

THE

*Spire*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

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Accessible

Vol. 81 No. 3

The Reverend Sara E. Baron, Pastor

July 2017

## Future Sundays

- 8:30 Community Breakfast Fellowship  
9:00 Books for Children & Adults  
9:30 Second Cup Café  
10:00 Sunday Morning Worship  
*Infant & Toddler Care available*  
11:00 Coffee Fellowship  
11:30 Second Hour Programs  
—Youth Event: Car Wash  
—Needlework Ministry, etc.  
7:00 Study: *Subversive Women of the Bible*

## Worship Text:

- July 2 Judith 8:9-36  
July 9 Luke 10:38-42  
July 16 1 Corinthians 14:26-36  
Acts 2:1-21  
July 23 John 6: 1-21  
July 30 Exodus 2:5-10

## Second Hour Programs:

- July 9 Youth Event: Car Wash  
July 23 Youth Event: Car Wash



## Summer Music at Worship at 10:00 AM

July 2

DIANE KINGSLAND - *Piano*

July 9

SOPRANOS AND ALTOS  
OF THE FUMC CHANCEL CHOIR

July 16

JENNIE MOAK - *Organ*

July 23

BARBARA HAVERLY  
DIANE KINGSLAND  
SUE LEARNER

July 30

HANDBELL QUARTET



August 6

TENORS AND BASSES  
OF THE FUMC CHANCEL CHOIR

August 13

AMANDA DAME - *Flute*

August 20

JANE BAKER - *Soprano*



August 27

DOMINICK GIAQUINTO - *Organ*

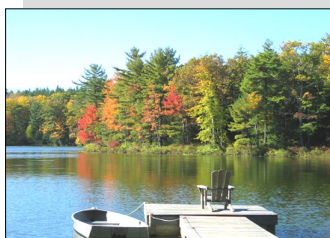
September 3

JENNIE MOAK - *Organ*

September 10

DAVID READ - *Baritone*

## Coming soon... CHURCH WIDE RETREAT!



***Signup today!***  
***details on insert;***  
***register by***  
***July 16!***



## From Our Pastor

At Church Council in June, Adult Education announced the presenter for our Family Weekend this year: Bishop Susan Hassinger. Many of you probably already know Bishop Hassinger, she was the Bishop of the Albany Episcopal Area (the former Troy and Wyoming Annual Conferences) from 2006-2010. For those of you who don't know her, I'm going to take this opportunity to tell you some of what I know of her.

Bishop Hassinger was elected Bishop in 1996 and served for 8 years in the New England Annual Conference before her retirement. She chose to retire because she felt God calling her to something new, and in her retirement she attended classes to become certified as a Spiritual Director. She also became the Bishop in Residence at Boston University. It was in hearing her story for the first time that I really comprehended that discernment and figuring out what God is calling us to is the work of a lifetime, and doesn't stop at ordination (nor consecration!!).

In 2006, Bishop Susan Morrison needed to step down from active episcopal work in the middle of a quadrennium, and Bishop Hassinger agreed to step in. For me personally, this meant that I was commissioned by Bishop Morrison and sent to my first appointment by Bishop Morrison; and I was ordained and served my first 4 years of ministry under the leadership of Bishop Hassinger. Within the process of ordination, we were expected to attend a retreat with the Bishop. So, in 2009, the one I attended was combined between the former Troy and Wyoming Annual Conferences, held at Sky Lake, and led by Bishop Hassinger directly. I had known her for years, and had incredible respect for her. Yet, it was in that retreat that I realized what her greatest gifts are. Bishop Susan Hassinger is the most impressive retreat leader I have ever had the pleasure of experiencing. She is incredibly well-prepared, and yet flexible. Later, I also experienced her as Bible Study Leader for Annual Conference and was equally impressed. She does her work, and she does it WELL.

So, I am thrilled beyond reasonable measure to once again experience a retreat under the leadership of Bishop Hassinger. She intends to lead us from Micah 6:8 "Do Justice, Love Kindness, and Walk Humbly with God." Her leadership will combine Bible Study with spirituality, activism, and practical concerns. I am ready to geek out and having trouble waiting for the retreat to start.

Now that I've gushed excessively over the leader, let me take a moment to remind you of why we even have a church retreat. While you may expect me to say "tradition" or "because you all said you wanted one," that isn't the fullest possible answer. We have a church retreat so that we can build the kin-dom of God. The church retreat: gives us space for rest and relaxation (Sabbath); gives us time to build deeper relationships with each other; nurtures us in the natural beauty of the earth; lets us play together; engages our hearts and minds together; and thus builds us up as a Body of Christ. The work (and play) that we do together as a Body of Christ, to build the kin-dom, is nurtured by re-treating together.

Sky Lake is a handicap accessible facility, and the kitchen staff feeds us incredibly delicious and healthy food with adaptations for special food needs. The retreat facilities include full bathrooms and access to electricity, a labyrinth, a lake to boat in, hiking, games and puzzles, and fireplaces galore. There will be special activities for children and youth, and time for shared worship. With gratitude for the faithfulness of those who came before us, there are also scholarship funds available for those who would like to come but can't afford the costs.

It is deeply good to play and learn together, and we are lucky to have one of the greatest teachers and spiritual leaders to guide us. If you are free August 25th-27<sup>th</sup>, I heartily encourage you to sign up for the church retreat. (If you want more prodding, ask anyone who went last year!) Come play!!

—Sara

## In Memoriam

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



† **Philip Launer**, a longtime member and friend of over 50 years, who passed away on June 20th. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date. Please keep his wife, Arden, and their children and family in your prayers.

Cards and notes of condolence can be sent to Arden and the family at:  
156 Lawrence St., Apt. 120  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

## Calling All Men!

The next Men's Breakfast Fellowship will be held Wednesday, July 26th, at 8:30 am at Blue Ribbon Diner on State St. All men are welcome. See Bob Coppola with any questions.



## Serve at the Mission

It's our church's turn to serve a meal at the City Mission of Schenectady Wednesday, July 26th, at 5:00 pm. With enough people, we'll be finished by 6:30. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Lois Atkinson (377-8249) to help.

## Mark Your Calendar:

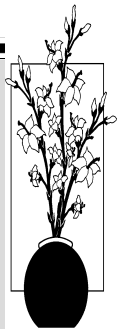
### UMW Special Event on August 6

Our United Methodist Women are sponsoring a special program focused on Environmental Justice on Sunday, August 6th. Everyone is welcome. The program will be held after Worship at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. Mark your calendar and watch for details!



## Calling All 2017 Graduates!

The office is collecting the names of members and friends of FUMC, who are graduating from high school and college to acknowledge their achievement. Call with your graduate!



## Altar Flowers

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

## A Stephen Ministry Moment

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

*Swedish Proverb*



## Enjoy doing Needlework?

Everyone is invited to join in our Needlework Ministry (knitting, crocheting, sewing) anytime; held most Sundays after Worship. Handmade items are created then donated to those in need. Just stop in Wesley Lounge on a Sunday or contact Eileen Deming or Alice Nash.

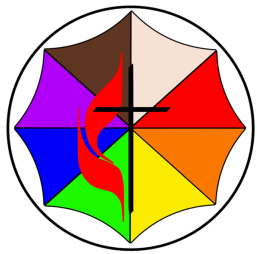

## E-Newsletter Available!

This monthly newsletter is available electronically, which means you can receive it sooner and save resources at the same time! If you'd prefer to receive it by email, please contact the office.



# July 2017

## First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2</b> 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Punch Fellowship 11:30 AM Needle-work Ministry	3	<b>4</b> <b>Independence Day</b> Church Office Closed	5	6	7	8
<b>9</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Punch Fellowship 11:30 AM Car Wash 11:30 AM Needle-work Ministry 7:00 PM Bible Study	10	<b>11</b> 2:00 PM Staff mtg.	<b>12</b> 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry	13	14	15
<b>16</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Punch Fellowship 11:30 AM Needle-work Ministry 7:00 PM Bible Study	<b>17</b> 7:00 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee	18	19	20	21	22
FUMC Serves at SICM Summer Lunch Program - site at Hillhurst Park on Campbell Road						
<b>23</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Punch Fellowship 11:30 AM Car Wash 11:30 AM Needle-work Ministry	24	25	<b>26</b> 8:30 AM Men's Breakfast Fellowship 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry 5:00 PM Serve Meal @ City Mission	27	28	<b>29</b> 9:30 AM Youth Service: Serve free Community Brunch @ Emmanuel Friedens 10:00 AM -11:30 Book Discussion
<b>30</b> 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> 11:00 AM Punch Fellowship 11:30 AM Needle-work Ministry 7:00 PM Bible Study	31					

**We are in the season of PENTECOST / in KINGDOMTIDE (green) - Ordinary (numbered) time when we focus on the mission of the church.**

## Skye Farm Celebrating 75th Anniversary!

Joint District Gathering and Celebration of Skye Farm's 75th Anniversary on Saturday, July 8th! Everyone is invited to an Albany and Adirondack District Joint Worship and Picnic from 10:00 am - 1 pm on July 8th, just prior to the Open House at Skye Farm (1-4 pm).

Worship on the waterfront begins at 10:30 AM - live music, Skye Farm's drama group, message and Holy Communion. Potluck Meal will begin at around 11:30. Hamburgers/rolls/beverages provided; if able, please bring a dish to share. After the meal join in the Open House festivities! RSVP's needed July 3rd at the Adirondack District at: 518-480-4866 or [adirondackdistrict@unyumc.org](mailto:adirondackdistrict@unyumc.org)



And save these dates for some more celebrating of Skye Farm's 75th anniversary:

—September 1-4...Alumni Weekend. Come for all or part of the weekend, which will include a Chicken BBQ!

—November 4...Anniversary Banquet held at Saratoga Springs UMC; we'll share Skye Farm's future vision!



## SICM Summer Lunches: Volunteer for a few hours of fun July 17-21

Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) will again be coordinating summer lunches for Schenectady children. Without this program many kids would not have a midday meal throughout the summer. Lunches are served at sites specifically targeted to reach the largest number of children. At the sites, nearly 100% of the children qualify for free or reduced price lunches when they are in school. The NYS Education Department and the US Department of Agriculture fund SICM's summer lunch program by reimbursing SICM for each meal served. Lunch is available to youth 18 years old and under. SICM expects to feed more than 1000 children per day at 18 different sites throughout the city. Last summer over 34,000 meals were served. The food is prepared at a central location and then brought to the distribution sites where it is given to the children by volunteers. FUMC's week to serve this year will be July 17-21. We will be at the Hillhurst Park, Campbell Rd., Bellevue. Hours to volunteer will be approx. 12:15—2:00. We will have 3-5 volunteers each day. Please sign-up for one or more days by contacting Jan Huston at 399-0919 or at [hustonjp24@gmail.com](mailto:hustonjp24@gmail.com).



## Summer Camp for Kids

There are still openings in some of the camps offered at Skye Farm and Sky Lake Campgrounds, which are operated by the United Methodist Church. These camps offer our children and youth wonderful experiences of an outdoor world of fun, joy and love during summer. For details, pick up a brochure in the narthex or go to: [www.campsandretreats.org](http://www.campsandretreats.org).

## Need Your Car Washed?

FUMC Youth are fund-raising to support their Mission Trip to West Virginia in August. The youth will hold a car wash after Worship on Sunday, July 9, and on Sunday, July 23, from 11:30am—2 pm in our parking lot. The cost is \$5 exterior wash; \$10 exterior wash and vacuuming. Please take note of these dates. Our youth would greatly appreciate your support. Also your sharing this with friends and neighbors.



# Church Retreat at Sky Lake

**August 25 – 27, 2017**

**Register today! Registrations needed by July 16**  
(Weekend Schedule on back)



Last year's retreat was so successful that another family weekend retreat at Sky Lake Camp and Retreat Center is scheduled! Again, this will be a time of focus and dialogue with intergenerational activities for all. Our guest presenter will be Bishop Susan Hassinger, who was "our" Bishop from 2006-2010. Sign-in will begin at 5:30pm Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> and check-out will be at 2:00pm on Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. Sky Lake Camp and Retreat Center is located 23 miles east of Binghamton in Windsor, NY.

Linens and meals are all provided with accommodations at Underwood Lodge; special dietary accommodations are available upon advanced request. Financial assistance through First UMC is available; please speak to Pastor Sara. To reserve a spot, your registration form and payment need to be turned in to the Church Office by July 16<sup>th</sup>.

Lodge rate for the weekend, which includes meals, is \$158 for adults; \$139 for youth/teens; \$64 for children age 4-12. Tent Camping is also available for the weekend at a greatly reduced rate [check with Rev. Bob Long]; meal costs for the weekend for those tenting are \$60 for adults/teens; \$30 for children age 4-12. More details on next page.

To check out room accommodations and the facilities at the Underwood Lodge, go to: <http://skylakecenter.org/camp-and-retreat-center/our-facilities>.

## Church Retreat 2017 – Registration Form

To sign up for the retreat, please provide your name, phone, etc., below and place in the offering plate or return to the Church Office.

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# of adults \_\_\_\_\_ # of youth/teens: \_\_\_\_\_ # of children (age 4-12) \_\_\_\_\_

Accommodations:

\_\_\_\_\_ Underwood Lodge (meals included) \_\_\_\_\_ Camp (tents not included)

Dietary Accommodations (Please list any special needs): \_\_\_\_\_



### **Theme and Topics**

**Theme: “Do Justice, Love Kindness, and Walk Humbly with God”**



**Friday:** “Come to me, ... and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11: 28 CEB)

**Saturday:** “Put on my yoke, and learn from me” (Matt. 22:29 CEB)

**Sunday:** “My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:30 CEB)

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### ***Susan Wolfe Hassinger***

Susan Wolfe Hassinger was elected a bishop of the United Methodist Church in 1996. She was the Bishop of the Albany area from 2006-2010.

Bishop Hassinger has worked with congregations and church organizations of various sizes, settings, and racial/ethnic backgrounds in conflict transformation, visioning, team building, and congregational development.

Her training, in addition to extensive work in conflict transformation, has included organizational development, family systems as applied to groups and organizations, anti-racism and white privilege, and leadership for change. Bishop Hassinger has also facilitated groups, including the annual conference, in processes of decision-making in addition to or instead of parliamentary procedure. Her practice of spiritual discernment with individuals and groups draws on the “holy conferencing” of John Wesley, as well as such diverse perspectives as the Quaker clearness committee and the Ignatian spiritual exercises.

Bishop Hassinger has been part of the design team and was the first president of JustPeace Center for Conflict Transformation and Mediation. She has also served on a task force on Theological Education and Leadership Formation that included representatives of the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools. That task force has produced a working document “A Wesleyan Vision for Theological Education and Leadership Formation for the 21st Century.” Bishop Hassinger continues as bishop-in-residence and lecturer at Boston University School of Theology.



### New York Health Act

A key project of the Intersectional Justice Committee over the past few months has been related to health care and the New York Health Act, which would have created a universal, single-payer health insurance system in the State of New York. First UMC, as well as the Upper NY Annual Conference, supported this Act because we believe healthcare to be a human right, and we believe that love of neighbor means that all members of our congregation, all members of our communities, and all New Yorkers (as well as beyond) should have equal access to quality health care, regardless of financial resources, with the costs born equitably across the state.

The NY legislative session closed on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> without passing the NY Health Act. The legislation ultimately stalled in the face of opposition from Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan and the lack of support from Governor Andrew Cuomo; nevertheless, it passed the Assembly for the third year in a row, this time with roughly 2/3 support, and it went from 20 co-sponsors in the Senate in January to 31 of the 62 senators at the end of the session—one co-sponsor short of a majority.

That is the closest the NYHA has ever come to passage, and it is a major victory in terms of building a groundswell of support toward its ultimate adoption. The broader Campaign for a NY Health Act is already looking toward next year, with an eye toward building even bigger grassroots support. In the fall we will have our own conversation about what kind of role we might want to play in that.



More immediately, our efforts to persuade Senator James Tedisco to become that 32<sup>nd</sup> Senate co-sponsor were not successful. As a member of a Republican party that remains united against this bill, our efforts were always a long shot; nevertheless, he remains the senator for many members of the congregation, so we worked hard to try to hold him accountable to representing us.

Looking more deeply than just whether or not Tedisco supported the Act, we had mixed success with his office. We were never able to meet with Tedisco directly; however, we met with his chief of staff in April and with his legislative policy director in early June. The first meeting felt productive and impactful; the second meeting did not and proved to be a very frustrating experience. We were able to connect with Tedisco's chief of staff, and he acknowledged that Tedisco believes that healthcare is a human right.

However, during our meeting with Tedisco's legislative policy director, he evidenced no knowledge of how the health care system even works, despite Tedisco serving on the Senate health committee, requiring an explanation even of some of our current health system's most basic concepts of regarding how it works before we could talk about how it would work differently under the NY Health Act. Furthermore, he seemed far more concerned about MVP Health Care and the jobs of the people that work there than about the health of Tedisco's own constituents, much less residents of the rest of the state. Furthermore, when a smaller group of those of us who had attended that meeting sought to pull Senator Tedisco out of the then occurring Senate legislative session for a few moments to chat, Tedisco declined even that.

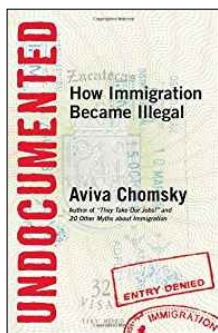
We intend to continue to pursue these efforts in some way and not let Tedisco off the hook, including inviting Tedisco to come out to the church and meet with us himself, so please look for more information on this possible meeting and consider your interest in attending. We do believe in persistence.



## July Book Discussion Saturday, July 29

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 June/July book is *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* by Aviva Chomsky, and our next discussion will be Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, at 10 AM. All are invited to join in this conversation.

In this illuminating work, immigrant rights activist Aviva Chomsky shows how “illegality” and “undocumentedness” are concepts that were created to exclude and exploit. With a focus on US policy, she probes how people, especially Mexican and Central Americans, have been assigned this status—and to what ends. Blending history with human drama, Chomsky explores what it means to be undocumented in a legal, social, economic, and historical context. The result is a powerful testament of the complex, contradictory, and ever-shifting nature of status in America.



Immigrants of all sorts are experiencing substantial discrimination in the United States, and a movement is underway and has been pressing the Schenectady City Council since February to declare Schenectady a “sanctuary city” and adopt a series of immigrant-friendly policies. As such, understanding the history of “undocumentedness” is especially important and can be a key tool to inform the conversations taking place in our community.

Kevin Nelson (kmichael07@yahoo.com) can provide you with a copy of *Undocumented* for \$13 or you can get your own through a library or other source.

The following book is going to be *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* by Bill McKibben.



## Upper NY Conference Mission u 2017

Theme:  
“Learning Together for the  
Transformation of the World”

Mission u, formerly known as Schools of Christian Mission, was originally developed years ago by United Methodist Women with the idea of educating and inspiring women to social action. Today its educational opportunities cross gender and age boundaries, and remains a lay-led, faith-based educational offering that focuses on current issues impacting society. At Mission u, you will have an opportunity to grow in understanding of the mission of the church in the current world context. The studies, two offered this year at 3 different sites around the conference, give particular attention to the responsibilities of people of faith in the fulfillment of the mission work of the church. Mission u also includes: Worship and singing, interest groups around current issues, audiovisual presentations, and great fellowship! All are welcome.

For 2017, the two courses offered this summer at each site, are as follows:

**Spiritual Growth Study:**  
“Living as a Covenant Community”

**Geographic Study:**  
“Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the U.S.”

### **Date and Site—July 14-16**

Cazenovia College, Cazenovia, NY  
Programs available for adults, youth and children

### **Date and Site—July 27-29**

Asbury Camp & Retreat Center, Silver Lake, NY

### **Date and Site—September 8-10**

Silver Bay YMCA on Lake George in Silver Bay, NY

For more information about this year’s two studies, including the cost (scholarship help available) and site locations, visit Mission u’s website at [www.unymissionu.org](http://www.unymissionu.org) or call 518-774-0659.



## MISSION MOMENTS

Delivered during Worship

### ► “Miracle on Craig Street”

*Delivered on June 4, 2017, by Jim Duggan and Rose Rivera, guest speakers*

#### HELPING HAMILTON HILL RESIDENTS GROW FRESH FOOD THERE FOR HEALTH

On 1 May last year, Sue Learner delivered a Mission Moment announcement about a Church Retreat at Sky Lake in late August with guest presenter Dr. Sabine O’Hara, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences at the University of the District of Columbia. Sabine was the wife of the late FUMC pastor, Phil O’Hara.

A week after Labor Day, Sue followed up briefly about the enjoyably relaxing times we spent in the camp setting and the blessing of improved understanding provided by Dr. O’Hara’s four sessions’ focus on “sustainability,” particular to life with and without readily available fresh food in urban settings. Specifically, the sessions guided an increased awareness of how to increase food-security in deficient urban neighborhoods “one city at a time” – and urged responsiveness. We returned with Sabine’s challenge and encouragement to apply our new awareness to the conditions in Schenectady.

Several of us soon attended a HUD-sponsored community “needs assessment” exercise, where “food desert” was defined as characterizing the Hamilton Hill neighborhood, one of the city’s three. Then, a quiet search began to find appropriate contacts within Hamilton Hill. Inquiry to the Schenectady County Health Services produced a copy of its working-draft plan to combat the local “food desert” issue. This plan, now finalized, seems to aim mostly toward more effectively engaging commercial-scale “local food growers and retailers.” The Daily Gazette’s editorial on 17 April 2017 about “Schenectady’s Food Desert Problem” took a similar slant with “.... lack of a full-service grocery store.”

Dr. O’Hara’s working examples strongly encouraged steps toward *greater neighborhood empowerment in residents themselves producing fresh food – small urban farms of various sorts.*

In the meanwhile, Bob Long and I were led to contact Rosa Rivera, a Hamilton Hill resident. Rosa is the full-time leader of the “Miracle on Craig Street” project (MOC) for a big, uplifting goal - - to obtain the foreclosed Carver Community Center property from the City of Schenectady and reconstitute it as a broad functional base for community activity, including an extensive vegetable gardening program. MOC’s website tells the story of responsible young neighbors teaming up to establish a leadership character, set objectives, incorporate legally, obtain office space (with designated hours), and negotiate effectively with the city toward obtaining and redeveloping the vacated property.



THE MOC website outlines an impressive range of support received, financial and otherwise, for its undertaking. Churches, such as First Reformed, Eastern Parkway United Methodist, State Street Presbyterian, Mt. Olivet Baptist, and Universalist Unitarian Society are early supporters. Union College is a basic supporter with many possible inputs as specific opportunities and situations evolve. Other entities are listed as “Partners,” and the list grows.

#### Statement by Rosa Rivera, “Miracle on Craig Street”:

Miracle on Craig Street is an all-volunteer run grassroots organization. To date we have 200+ volunteers who have put their hands on this project and donated their time to helping us achieve our vision of revitalizing and re-opening Carver Community Center.

At this time MOC maintains a 2500 square foot organic garden on the corner of Craig and Wiley Street near the Carver Community Center. Our goal is to expand our operation and maintain a large

*continued on next page....*

organic community garden that grows food and teaches our children and families about growing food, nutrition, cooking, and the food system.

We plan to expand to a 5000 square foot community garden in the Hamilton Hill Neighborhood, growing fresh veggies and fruit that will be used for community meals in the neighborhood. The purpose of our place-based garden program, beyond teaching community residents about agriculture, is to create pride and ownership in our community; to us, this means that neighbors and residents have to be at the center of change and ownership in their lives and in their community.

MOC will utilize 35+ volunteers from the community who will help to keep up the garden. We are currently working with 20 volunteers on a weekly basis to water, weed, landscape, harvest, and maintain the garden.

We are seeking support from FUMC for our project to make it a success in the Schenectady Community.

The Miracle on Craig Street  
PO Box 357  
Schenectady, NY 12301  
miracleoncraigstreet@gmail.com  
www.miracleoncraigstreet.weebly.com  
518-982-5050



## ► Summer Lunch Program

*Delivered on June 18, 2017, by Jan Huston*

I'm going to tell you about the Summer Lunch Program. My goal is to inspire you to volunteer to help for a few hours in July. Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) will again be coordinating summer lunches for Schenectady children. In Schenectady more than half of the youth live below the poverty level and over 80% qualify for free lunch at school. Without this program many kids would not have breakfast or lunch during the summer.

The NYS Education Department and the US Department of Agriculture fund SICM's summer lunch program by reimbursing SICM for each meal served.



In 2016 over 75,000 lunches and 6,500 breakfasts were served in Schenectady and Scotia through the summer lunch program. Lunches are served at sites specifically targeted to reach the largest number of children. At the sites, nearly 100% of the children qualify for free or reduced price lunches when they are in school. Four years ago SICM added a mobile unit. This enabled them to distribute 30,000 meals by stopping at 16 different locations.

Lunch is available to youth 18 years old and under. SICM expects to feed more than 1,000 children every day at 18 different sites throughout the city. The food is prepared at a central location and then brought to the distribution sites. Each site has a site supervisor all summer and rotating groups of volunteers who help serve. This year SICM has a new food distributor – Red Rabbit. Their goal is to expose children to foods they might not otherwise know about. There will probably be more hot foods than in previous years. Instead of packing paper bags for the kids, we will likely be serving foods buffet style. After the children have eaten, volunteers are encouraged to read to them, help them color or play a game. Barb Armstrong usually takes bubbles which kids always enjoy.

**Our church's week to serve this year will be Monday-Friday, July 17-21. We will be at the Hillhurst Park on Campbell Rd. in the Bellevue section of Schenectady. I can give you directions to the site. Hours to volunteer will be approximately 12:25—2:00. We will have 3 to 5 volunteers each day. I will have a clip board after the service so that you can start signing up for the day or days that you prefer.**



# KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES – MAY 2017

PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

## OUR PRAYERS

### Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of Philip Launer, our longtime friend and member, who passed away on June 20th (see page 3 for details)

The family & friends of Luther Marks, who passed away on June 14th (Terry Phillips' brother-in-law)

The family & friends of José Velasquez-Valencia, who passed away on June 13th (José & Beth Long-Velasquez's father/father-in-law)

### Our Christian support is also extended to:

Jan Butts	Sandy Buschak-Jackson	Shirley Readdean
Ross Corbett	Courtney & Jack McEwan	Shirley Rivest
Rudy Dehn	Carolyn Micklas	Bob Slater
June Dieffenbach	Mary Neville	Nancy Walden
Jen & Merrick Fuller	Claire Racicot	

And to: Belinda Forbes, our Nicaraguan Missionary; our homebound; those grieving; VIM Teams; and those affected by natural disasters, poverty and/or violence everywhere.

### We celebrate with:

Lee & Marylois Tupper, who celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary on June 18th. Happy Anniversary!

Drew Vickery, who celebrated his confirmation during Worship on June 4th. Congratulations and Welcome!

## OUR PRESENCE

Date	Worship
May 7	60
May 14	83
May 21	89
May 28	61

## OUR GIFTS

Date	Amount
May 7	\$3,917.00
May 14	1,619.00
May 21	6,403.00
May 28	1,731.00

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

### Those served this month:

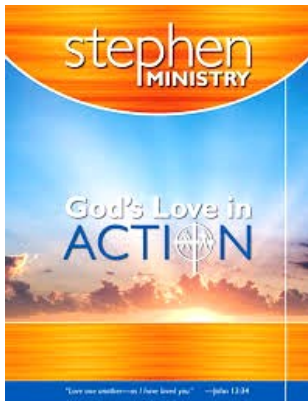
Children (infant-17)	26
Adults (18-64)	179
Elderly (65+)	<u>75</u>
Total	280



## OUR SERVICE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Date</u></p> <p>5/2</p> <p>5/5</p> <p>5/7</p> <p>5/14</p> <p>5/24</p> <p>5/27</p> <p>May</p> | <p>—Church Library work and sort day held</p> <p>—&amp; 5/12, 5/26 Youth Service: Glen Eddy Retirement Community</p> <p>—Participated in CROP Walk to help raise funds &amp; awareness to fight hunger; we raised over \$800</p> <p>—New Program started: Free Book Distribution to children and adults</p> <p>—Concert featured the Westminster Concert Bell Choir; free and open to all</p> <p>—Served meal at the City Mission of Schenectady</p> <p>—Youth Service: Served free Community Brunch</p> <p>—Distributed personal care items to those in need through our SUSTAIN Ministry program</p> <p>—Supported the UNYAC Africa University Scholarship program through efforts by Rev. Bob Long</p> <p>—Provided opportunities to support the NY Health Act and on becoming a “Sanctuary City”</p> <p>—Through our UMW, we began collecting empty pill bottles for foreign countries in need to dispense medicines</p> <p>—Presented <i>Mission Moments</i> during Worship on: Center for Community Justice (CCJ); VIM Experience in New Jersey; and Actions to Support NY Health Act</p> <p>—Continue to serve the Community Breakfast on Sundays, free and open to all</p> <p>—Sunday 2nd hour offerings: Needlework Ministry; Ministry Team Meetings; and Prayer Service @ Sikh Temple</p> |
|--|---|

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



## **We Are a Stephen Ministry Congregation**

Stephen Ministers are trained to help provide the emotional and spiritual care we need when faced with a crisis or difficulty, such as the loss of a loved one, chronic illness, unemployment, separation or divorce, hospitalization, loneliness or discouragement.

Stephen Ministers provide one-on-one caring for about an hour each week to those facing a life crisis. It is a ministry of presence and is strictly confidential. It is being with a person during pain, illness, or even death. Their job is to listen to you, to help you talk about your concern(s), to help you express and understand your feelings, and to help you find solutions or come to terms with your problem(s).

The congregation's role is to contact the pastor if you're facing a crisis and might want a Stephen Minister, you know of someone who might benefit from this program, or you'd like to be a Stephen Minister or Leader and go for training.



## **In Our Community...**

### **► HFP Needs of the Month—**

The Home Furnishings Program, which operates from our church to provide folks in need with household items, has announced “Needs of the Month,” which are: small dressers, love seats, coffee & end tables, forks, large sharp knives, drinking glasses, metal baking pans, muffin & cake pans, full & queen size blankets, coffee makers, and toasters. Smaller items to donate can be brought to church; for large donations or large quantities of items to donate, call HFP at 346-2444.

### **► Thursday Musical Club—**

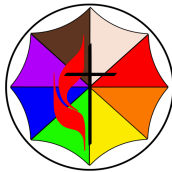
For over a century, the Thursday Musical Club, an all-women's chorus, has given women of all ages and musical abilities the opportunity to perform a wide variety of musical styles for the enjoyment of its members and the public. With a tradition of excellent musical leadership, it offers two seasonal performances each year—one in April and one in December. All singers welcome...no auditions! Rehearsals are on Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 am here at First UMC in Fellowship Hall from September to April. The December concert is scheduled for Dec. 2 at 3:00 pm. To signup or for details go to: [www.tmc singers.org](http://www.tmc singers.org) or <http://facebook.com/ThursdayMusicalClub>.

## **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.





*The Spire*

**First United Methodist Church**  
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**NEXT SPIRE MAILED:**

July 26; articles due July 15



**'Like' us on Facebook**

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

We have an active facebook page...share joys and concerns, events, photos, inspirational quotes, etc.

**Enjoy  
Breakfast  
on Sundays**



Everyone is invited to come enjoy the Downtown Community Breakfast, served on Sundays 8:30-9:30 am prior to the start of the Worship service. The meal is free and served in Fellowship Hall each week except on the first Sunday of each month. Hope to see you there!

**Invitation**

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



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