiving arrangement given on:**

- Oct. 1** in celebration of Dominick Giaquinto's birthday
- Oct. 8** in celebration of Malcolm & Jean Boggs' 71st wedding anniversary
- Oct. 22** in celebration of immigration
- Nov. 19** cornucopia, fruits, vegetables & food given in praise & Thanksgiving for Franklin and Virginia Armstrong
- Nov. 26** in celebration of the birth of Leona Jeanne Kempf on Nov. 21st

**To give altar flowers for Sunday Worship, contact Ann Farrell (518-867-7654).**

## From the Finance Committee

### ◆ 2018 Offering Envelopes

Boxed Offering Envelopes for 2018 will be available in the Narthex beginning Sunday, December 10th. If you do not find a box with your name on it and want envelopes, please use the signup sheet on a Sunday or contact the office.

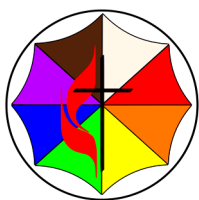
### ◆ 2017 Contributions and Statements

2017 Contributions Statements will be distributed in January. However, if you'd like to know where you currently stand on your 2017 commitment, please call the office (374-4403) and a Contribution Statement will be mailed to you. If you are contributing shares of stock to satisfy your 2017 commitment or to make a prepayment for 2018 and you want the contribution to be credited in 2017, please allow sufficient time for FUMC to sell the stock before the end of December.

### ◆ Electronic Giving Available

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

—Chris Rambo, Sr., FUMC Financial Secretary



## FUMC Shirts Coming!

If anyone would like to order an FUMC shirt and/or hoodie, please fill the form below and give the form with the amount to Ally Klein or Mary Ann Marshall by December 10th; checks payable to First UMC. There may be another opportunity to order shirts next year. The shirts and hoodies will be made up with the FUMC logo, which was designed by Ally Klein.

The colors and prices are as follows:

**White:** T-Shirt — small-XL \$26; 2XL-3XL \$29  
Zipper Hoodie—small-XL \$51; 2XL \$55

**Creame (t-shirt only), Black, Dark Blue, Brown:**  
T-Shirt — small-XL \$28; 2XL-3XL \$32  
Zipper Hoodie—small-XL \$56; 2XL \$58

## Youth Group News

FUMC continues to witness the impact the mission trips had and continues to have on our youth. They continue to focus on service to others as an expression of God's love and concern for those who are in need.

FUMC youth again this year have expressed a desire to do more at home in the way of service to others; home meaning within FUMC community as well as within the community of Schenectady.

FUMC and Emmanuel Friedens youth have met and are beginning to explore ways of having joint activities together in the way of service and fun. Last month, Emmanuel Friedens youth joined us in worship and our youth joined them in worship at Emmanuel Friedens. Both groups had the opportunity to fellowship after worship with each other. The youth had the pleasure of being lead on a bike ride by Bob Long with plans to do more of this in the spring.



FUMC youth continue to look for ways to be an expression of God's inclusive love for all within their community. The youth wish list for Christmas is a used ping pong table with net and paddles that are in good condition. Also billiard cues in good condition with felt tips.

Thanks to co-leaders, parents and everyone for your support & encouragement to and for our youth. FUMC youth would like to wish everyone a Joyous Holiday!

All youth ages 13-18 are invited to gather on:

12/2: Youth meet at 9:30; decorating church for Advent

12/9: Service project, meet youth lounge 10:00

12/16: Meeting youth lounge 11:30

12/23: Meeting youth lounge 11:30; Christmas party with Emmanuel Friedens

12/30: Youth meet 9:30, church parking lot. Emmanuel Friedens breakfast. Youth lounge afterwards.

—Sylvester Doyer, Youth Leader

### FUMC Shirt & Hoodie Order Form

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

#Shirts, Logo on Front or Back, Color(s) & Size(s) \_\_\_\_\_



Amount of check (payable to First UMC) or cash: \_\_\_\_\_





# December 2017

## First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 9:30 AM Youth decorate church for Advent 11:30 AM - 2:30 Youth & Parents Meet
<b>1st Sunday of Advent Family Sunday</b> 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:45 AM Pre-Conference 12:30 PM Church Conference 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 2:00 PM Staff Meeting	<b>6</b> 6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Reconciling Event Planning	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10:00AM Youth Service Project @ FUMC  10:00 AM Monthly Book Discussion
<b>10 2nd Sunday of Advent</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:20 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs 12:00 PM Lunch and Caroling to our Shutins 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:30 AM SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting  2:00 PM Staff Meeting	<b>13</b> 12:00 - 1:00 PM SUSTAIN Ministry  6:45 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 7:30 AM Choir & Guest Musicians Rehearsal  11:30 am Youth Group
<b>17 3rd Sunday of Advent</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe <b>10:00 AM Service of Lessons &amp; Carols</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM Annual Carol Sing 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>18</b> 7:00 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee	<b>19</b> 2:00 PM Staff Meeting	<b>20</b> 7:00 PM Long Night Advent / Holiday Service	<b>21</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 11:30 am Joint Youth Group: Christmas Party
<b>24 4th Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship	<b>25 Merry Christmas!</b> <b>6:30 AM Dawn Worship Service</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 8:30 AM Men's Fellowship Breakfast 9:00 am Stephen Ministers 12:00 - 1:00 PM SUSTAIN Ministry	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 9:30 AM Youth Service: Serve free Community Brunch @ Emmanuel Friedens  11:30 am Youth Group
<b>31</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:30 AM Second Cup Cafe <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 10:20 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:30 AM 2nd Hour Programs						

We are in the season of ADVENT (blue or purple) -  
During Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus' birth.

# The Sunday School Scoop

## December 2017



December 3	<b>First Sunday in Advent</b> 10:20 am — <i>Family Sunday: No Sunday School</i> ; children and youth remain for the full service to Worship with their families
December 10	<b>Second Sunday in Advent</b> 10:20 am —Sunday School; Theme is <i>Story &amp; Art</i> : “Change of Color Hearts” 12:00 pm —Lunch & Caroling to our Shutins
December 17	<b>Third Sunday in Advent</b> 10:20 am — <i>No Sunday School</i> ; Service of Lessons and Carols 11:30 am—Annual Christmas Carol Sing Along
December 24	<b>Fourth Sunday in Advent</b> 10:20 am — <i>Family Sunday: No Sunday School</i> ; children and youth remain for the full service to Worship with their families
December 25	<b>MERRY CHRISTMAS!</b> 6:30 am —Christmas Dawn Service in sanctuary with live nativity!
December 31	<b>First Sunday after Christmas Day</b> 10:20 am —Sunday School; Theme is <i>Cooking</i> : “Transformation Treats”

## Supplies needed

The 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 church office. Thank You!

### Items needed:

- Color Wheel
- Glue Sticks
- 3x3x1” squares of wood or Styrofoam
- sheets of craft foam
- cardboard or plastic tubes: 30, 26½, 22½, 20, 18 & 15” in length
- magnets
- red and green sticker dots
- ”A picture book of Louis Braille” by David A. Adler



**Youth News  
& Schedule  
on page 4**



## Enjoy Needlework?

The Needlework Ministry program (knitting, crocheting, sewing) gathers on most Sundays after Worship. Everyone is welcome; no experience necessary. Items are created then donated for those in need in the community. Come join in!

## A Stephen Ministry Moment

**"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."**

Martin Luther King, Jr

## Calling All Men!

The next Men's Breakfast Fellowship will be held Wednesday, December 27th, at 8:30 am at the Blue Ribbon Diner on State St. All men are invited to gather every 4th Wednesday of the month. See Bob Coppola with any questions.



## Signup Now to Serve Meal at the City Mission

The City Mission has a new software signup process. Each individual volunteering to serve a meal at the City Mission is asked to create an account and sign-up in advance for each meal date they will be attending.

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

To signup within 5 days just prior to serving, go to:  
<http://www.schenectadycitymission.com>;  
click "volunteer" and find FUMC's date to serve, e.g., Wednesday, Jan 3. Other volunteers may be solicited to sign-up during this time as well.

If you do not have a computer or have a problem signing up, please call Lori at 518-346-2275 ext. 301; give your name and date you want to serve.

The 2018 Wednesday dates assigned for to our church:  
**January 3, May 30, August 22, December 19.**

Arrival time is no later than 5 pm. You will be required to wear a hair net if you're not wearing a hat.

Please let Lois Atkinson (518 377-8249) know if you have signed-up for an upcoming meal. Thank you.



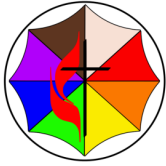
## In Our Community....

► **Thursday Musical Club (TMC)**, which rehearses here at FUMC on Wednesdays and welcomes singers, will hold their Christmas Concert Saturday, Dec. 2nd, at 3:00 pm at Eastern Parkway UMC, 943 Palmer Ave. Tickets are \$15; \$12 for seniors & students. For details, go to [www.tmc-singers.org](http://www.tmc-singers.org).

► **Union College Community Potluck Dinner**, sponsored by the Campus Protestant Ministries of Union College, will be held Monday, Dec. 4th, at 6 pm in the Old Chapel on Union's campus. Share food and culture with the college's International Students during the holiday break! Bring a large potluck dish to share; turkey & gravy provided. To RSVP, helpful but not necessary, send email: [brooksv@union.edu](mailto:brooksv@union.edu).

► **SICM December Assembly & Potluck Dinner** will be held Tuesday, Dec. 5th, at 6 pm at Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church, 1055 Wendell Ave., Sch'dy. Holiday music by *Revisions*. All welcome. Please bring dish to share. If last name starts between A-L, bring vegetable or salad; if between M-Z, bring a main dish. For more information, contact 518-374-2683.

► **Home Furnishings Program**, which operates from our church, announced "Needs of the Month" for December: small dressers & sofas, kitchen table sets, large pots & frying pans, cutlery, toasters, coffee-makers, crock-pots, cereal bowls. To make a donation, call HFP at 518-346-2444.



First United Methodist Church - Schenectady

## Gather for these special ADVENT HOLIDAY SERVICES & EVENTS:



### **ROSE WINDOW REFLECTIONS** - Wednesday-Friday, Dec. 6-8, 2:00-3:00 pm

The church Sanctuary will be open for all to have an opportunity to see the sunlight shine through the beautiful Rose Window and encircle the cross on the Altar.

### **CAROLING TO OUR HOMEBOUND & LUNCH** - Sunday, Dec. 10, 12 noon

Young and old alike - come caroling to bring some joy and Christmas music to our church family members who are not able to get out often. Lunch will be provided prior to heading out. This event will fill both singers and the listeners with a full dose of Christmas Spirit!

### **ADVENT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** - Sunday, Dec. 17, 10:00 AM

On this day the worship service is one of Lessons and Carols. The story of the Birth of Jesus is told in song and words by means of Christmas anthems sung by the Chancel Choir, Christmas carols sung by the congregation and the Christmas story as told in the Scriptures. The Emery String Quartet will begin playing the prelude at 9:45. For details, see next page.

### **CAROL SING AROUND THE FIREPLACE** - Sunday, Dec. 17, 11:30 AM

Following worship and Coffee Fellowship, everyone is invited to gather around the fireplace in Fellowship Hall for our annual carol sing, led by Dominick Giaquinto, our Music Director.

### **LONG NIGHT ADVENT SERVICE** - Wednesday, Dec. 20, 7:00 PM

A Long Night Advent Service, held on or near the longest night of the year, is designed for those who find Christmas a difficult season. We hear constantly about the happiness of the season and about getting together with family and friends. Yet, grief, broken relationships, unemployment, illness, pain and isolation can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating. This special service, which will include music, prayers and readings, is to help us reflect on God as Emmanuel, "God-with-us," who comes to us in times of struggle and reminds us of the true preciousness of the gift of Emmanuel and how we can gain comfort by knowing that we are never truly alone. Our Stephen Ministers, a care giving ministry, will provide light refreshments following the service.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE** - Sunday, Dec. 24

#### **8:30 AM — Breakfast Fellowship**

Our Community Breakfast will be served 8:30 to 9:30 am Christmas Eve morning in Fellowship Hall. The meal is free and everyone is welcome.

#### **10:00 AM — Worship Service**

During Worship on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, our Chancel Choir will sing, and Pastor Sara will delivered a special message.



### **CHRISTMAS DAY** - Monday, Dec. 25

#### **6:30 AM — Dawn Service**

This unique service will feature a live Nativity! For over 70 years, FUMC has welcomed Christmas with a Dawn Service. Families and friends gather in the sanctuary by 6:30 am for carols and the Christmas story. The church is lit only by candles as the worshipers enter silently into the sanctuary to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Come as you are!





## The Christmas Service of Lessons & Carols

As is our tradition at FUMC, we will have our annual Worship Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 17, at 10 am. In a Service of Lessons and Carols, the story of the Nativity of Jesus is told through scripture and song. This year we will be using "A Festival of Lessons and Carols" of Hal Hopson, which was given to the church in memory of John Walden.



The Emery String Quartet will join members of our Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir for this service. Dominick Giaquinto will serve as organist and

Mitch Haverly will be the conductor. The congregation will be invited to sing familiar carols and hymns, and the Chancel Choir will sing several anthems.

This service is a wonderful way to experience the true meaning and spirit of the Christmas season. You are encouraged to invite family and friends to join us for this yearly tradition. The prelude by the Emery String Quartet will begin at 9:45.

*And plan to invite your friends and family to...*



## The Rose Window

The rose window was installed sometime around 1874, during the time the church building was constructed. In 1981, it was removed for cleaning and repairs, then reinstalled and covered with Lexan.



As with all rose windows, its shape is that of a wheel, with a hub and spokes, a reminder that rose windows were originally called wheel windows. A rose window is also referred to as a marigold window, for the rose is a symbol of Mary. In FUMC's rose window, the twelve spokes are a reminder of the twelve Apostles. At the end of each spoke is a quatrefoil, which resembles a four-petaled flower. A quatrefoil indicates any fourfold group of objects or attributes, such as the Four Evangelists or the Four Gospels.

Each of the four colors in the window—red, blue, green, gold—has its own symbolism. From a distance, some of the glass appears to be white, a color which stands for purity, light and joy. Red symbolizes blood, fire, Christian zeal and the Holy Spirit; blue represents heaven, truth and constancy. The red and blue combines to form violet, a symbol of penitence, mourning and royalty. Green symbolizes life, hope, nature and growth, while gold adds the qualities of glory and splendor to the meanings of white. The different colored lights in stained glass have different properties: white is piercing, blue is luminous and expansive, red contracts at a distance and gold remains stable. As daylight fades, red will turn black but blue will remain until all the light is gone.

Many years ago, the Rev. Leon Adkins, Sr., pastor at the time, preached a sermon on the rose window. His concluding remarks still hold today: "It (Rose Window) testifies to the central mystery of life - the union of God and man. It radiates the reality of constancy and truth. It radiates the glory of love and suffering which shall bring the Gospel of our Lord into the fulfillment of humanity's direst need and highest hope!"

## Book Discussions

### ♦ Discussion on December 9th @ 10:00 AM

The November/December book study is on Bryan Stevenson's book, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. It is a *NY Times* Bestseller and has received many awards, including being named one of the "Best Book of the Year" by the *NY Times*. Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need. *Just Mercy* is an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a window into the lives of those he defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.



### ♦ Discussion on January 27th @ 10:00 AM

The December/January book study will be on *Crazy Love* by Leslie Morgan Steiner. UMW and the Intersectional Justice Committee have teamed up to pick this book on abusive love out of Steiner's own life.

At 22, Leslie Morgan Steiner seemed to have it all: a Harvard diploma, a glamorous job at *Seventeen* magazine, a downtown NYC apartment. Plus a handsome, funny, street-smart boyfriend who adored her. But behind her façade of success, this golden girl hid a dark secret. She'd made a mistake shared by millions: she fell in love with the wrong person.

Gripping and utterly compelling, *Crazy Love* takes you inside the violent, devastating world of abusive love. Conor said he'd been abused since he was a young boy, and love and rage danced intimately together in his psyche. Why didn't Leslie leave? She stayed because she loved him. Find out for yourself if she had fallen truly in love – or into a psychological trap. *Crazy Love* will draw you in -- and never let go.

Kevin Nelson (kmichael07@yahoo.com) can get you a copy of either book or both for \$13 each, or you can get your own through a library or other source.

## United Methodist Women

### Empty Pill Bottle Collection:

"Thank you" to everyone who contributed their empty pill bottles to United Methodist Women (UMW)! With your help, we were able to deliver approximately 750 empty bottles to the Albany District Fall Meeting. These bottles will be re-used through the **Matthew 25 Ministries** program. We will be collecting them again at some point in March, in preparation for our District Spring Meeting. Look for the basket in the Narthex.

According to the United Methodist Women Handbook, UMW "shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." All are invited to join us for an opportunity to change yourself and change the world.

Recently we voted to donate \$1000.00 of the Mary Carleton Bequest Fund to help assist relief efforts in Puerto Rico or US Virgin Islands. We are grateful for Mary Carleton and her family's compassion to want to help others through UMW mission work.

In addition, we are in the process of making arrangements for a couple of guest-speaker events to inform the congregation about a couple of issues. We are arranging discussions on Water Sustainability in urban settings, and Human Trafficking. These events will be open and free to everyone. Please feel free to attend and invite friends.

Our next UMW meeting and potential guest-speaker event will be on Sunday, January 7, 2018, at 11:30am. Consider joining us. Our officers for 2018 are as follows: Shirley R. & Kristen J., Co -Presidents; Alice N., Vice President/Programming; Sue L., Treasurer; Kathy P., Secretary; Jan H. & Amanda T., Nominations Team. Thank you.



## Racial Justice Workshop – Being Responsible To Our Community

During the recent Intersectional Justice Committee meeting, Kevin shared about the (FREE) Racial Justice workshop that is taking place on Sunday, December 10th, from 1 PM-6 PM at Girls, Inc., 962 Albany Street (dinner and childcare provided). This is a free workshop that is being put on by Jamaica Miles, our local organizer from Citizen Action. Kevin will be attending; Sara hopes to attend; and they are hoping that many of you will choose to attend as well. Here is the description of the workshop, and below is the link to register. You must register in advance, but Kevin would appreciate you letting him know if you will be coming. Thanks everyone!

Americans define racism as individual, overt and intentional. But modern forms of racial discrimination are often unintentional, systemic and hidden. Racism operates along with other systems of oppression including class exploitation, sexism, homophobia, and many others. Politicians, employers and public administrators have all learned to use codes for the groups they target.

During our Racial Justice Workshop, we will discuss the different levels of racism, anti-racism, diversity/cultural competency and how to become better role models and agents for change. Dinner and childcare will be provided. <https://actionnetwork.org/events/racial-justice-workshop-being-responsible-to-our-community>

## Alternative Giving Suggestions

The Intersectional Justice Committee is encouraging all to consider “alternative giving” for Christmas and other celebrations. Most of us have too much “stuff” while many in the world are suffering without the basic necessities. Alternative (or additional) giving allows us to honor others by giving a gift in their name to a cause or organization which seeks to improve the lives of others. This year we are focusing on 5 alternatives. Displays will be available at church. You can also learn more about each option by talking with a member of the Intersectional Justice Committee.



**Church World Service: Blanket Program**— A \$10 blanket supplies warmth to someone experiencing a crisis.

**FUMC SUSTAIN (Soap) Ministry** – Soap and other basic hygiene products are not covered by food stamps. Any size donation will help with the hygiene of needy Schenectadians.

**Heifer International** – “The gift that multiplies.” Animals and training in their care are given worldwide. Recipients give the first offspring to someone else, thereby spreading the gift. Any donation is helpful, but you have the option of “buying” specific animals.

**Home Furnishings Program** of Schenectady County – This organization recycles furniture by giving donated furniture and other household items to people in need, who have been referred by agencies in the county.

**Community Breakfast Program** — This program is held at our church each Sunday except on the first Sunday of each month to provide a good breakfast and hospitality to the people of Schenectady.

Checks can be made out to FUMC with a notation of the agency to which you are donating. Or you can donate directly to the agency for GE or other matching. Cards, which you can give to the person you are honoring, will be available in Fellowship Hall starting on December 3rd.

***We hope you will consider this meaningful way to share love at Christmas.***



## Christmas Poinsettias 2017



Each year at Christmas time we brighten our worship spaces with live poinsettia plants. You are invited to participate by ordering one or more poinsettias for our Christmas season worship services. The plants are then yours to keep, or to share. You may also make a donation to the Altar Guild without ordering a plant. Your name and Memorial will appear in the worship bulletin.

**Please fill out the form below and return it with payment by Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, or you may email your order to [fumcflowers@gmail.com](mailto:fumcflowers@gmail.com).**

Completed forms with payment may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church at 603 State St., Schenectady, NY 12305, Attn: Altar Guild (please make check payable to First UMC.)

Alternatively, payment may be made electronically at [www.fumcschenectady.org](http://www.fumcschenectady.org) using the tab “Electronic Giving” (please select “Another Purpose” and write in “poinsettia.”)

**\* Please indicate your choices:**

Name of Donor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

and/or In Celebration of Christmas \_\_\_\_\_

\* Number of Plants \_\_\_\_\_ Red \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Only

\* Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Church cost is \$12 per plant)

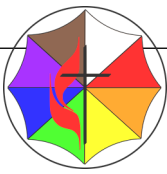
\* \_\_\_\_\_ Will pick up plant(s) after 10 a.m. service on December 17

\* \_\_\_\_\_ Will not pick up plant(s); please take to a shut-in

\* \_\_\_\_\_ Plant(s) can be left on altar for two Sundays, December 17 and 24

\* \_\_\_\_\_ Would be happy to deliver a plant after a service





## MISSION MOMENT

Delivered during Worship

### ► World Communion Sunday Scholarships

*Delivered on October 1, 2017, by Virgia Phoenix*

Congregations around the world observe World Communion Sunday, usually on the first Sunday in October. According to our book of Discipline, World Communion Sunday "calls the church to be the Catholic inclusive church."

World Communion Sunday as a tradition started in 1934 by a Presbyterian Minister as an attempt to bring the church together in a service of Christian unity. In 1940, it was adopted by the Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches). It was then promoted as an observance in Christian Churches worldwide. In the United Methodist Church, World Communion Sunday is one of the Special Giving Sundays authorized by the General Conference. A special offering is received. One half of this offering is designated for World Communion Scholarships. The Board of Global Ministries administers these scholarships. Half of the scholarship money goes to ministries beyond the United States. The purpose of the offering is "to assist racial and ethnic persons pursuing various avenues of ministry."



The General Board of Church and Society calls World Communion Scholarships vital to the church's future, especially for racial and ethnic minority students and international students on graduate and undergraduate levels. It further states that the scholarships provide gifts to students who might not be able to pursue a higher education otherwise.

Leon Adkins Sr., a former pastor of FUMC in the 1940s, was on the staff of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry in the 1950s. He was tasked with recruiting candidates for ministry. It was in keeping with this goal that I was recruited as a suitable candidate following my graduation from Wiley College. Therefore, receiving a World Communion Scholarship made it possible to enroll in Boston University School of Theology, graduating with a Masters of Divinity degree.

World Communion scholars were required to attend a week of orientation in Washington, DC. Arriving in Washington in August of 1957 and joining 26 other recruits from near and distant places, the reality of the extensiveness of our church as a global connection was awesome. They came from Fiji, Tonga, Yugoslavia, Malaya, The Philippines, India, Singapore, Norway, and in the United States: African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Alaskan Natives and places that currently escape my memory. Some of the scholars never returned to the countries that they left behind, many of the countries no longer exist and some have different names and different forms of government. Some have been decimated by upheavals resulting in division and extinction. What they knew as home became only a memory buried in a past impossible to reclaim.

The World Communion Scholarship awarded three wonderful opportunities that shaped my life: 1- Forming bonds of friendship nationally and internationally that exists to this day; 2- Serving The Methodist Church as a Lay Employee for 26 years and 3- Finding a connection with FUMC long before it became a reality.

Thanks to Leon Adkins Sr., his successors and World Communion Scholarships, all fortunate recipients can share in important ministries connecting us to United Methodists all over the world. Countries with Methodist Presidents, Bishops, leaders and citizens who serve in Church and Society creating significant milestones that help shape the Arc of History.





# Overview of Disaster Recovery by UMCOR and UMVIM

## United Methodist Committee on Relief & United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

There is a story that at a time of disaster one governor asked the other, "Have the M and M's arrived yet?" He was referring to the Methodists and the Mennonites. United Methodists are often the first in and the last out of an area affected by a disaster. There is a process for making this happen. People eager to volunteer need to understand the process.

First, the bishop in the affected area requests help from UMCOR. Then, an advance team of individuals experienced in logistics, communications, construction, volunteer management, and case management will work with the bishop and his team to plan a strategy. They will plan an approach to distribution of supplies, and deployment of Early Response Teams (ERTs) and Volunteers in Mission (VIMs). ERTs are teams with special training who go in first to clean up an area. They might muck out a flooded basement, clean up mold, etc. They are self-contained groups who do not need the support of the local people. VIMS go in later and work on recovery and rebuilding. This process can take over 10 years.

All groups should be available to listen to the people affected and try to support their emotional needs. People who might not be able to do construction are needed on VIM teams for giving support, being gophers, or perhaps playing with children. There is an organization run by Church of the Brethren called Children's Disaster Services (CDS) which provides special training to volunteers who will work with children after a disaster. Many United Methodists work with this group. (More about that some other time!)

While we are waiting for the invitation for VIMs to go to the Caribbean, there are many other sites in need. Our youth worked on the Jersey Shore and in WV during the past year. More help is needed there as well as in many other places. More information on volunteer opportunities is at:

Northeast Jurisdiction VIM website – [www.umvimnej.org](http://www.umvimnej.org)

Upper NY Annual Conference website – [www.unyumc.org/mission](http://www.unyumc.org/mission)

Upper New York VIM Facebook—[www.facebook.com/uppernewyork](http://www.facebook.com/uppernewyork)

UMCOR website – [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)

Our own FUMC team will be going to Mission Central in PA in April 2018 to help with the distribution of emergency supplies to those in need. For more information, please see below and watch for further details!

### Save the dates!! FUMC Intergenerational Volunteers in Mission Trip!!



**When?** Monday, April 2—Friday, April 6, 2018

**Where?** Mission Central, Mechanicsburg, PA. Mission Central is a United Methodist depot where disaster recovery supplies are collected from the Northeast before they are sent to those in need. See [missioncentral.org](http://missioncentral.org).

**What will the team do?** There are a variety of tasks which include sorting and checking kits like the flood buckets and hygiene kits we have sent. The volunteer coordinator knows that our youth are enthused about the construction skills they have learned and says that springtime will offer an opportunity to use some of those skills. There might be needs in the community of Mechanicsburg. The coordinator suggested that we might want to take ½ day to sight see in the area. We will discuss this.

**Where will the team stay?** We will stay in Silver Spring Retreat Center ([silverspring.org](http://silverspring.org)), a beautiful facility 1.5 miles from Mission Central. It has 19 beds, another mattress, a full kitchen, a pleasant room with a TV, and meeting rooms. It can accommodate up to 30 people.

**What will we eat?** We will prepare most of our meals in the retreat center and make bag lunches to take for our work times.

**How will we get there?** Driving takes about 6 hours. Mechanicsburg is near Harrisburg. After we know who is going, we will decide whether we need to rent a van or whether we have enough cars and drivers.

**How much will it cost?** We don't have exact figures yet but will keep the cost as low as possible. This should not be difficult as we will do our own meals and the retreat center is very generous.

**How can we learn more?** Team leaders are Sylvester Doyer and Jan Huston. Let them know you are interested. Applications and more details will be available soon.

# KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - OCTOBER 2017

PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

## Our Prayers

Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of Hollis Stedman, who passed away November 8th (Roger & Diane Kingsland's friend)

The family & friends of Aunt Mickey, who passed away recently (Jean Gustafson's Aunt)

On Jan Butts	Extended Jack McEwan
Ross Corbett	Mary Neville
June Dieffenbach	Claire Racicot
Jen & Merrick Fuller	Shirley Rivest
Sandy Buschak-Jackson	Bob Slater
Robyn Lonergan	Dick Smith

We Celebrate with:

Kevin & Stephanie Kempf on the birth of their first child, Leona Jeanne, who was born on Nov. 21. Congratulations!

Adam & Amy Bird, parents, and Bill & Pam Bird, grandparents, on the birth of Bergen on Oct. 11. Congratulations!

Jonny Gustafson, Jean's nephew, who has ranked 3rd on the World Cup Luge Racing Team! Congratulations!

## Our Presence

Date	Worship	Date	Amount
October 1	63	October 1	\$10,180.00
October 8	64	October 8	1,041.00
October 15	73	October 15	5,101.00
October 22	76	October 22	1,715.16
October 29	68	October 29	5,255.59

## Our Gifts

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Those served this month:

Children (infant-17)	43
Adults (18-64)	208
Elderly (65+)	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>

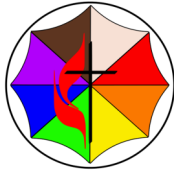


## Our Service

### Date

- 10/1 —Held concert featuring the Harmonic Brass of Munich; free and open to all
- 10/5 —Participated in the Albany District Day with Bishop Mark Webb @ Shenendehowa UMC
- 10/8 —Welcomed four new members into our church family during Worship
  - New weekly Bible Study began on *The Book of James*, led by Pastor Sara; open to all, free of charge
  - Welcomed Bishop Webb for a conversation about discrimination of LGBTQ persons; open to all
- 10/14 —Held Carl Lecture featuring Dr. Traci West on "Grace and Race: Intersectionality"; free & open to all
- 10/15 —Bread for the World Sunday held with Litany of Commemoration
- 10/21 —Our United Methodist Women (UMW) held fall gathering with all women welcome
  - Appreciation Luncheon & Training held for our Community Breakfast & SUSTAIN Ministry volunteers
- 10/26 —(The) Gathering held with reflection on question: *What Is Important?*; all welcomed
- 10/28 —Book discussion held on Bill McKibben's book, *Deep Economy...Wealth of Communities & the Durable Future*
- Oct. —Distributed personal care items to those in need through our SUSTAIN Ministry
  - Held collections for UMCOR towards relief efforts after the devastating hurricanes in the south (\$1,275)
  - Continue to prepare and serve the Downtown Community Breakfast on Sundays, free and open to all
  - 2nd hour events: Needlework Ministry; Team Meetings; Forum: VIM Team to Nicaragua; Joint Youth Fellowship

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



*The Spire*

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

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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Albany, NY  
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***Serving Schenectady for over 200 Years***

**NEXT SPIRE MAILED:**

Dec. 28; articles due Dec. 15

**Sunday  
Bible Study**

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



**Invitation**

Would you simply enjoy a visit or would you 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 374-4403.

**Coming in early  
January...**

***Watch for details!***

- ▶ Serve at City Mission—Jan. 3
- ▶ Epiphany Sunday—Jan. 7
- ▶ UMW Gathering—Jan. 7
- ▶ Church Night—Jan. 9

**E-Newsletter**

To receive our monthly newsletter by email, please contact the office.

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

**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/2](http://www.unyumc.org/districts/2)



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