

THE

Spire

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Accessible

Vol. 81 No. 2

The Reverend Sara E. Baron, Pastor

June 2017

FUTURE SUNDAYS

- 8:30 Community Breakfast
- 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:
 - Needlework Ministry
 - Adult Forum
 - Sermon 'Talk-Back'
- 7:00 Young Adult Bible Study

Worship Text:

- June 4 **Pentecost**
Christian Education / Family Sunday
1 Corinthians 14:26-36; Acts 2:1-21
- June 11 **Peace with Justice Sunday**
Judges 19
- June 18 **Father's Day**
1 Kings 1:11-31; 1 Kings 2:13-25
- June 25 **Graduation Sunday**
Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39

Second Hour Events:

- June 4 Church-Wide Picnic
Children and Youth Ministries, *sponsor*
- June 11 Needlework Ministry
Pride Parade & Festival in Albany
Intersectional Justice Committee, *sponsor*
- June 25 Adult Forum: *Domestic Violence*
United Methodist Women, *sponsor*



Celebration on June 4—

Pentecost & Christian Education Sunday

We'll celebrate Pentecost on Sunday, June 4th, which is the season we celebrate the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit through the life of the church. Plan to wear red, the color of the Spirit!

We'll also celebrate Christian Education Sunday and hold Confirmation, marking the end of our church school year. Everyone is invited to this special event, sponsored by our Children and Youth Ministries Team. Following the Worship Service, plan to stay to enjoy:

- **Picnic on church lawn** (weather permitting)
 - Hamburgers & Hot dogs
 - Salads & Side dishes
 - Watermelon
 - Beverages



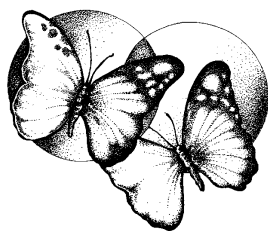
● **Fun Fellowship for All**

Hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls and beverages will be provided; please **bring a dish to share** (salads, watermelon, casseroles, etc.) and be sure to dress appropriately. Signups helpful...please contact the church office.



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.





From our Pastor

This month I want to start a difficult conversation with all of you, one that we've all been trying to figure out on our own for our whole lives, but that we haven't spent enough time talking about together. The conversation centers around the question, "How can I help people who are struggling?" In practicality, I want to consider the question, "What should I do when someone at church asks me for money?"

This is an uncomfortable conversation, mostly because it relates to an uncomfortable situation. We often feel stuck. We all have some desires to be "nice," "good," "generous," or "Christ-like." It is even harder to say "no" at church, and it can feel positively mean to refuse a gift when someone asks for one directly, face to face. In fact, there is a Biblical text that says, "Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you." (Matthew 5:42, NRSV)

At the same time, no one wants to be taken advantage of, not all of us have enough to give, and we aren't always sure that a monetary gift is the most helpful gift to give. Our city and community are full of beloved people of God who are living with addiction, and with the new casino, this is only getting worse. The gifts we are asked for are often being sought in order to feed an addiction that harms the person who is asking for the money!! None of us have perfect discernment to know what needs a person actually has, and how much of what we're told is truth. Living in poverty is difficult, and people develop imperative coping mechanisms, including the capacity to tell stories the ways they are best received.

I do have a few suggestions to offer, but even they are difficult. First of all, I want you to know that, as a whole, you are exceptionally generous. That means that this community is particularly vulnerable to those who are seeking to find ways to feed their addictions. This has happened many times. Often the answer "no" is the best gift to a person who is struggling with addiction, whether or not they agree. If you want to say "no" to a person who asks you for money, please trust your instincts. Additionally, it may be useful to think about problems in terms of short-term solutions and long-term solutions. What we want for everyone is long-term well-being, and it is more helpful to guide people towards those than respond only to a crisis of right now!

Sometimes people most need a listening ear, and if you have it in you to hear their story, that may be a gift of love. Sometimes people need a chance to talk to a pastor, and I'm happy to make appointments with people. Most often, people need help accessing recourses that already exist in our community. Linda Smith in the office is exceptionally knowledgeable about helping people find what already exists, as is Sylvester Doyer, a retired social worker. If someone approaches you for resources on a Sunday, look for Sylvester! I don't know how he has so much wisdom and patience, but I am very glad he is willing to use it for the well-being of our communities.

We are very lucky to be in a location where so many resources are available, and to have people willing and able to guide people to accessing them. However, at the core, we deal with a broken world. Enormous numbers of people in our city, and our country, and our world, exist without sufficient resources. Some of the work we do as church is aimed at changing that fundamental reality, and I hope we keep finding more effective ways to do so. Enormous numbers of people in our city, and our country, and our world struggling with addictions, and there is a need for more addiction care facilities and better addiction research. Some of the work we do as church is aimed at changing that fundamental reality, and I hope we keep finding more effective ways to do so.

In the meantime, I invite you to use caution and discretion if ever you choose to give monetary gifts to those who ask you for them. If you are willing, I invite you instead to seek out those who can help people find long-term solutions. Finally, I hope you will engage with me in this conversation as it continues. I don't know anyone who feels entirely capable of answering the question, "How can I best help?" but almost everyone I know is struggling with it. It seems like time for us to work together on the possible answers.

—Sara

In Memoriam

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



† **Rev. George Bailey**, our former pastor and dear longtime friend, who passed away on May 22. A Memorial Service will be held Sunday, June 4, at 3:00 pm In the church sanctuary. Please keep his daughters, Christine Yesse & Brenda Lewis, and the family in your prayers. Cards of condolence, can be sent to them at: c/o Townley and Wheeler Funeral Home, 21 Midline Rd., Ballston Lake, NY 12019.

† **Joseph LaNigra**, who passed away May 9 after a battle with cancer. A private service celebrating his life was held. Please keep his mother, Carolyn Micklas, and the family in your prayers. Cards/notes of condolence, can be sent to Carolyn at: 749 Hampton Ave., Schenectady, NY 12309.

“CHURCH NIGHT”

Tuesday, June 13



All Ministry Teams are invited to hold meetings on *Church Night*, held the second Tuesday of each month. After the team meetings, everyone is welcome to gather for the Church Council meeting. The evening schedule is:

6:30 pm Ministry Teams meet

7:30 pm Church Council meets

(Notices will go out to teams meeting.)

Notes of Thanks



CROP WALK

Thank you to everyone who walked or donated to the CWS CROP Hunger Walk. First United Methodist was able to raise \$814, which will help to eliminate food insecurity locally and abroad.

—Elaine Troy, Coordinator

Dear Friends in Mission,

Thank you for your generous support of the Missionary Advance of United Methodist Missionary Jeremias Franca, who completed 9 years of missionary service with Global Ministries...assigned as Hospital Administrator of Chicunque Rural Hospital in Mozambique.

Your faithful contributions....provide critical support for funding United Methodist missionaries. 100% of your donations were used to help provide pay and benefits for Jeremias and all other UM missionaries. Since our UM World Service Apportionments cover only 1/3 of the costs for supporting a missionary, your donations played a key role...Thank you for that commitment and for your partnership in servant ministries of Jeremias and his colleagues.

With his service completed, Jeremias Franca's Missionary Advance is no longer available for donations. Please consider continuing your vital partnership by providing support to another missionary engaged in comparable ministries. I suggest contributing to Missionary Advance of UM Missionary David McCormick (Advance #3022179), who serves as Hospital Administrator of Chicunque Rural Hospital in Mozambique. You can view David's missionary biography and his Advance donation information at www.umcmmission.org/explore-our-work/missionaries-in-service/missionary-profiles/mccormick-david. May God ever bless and lead us in the service of the Kingdom.

Sincerely, Eric Angel

*Service Manager for Itineration and Missionary Support
Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church*



Altar Flowers

We are grateful for the Altar Flowers given in April:

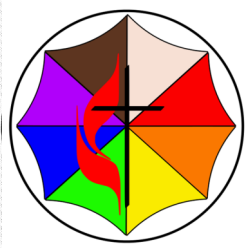
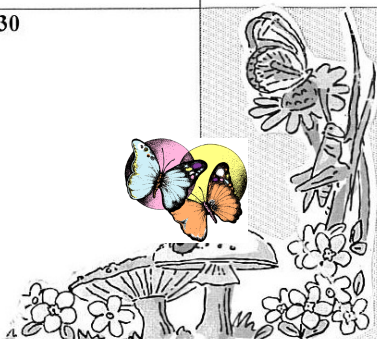
Apr. 16 in celebration of Easter in honor and memory of loved ones

Apr. 30 in loving memory of Susan Oldow Patterson

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

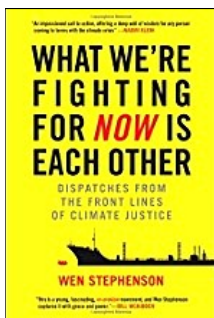
June 2017

First United Methodist Church, Schenectady

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|
|  | | | | 1 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal | 2 | 3 |
| 4 Day of Pentecost <i>Christian Education Sunday</i> 9:30 AM 2nd Cup 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM Annual Picnic on the lawn 3:00 PM Memorial Service for the Rev. George Bailey 7:00 PM Bible Study | 5 | 6 2:00 PM Staff mtg. | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 10:00 AM -11:30 Book Discussion 10:00 AM -3 Lay Servant Ministry Course |
| 11 Peace with Justice Sunday 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM Needlework Ministry 12:00 PM -5 Pride Parade & Festival 7:00 PM Bible Study | 12 | 13 2:00 PM Staff Mtg. ----- CHURCH NIGHT 4:00 PM -6:30 SUSTAIN Ministry: Sorting 6:30 PM Ministry Teams meet 7:30 PM Council | 14 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry | 15 | 16 | 17 10:00 AM -3 Lay Servant Ministry Course |
| 18 Father's Day 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM Second Hour Programs | 19 7:00 PM Staff Pastor / Parish Relations Committee | 20 2:00 PM Staff mtg. | 21 | 22 Public Schools last day | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Graduation Sunday 8:30 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Books to Children & Adults 9:30 AM 2nd Cup 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee 11:30 AM Needlework Ministry 11:30 AM UMW Sponsored Event | 26 | 27 2:00 PM Staff mtg. 7:00 PM Trustees | 28 8:30 AM Men's Breakfast Fellowship 12:00 PM -1:00 SUSTAIN Ministry | 29 | 30 |  |

We are in the season of PENTECOST (red) - the season which we celebrate the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit through the life of the church; sometimes referred to the birthday of the church.

May/June Book Discussion



Everyone is welcome to our next conversation held on Saturday, June 10th at 10:00 am. We'll discuss the book entitled, "What We Are Fighting For Now Is Each Other: Dispatches From the Front Lines of Climate Justice" by Wen Stephenson. Stephenson takes an

urgent, on-the-ground look at some of the "new American radicals" who have laid everything on the line to build a stronger climate justice movement in opposition to political and economic policies that are leading us to catastrophic climate change. Kevin Nelson (kmichael07@yahoo.com) can provide you with a copy for \$13 or you can get your own through a library or other source.

The following book discussion will be about "Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal" by Aviva Chomsky. The discussion will be on Saturday, July 29th, at 10 AM.



Albany Pride Parade

Come join members of the Intersectional Justice committee when we march in the Capital Pride Parade on Sunday, June 11th! The parade steps off at noon from the State Street side of Washington Park and marches around to Madison Avenue. After the parade you can listen to the music or browse the many vendor tables and tents in the Capital Pride Festival that runs all afternoon. It's loads of fun, and as in the past, we've invited members of other Reconciling churches to join us; hope to see you there! For more information, talk to Michele Cole or Kevin Nelson.

Calling all Men: Gather for Breakfast



The next Men's Breakfast Fellowship will be held Wednesday, June 28th, at 8:30 am at the Blue Ribbon Diner on State Street, Schenectady. The breakfast is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Join us!

Enjoy Needlework?

The Needlework Ministry program (knitting, crocheting, sewing) gathers most Sundays after Worship in Wesley Lounge. Handmade items are created and given to neighbors in need. To participate, plan to stop in on a Sunday!

UMW Sponsors Special Event—June 25th

Our United Methodist Women has invited Wendy of Schenectady YWCA to come and speak to us about Domestic Violence issues. This forum will be held on Sunday, June 25th, following Worship, at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome.

Also, UMW is collecting empty pill bottles, which will help foreign countries in need distribute medicine. Bottles with labels removed can be placed in the basket in the narthex.

2017 Graduates

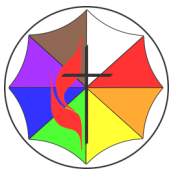


The office is collecting the names of members and friends of FUMC, who are graduating from high school and college this year. Call with your graduate! On June 25th, a special recognition of our 2017 graduates will be held during Worship.

Fellowship before Worship!

Come early on Sundays for these programs:

- **Community Breakfast** - Served 8:30-9:30 am in Fellowship Hall weekly except on the first Sunday of each month.
- **Books Available** - At the Breakfast program, books are available for children & adults 9:00-9:30.
- **Second Cup Café** - Held in Library 9:30-9:50 am. Stop in for coffee and/or to read the newspaper!



MISSION MOMENTS

Delivered during Worship

► Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus (RISSE)

Delivered on March 26, 2017, by Judy Bonds, guest speaker

Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you about RISSE – the Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus (United Methodist Church in Albany). The RISSE mission: to equip refugees and other recent immigrants to build sustainable, independent lives by offering language and literacy instruction, and support with life skills and integration into the US culture and community.

RISSE began in 2007 when the church agreed to sponsor five newly arrived refugee families from central Africa. These families were forced to leave Africa after suffering adverse effects from years of ethnic rivalries, the most publicized of which was the genocide in Rwanda. All of these families suffered loss of family members during those times – of husbands, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and children. All had lived in refugee camps for years.

Needs of these families were great. The children were placed in age-appropriate classes at school, but spoke no English and needed much assistance. Church members began an afterschool program to assist these children with homework and with learning English. Church members found many other needs existed as well: Imagine – you have an ill child that needs to go to the doctor, but you do not speak or understand English and so can't communicate with those doctors. Imagine – you get legal looking forms in the mail, but you can't read English. Imagine – you have questions regarding your children's schooling, but you can't communicate with officials. Even shopping can be intimidating for non-English speakers. And how do you go about looking for a job? Or learn to drive or to use the bus? Volunteers from the church stepped up to assist the families with these and many other everyday activities.

From this initial church ministry to help those five families, RISSE has grown into a 501(c)3 non-profit serving 75 children in the afterschool program (all English as a Second Language [ESL] students) and 80 adults in a fulltime adult ESL program, adults new, or nearly new to the English language. Some of the adults face the additional obstacle of being illiterate in even their own native language as they had never attended school. RISSE also assists families in many other ways, such as employment, housing, and finding of available community resources.

Families come from countries as diverse as Rwanda, Congo, Sudan, Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. In fact, RISSE has served families from over 20 different countries. Last year alone, RISSE served over 200 families. Emmaus United Methodist Church remains a key partner to the RISSE program by providing program space in both the church and parsonage buildings. The Methodist Church through the Board of Global Ministries has recognized RISSE as an Advance ministry. Many community groups, faith communities, universities and other organizations have joined in this ministry along the way.



A little love can go a long way. I'd like to tell you the story of just one of these early first five family members, but emblematic of many: "Jane," of Rwanda/Congo region, was 14 years old when she arrived in 2007 speaking no English. As with many such families in central Africa, hers had traveled from Rwanda to Congo to Burundi seeking safety and escaping numerous traumatic events, the latest of which had been an armed attack on the refugee camp where the family was then residing. She was 11 years old at the time and survived that attack by lying down amidst a pile of bodies and playing dead. Her widowed mother, as well as her oldest brother, were killed during that attack. After several years of applications, she and her 4 surviving siblings were granted status to come as refugees to the US. She was one of those first RISSE students. Today, just 10 years later, she is a graduate of Siena College with a degree

continued on next page....

In accounting and is working on a Master's degree. As impressive as that is, she also has begun a non-profit ministry to give back, teaching women in Rwanda to sew and create garments that they can sell to generate income. As she says: "I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to come to the US and so I wanted to do something to give back and to help empower women remaining in Rwanda, because that could have been me."

Through the families at RISSE, I have heard profound stories of forgiveness, of faith and of perseverance. I have been privileged to experience joyous singing and celebrations in worship services. I have heard stories of trials and tribulations. One comment that will always haunt was made by one of these early family members when asked about one of her surprises upon her move to the US to which she replied: "I didn't think that American's prayed as much as they do, because I didn't think they had that much to pray about."

As the saying goes: "It takes a village..." The RISSE program may be such an example. The church buildings provide the space, but it is only through wide-spread community support and engagement that this service to our neighbors is possible.

RISSE appreciates you, as congregants of First United Methodist Church, for the financial support, the physical support (through Volunteers in Mission teams), and the opportunity to get this word out. Together we are making a difference.

► **United Methodist Women (UMW)**

Delivered on April 2, 2017, by Alice Nash and Virgia Phoenix



Good Morning! For those of you who don't know us, I am Alice Nash, Vice President of FUMC Schenectady's United Methodist Women, and this is Virgia Phoenix.

This morning, I am going to tell you a little about our UMW, and Virgia will fill you in on the history of UMW.

Our focuses are on the Environment, and Domestic and Sexual Violence Toward Women.

We usually meet in the Wesley Lounge. Our next meeting will be April 22nd at 10am. All women are invited.

Methodist women have been advocating for human rights and social justice since the 1800s. In the beginning, their initiatives were realized by sending missionaries to India, Africa and newly freed slaves in the South.

What is currently known as United Methodist Women is a melding of the women's groups of 8 denominations of Methodism, the Evangelical and United Brethren Churches.

In 1972 all women's groups became one group named United Methodist Women as an auxiliary of the Board of Global Ministries. The strong emphasis on missions and education at home and abroad is a hallmark of the United Methodist Women. The organization has been in the forefront of advocacy for the rights of women, children and racial inclusiveness and is responsible for leading the United Methodist Church in embracing the adoption of policies and challenges for the advancement of justice and equality, and supporting concerns affecting the whole of humanity.

United Methodist Women's advocacy areas include domestic violence, economic justice, climate change, peace building, racial justice. and women's rights. Their extensive reading program helps all Methodists be current on issues relating to every human condition.

To find out more, go to UnitedMethodistWomen.org or the United Methodist Book of Discipline. Current stories are available by looking at issues of "Response" Magazine in FUMC's library.

► **Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.)**

Delivered on April 9, 2017, by guest George, Coordinator of the Morning Wakeup AA Group



Mission Statement of Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
- A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.
- Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.



► **CROP Hunger Walk**

Delivered on April 23, 2017, by Elaine Troy

Church World Service (CWS) was established to share US Midwestern grain with people in post war Europe and Asia. In 1947, CWS established the Christian Rural Overseas Program (CROP) to run this program. Today we usually say that CROP stands for Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty.

The purpose of the annual CROP walk is to raise funds that can be used to alleviate or eliminate hunger. Hunger Facts:

- Over 1 billion people are hungry worldwide. That's one out of every 7 people.
- Each day almost 16000 children die from hunger related causes – one every 5 seconds.
- If all 36.2 million food insecure Americans stood in line in a Food Pantry in NY, the line would stretch to Los Angeles and back. Twice.

Up to 25% of the money raised in a CROP Hunger Walk supports hunger-fighting efforts in that same local community. Last year, CROP Hunger Walks provided over \$4 million dollars to some 3000 soup kitchens and food pantries in the U.S. Our Breakfast Program is helped by our participation.



The Schenectady CROP Hunger Walk will be held on Sunday, May 7, 2017, at 1:30 pm. We need people to support the walk with money and to participate in the walk if they can. There will be at least 8 members of FUMC walking, but we invite YOU to join us. Meet at Emmanuel Friedens Church at 1:15.

Show your support for efforts to end hunger.

► Center for Community Justice (CCJ)

Delivered on May 7, 2017, by Pam Brucker, guest speaker

My name is Pam Brucker and I am the Director of Support Services at The Center for Community Justice. We answer to eight Courts in Schenectady County but do not work for them. We are a very small not-for-profit. There are nine staff persons with four being part time. The cornerstone of our agency is the Re-Entry Program. In this program we acclimate folks that are just getting out of prison back into our community. Classes are held throughout the day such as job readiness, bus passes are available for the Reentry clients and coffee is always on. All people who enter our agency are treated with respect and dignity. They are coming out of the Criminal Justice system to meet with us and receive assistance in the Restorative Justice programming. We also have Community Service, Restitution, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Community Accountability Board (CAB), and Supervised Visitation.



I am here to speak about the Supervised Visitation program that I oversee. Supervised Visits are referrals that come from Schenectady County Family Court. I receive the very bad cases. There is an extensive process in preparing families for visits. There is intake, phone calls, Orders of Protection, and schedules to work with all parties involved. I have 36 rules to keep the children safe such as no food/drink, no picture taking, no whispering or speaking in another language to name just a few. This program is not about the parents but about the closure for the children. I also write a formal Court report about each visit to the Judge to assist in his/her decision on giving the visiting parent unsupervised visits with the child/children or to continue with supervised. I use two

rooms at the First United Methodist Church. The children feel very safe and comfortable at the church. All the very many years of praying in the church and positive work that is done here is felt by the children when I bring them into see their parent.

Mission Moment - Youth VIM Trip to New Jersey

Delivered May 14, 2017 by Youth: Drew & Cole; Leaders: Sylvester Doyer & Beth Long-Velasquez

FUMC Youth during their spring break, rather than relaxing and enjoying the week off from school, chose to go on a VIM Mission Trip to South Jersey.

Drew, James, Cole and Zach gave their time to help with rebuilding two houses destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. Our youth had an opportunity to join youth from Carmillus, N.Y. and Ithaca, N.Y., to do this important work.

FUMC Youth learned and developed new skills such as putting up insulation and framing, and hanging sheet rock. They also learned to do mudding, caulking, sanding and painting. The experience was positive and had a positive effect on them as well as their youth leaders.



Our youth had an opportunity to make new friends and have fun while doing a hard days work.

FUMC Youth have expressed a desire to do/go on other mission trips should the opportunity present itself. The youth leaders and youth would also like to thank all who advised and helped make the mission trip possible as well as the parents of such a terrific group of young people.

Advanced Lay Speaking Course

"Your Ministry of Leading Worship 101," an Advanced Lay Speaking course, will be offered here at First United Methodist Church, Schenectady on June 10th and June 17th from 10am to 3pm. Even if you're not working toward certification as a Lay Servant or Lay Speaker, this course will give you insights into why our worship is organized as it is. The course facilitators are Michele Cole and Perry Read from Amsterdam UMC.

The book for the course is "Worshiping with United Methodists" [Revised] by Hoyt Hickman (AB526 - 978-0-6873-3526-8 \$11.00), which can be ordered from the Upper Room Bookstore; 800-972-0433 or Bookstore.UpperRoom.org. For more information, or to register for the course, please contact Michele Cole (micheleacole@yahoo.com).

Summer Lunch Program – Volunteer 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 approximately 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.



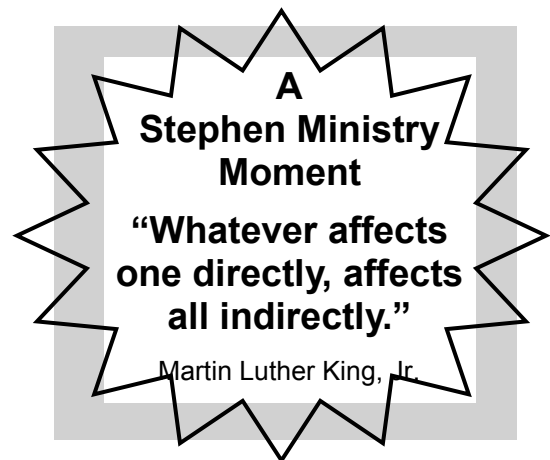
Carl Lecture — Mark Calendar! *Engaging the Bible for Today*

One of today's premier Biblical Scholars, Dr. John Dominic Crossan, is coming to First UMC, Schenectady! He will provide two lectures on Saturday, Sept. 23: one at 10 am and the other at 1:30 pm, with lunch in-between. He'll preach on Sunday morning, Sept. 24, with a time for engagement in the 2nd hour following worship.

Dr. Crossan was a member of a 13th century Roman Catholic religious order, the Servites (*Ordo Servorum Mariae*), from 1950 to 1969 and an ordained priest from 1957 to 1969. He joined DePaul University, Chicago, in 1969 and remained there until 1995. He is now a Professor Emeritus in its Department of Religious Studies. Dr. Crossan is a long-time member of the Jesus Seminar, and was Co-Chair of the Jesus Seminar from 1985-1996 as it met in twice-annual meetings to debate the historicity of the life of Jesus in the gospels.

As usual, we will not keep Dr. Crossan only to ourselves but invite the widest community. You are encouraged to save these dates now and invite others whom you know might be interested.

—Bob Long, Chair, Adult Education Team



Invitation

Would you 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, please call 374-4403.

Enjoy Summer Camp Fun



Several Christian camps are owned by Upper New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, and offer wonderful camping and retreat experiences for children, youth, adults and families.

Skye Farm camp is located in the Adirondacks, just off Northway Exit 24 (1½ hrs. away). Another nearby camp is Sky Lake campground, located in Windsor, NY (2 hrs. away), which is where we'll return for our 2nd annual church retreat in August! And where Pastor Sara serves as a camp counselor at a special needs camp each summer. If you have a child or grandchild, plan to enroll them for a week at one of these camps! For a complete list of the camps and to register, pick up a camp brochure at church or go to: www.skyefarmcamp.org or www.skylakecenter.org.

Summer Camps to choose from include:

Aquasphere
Adirondack Pikes
Bike the Trail
Campolodean:
Animals...Extreme...Tech...Sports, etc
Fins, Feathers, Fur, Bark and Sky
Gamers Club
Hook, Line and Sinker
Music & Visual Arts
Rocks, Ropes & Rivers
Special Needs
Unplugged
and many others.

Skye Farm Celebrating 75th Anniversary!

Please save the dates and plan to join in one or all of these special celebration events!

—Saturday, July 8...the Albany and Adirondack Districts will hold a joint District Worship/Picnic event 10 to 1 pm prior to the Open House.
—Saturday, July 8...Open House from 1-4 pm
—September 1-4...Alumni Weekend
—Saturday, Nov. 4...Anniversary Banquet held at Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church



In Our Community—

► Home Furnishings Program

The HFP, which operates from our church and assists neighbors in need, will hold a fundraiser sale Saturday, June 3, 10:00-3, at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 103 So. Reynolds St., Scotia, part of Scotia's Village-wide Garage Sale. Also, the HFP is in need of: small dressers & kitchen table sets, living-room chairs and loveseats, can openers, shower curtains, pillows and blankets, large pots, etc. Small items to donate can be brought to church; call 346-2444 to donate large items or a large quantity of items.

► Biking for College Scholarships

The Rev. Bob Long will bike 155 miles, the distance from Niskayuna to Syracuse where the UNY Annual Conference will be held from June 1-3, to raise funds for a scholarship to Africa University, named to honor Virgia Phoenix.

To support Bob in this worthy cause and donate to the fund, contact him or the church office, or sign one of the sheets at church. Checks should be made payable to: UNYUMC with note: AU Ride/Walk/Run.

► Capital Pride Singers in Concert

This concert on Sunday, June 4, at 5 pm at Emmanuel Friedens Church on Nott Terrace, will feature the Capital Pride Singers, who are the only Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender/Affirming chorus in the capital region. Their mission is to promote an understanding of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender experience through music; and to build community both within and outside the GLBT experience. Tickets are \$10. For more details, call 374-4114.

► Capital Region Sikh Community Fair

The Guru Nanak Dabar Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) has invited us with great enthusiasm to their community fair, held at their location of 1944 Union St., Schenectady, on Saturday, June 10, 12-5 pm. The fair will include free Indian food, bouncy house, clothes and jewelry sales, turban tying demonstrations, and a tour of the temple.

Those of us who joined them for worship on May 21st greatly encourage the rest of you to experience the grace and hospitality of our neighbors in faith too!

New York Health Act

Whereas, in ¶ 161.V of the Social Principles, The United Methodist Church affirms health care as “a basic human right”; “providing the care needed to maintain health, prevent disease, and restore health after injury or illness is a responsibility each person owes others and government owes to all, a responsibility government ignores at its peril”; and “we believe it is a government responsibility to provide all citizens with health care”; and,

Whereas, the New York Health Act (A.5062/S.3525) (for full text go to <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us> and type: a5062) has been introduced in the NY legislature; it would provide universal coverage in the state of NY, comprehensive benefits, contain no financial barriers to care (no deductibles and no co-pays), and would offer free choices of doctors, specialists and hospitals; and,

Whereas, it would be funded by progressive state taxes along with existing federal and state funds which would include progressive graduated payroll premiums (80% employer, 20% employee), graduated premiums on non-wage income for high-income earners, and federal Medicare and Medicaid funds, resulting in estimates that 98% of New Yorkers will pay less; and,

Whereas, one of the most important keys to the success of such a system is the elimination of health insurance companies because it reduces the middle layer/third party administrative waste and eliminates the presence of third parties seeking to profit off our health care, including their incentives to capriciously deny coverage of services in order to increase their profits; and,

Whereas, property taxes would go down related to \$7.8b in savings from county Medicaid contributions; and,

Whereas, employees wouldn't be trapped in jobs based on their health benefits; small businesses and organizations would no longer be at a competitive disadvantage relative to large employers related to health benefits; conflicts between government entities and unions over health benefits in contract negotiations would be eliminated; negotiating at a state level over health care costs, including prescription drug costs, would produce substantial savings and enable control and planning of future costs; the workforce would be healthier; we would be healthier; and,

Whereas, at a time when positive, comprehensive solutions are not going to come from Congress, a universal coverage, single-payer system already has the support of a majority in the Assembly and only needs two more votes to assure passage in the Senate; and, many members of FUMC are represented by a senator (James Tedisco) who has yet to support this bill, providing us with an opportunity for outsized influence in impacting the ultimate outcome of this legislation relative to people whose legislators have already backed it.

Therefore be it resolved, First United Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305 **supports the New York Health Act (A.5062/S.3525) and urges Senator James Tedisco to do the same.**

In support of the effort to expand healthcare access and comprehensive health insurance coverage to all New Yorkers, the following talking points can be used in creating videos or writing letters to Senator Tedisco or other senators. You can identify your senator by going to: <https://www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator>.

Potential talking points:

- 1) Name why universal access to healthcare is important to you. What values, such as "healthcare is a basic human right" or "all people are deserving of treatment of sickness and disease and prevention of early death from treatable causes, regardless of wealth," inform why you feel this way.
- 2) Personal testimonials about you or a loved one are very important. One example is stories about times when you had to delay treatment or couldn't afford treatment despite having health insurance.
- 3) You care about security of access to healthcare and the NY Health Act is the only way to guarantee all New Yorkers have access to healthcare, including the 1 million that still don't under the current system.
- 4) The NY Health Act will provide access to healthcare when it is needed instead of rationing care based on ability to pay.
- 5) The Assembly has already passed the NY Health Act and only one more Senate supporter is needed in order to have a majority backing this bill.
- 6) The NY Health Act will eliminate underinsurance where people have insurance in theory
- 7) Many businesses are in favor because the NY Health Act would eliminate the headaches of providing employer-sponsored plans; it would eliminate the competitive disadvantages involved in not offering plans or not offering quality plans; and it would result in a healthier workforce.
- 8) The NY Health Act benefits employees because they could work wherever they want without having to worry about which employers provide health insurance, how good the plans are, or how much they cost.
- 9) A publicly funded system like the NY Health Act is significantly better designed for dealing with epidemics, like opioid addiction, through provision of universal access to preventive measures, treatment and rehabilitation.
- 10) Everyone would be able to go to the doctor or hospital of their choice. No more in-network and out-of-network!

More details about the NY Health Act, including details about its design and the structure of how this publicly-funded system would be paid for (primarily payroll taxes and taxable non-payroll income such as capital gains, dividends and interest) can be found here: <http://www.nyhcampaign.org/>

Letters to Tedisco can be sent to:

Senator James Tedisco
Legislative Office Building
Room 803
Albany, NY 12247

Church Retreat at Sky Lake

August 25 – 27, 2017



Please consider joining us for a weekend retreat at Sky Lake Camp and Retreat Center. It will be a time of focus and dialogue with inter-generational activities for all. The guest presenter and theme are still being negotiated.

Sign-in will begin at 5:30pm on Friday, August 25th and check-out will be at 2:00pm on Sunday, August 27th. Sky Lake is located 23 miles east of Binghamton in Windsor, NY.

To view the room accommodations and the beautiful facilities, 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 on a Sunday, or return to the Church Office.

Name(s) _____

Email _____ Phone _____

of adults/teens: _____ # of children (age 4-12) _____

Accommodations:

_____ Underwood Lodge (meals included) _____ Camp (tents not included)

Dietary Accommodations (Please list any special needs): _____

KEEPING OUR COVENANT PROMISES - APRIL 2017

PRAYERS - PRESENCE - GIFTS - SERVICE

OUR PRAYERS

Christian support is extended to:

The family & friends of the Rev. George Bailey, our former Associate Pastor, who passed away May 22nd (details on pg. 3)

The family & friends of Joseph LaNigra, who passed away on May 9th (Carolyn Micklas' son; details on pg. 3)

Jane Baker, whose mother passed away on March 29th

The family & friends of Ernest Bonacquist, who passed away March 28th (Mark Bonacquist's father)

Christian support is also extended to:

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ross Corbett | Courtney & | Shirley Readdean |
| June Dieffenbach | Jack McEwan | Shirley Rivest |
| Sandy Buschak-Jackson | Mary Neville | Bob Slater |
| Dorie McArthur | Clare Racicot | Nancy Walden |

We celebrate with:

Pastor Sara, whose devotion was selected to be included in a book due out Aug. 15: "Strong for a Moment Like This: The Daily Devotions of Hillary Rodham Clinton." Congratulations!

Walter Grattidge, who received the Beyer Award April 10th from University of Manchester, England, for his support & services to the university through the North American Foundation for the University of Manchester (NAFUM). Congratulations!

Kevin & Stephanie Kempf, who are expecting their first child in November. Congratulations!

OUR PRESENCE

| Date | Worship |
|----------|---------|
| April 2 | 54 |
| April 9 | 90 |
| April 16 | 157 |
| April 23 | 75 |
| April 30 | 82 |

OUR GIFTS

| Date | Amount |
|----------|-------------|
| April 2 | \$ 4,345.00 |
| April 9 | 2,687.00 |
| April 16 | 3,022.00 |
| April 23 | 2,995.00 |
| April 30 | 12,076.63 |

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Those served this month:

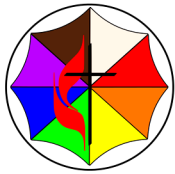
| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Children (infant-17) | 26 |
| Adults (18-64) | 232 |
| Elderly (65+) | <u>78</u> |
| Total | 336 |



OUR SERVICE

- Date
- 4/7 —& 4/28 Youth Service: Assisted at Glen Eddy Retirement Community
 - 4/16 —Held Lenten Photo Show with photos submitted on weekly themes: *Strong, Support, Whole, Connect, and Bright*
 - 4/17 —4/22 Volunteers In Mission Youth Trip to New Jersey shore: Hurricane Sandy Relief Work
 - 4/23 —Gathered for interfaith event with a visit to the Al-Hidayah Mosque in Latham, NY
 - 4/29 —Youth Service: Served free community brunch
 - Book Discussion on *The Third Reconstruction:...Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear*
 - 4/30 —Celebrated Native American Ministries Sunday during Worship with special collection (\$139)
 - Apr. —During Holy Week, we offered and/or participated in: Palm Sunday Service; Maundy Thursday Service; Good Friday Stations of the Cross Walk; Holy Saturday Service; Easter Worship w/guests, Schenectady Brass Quintet
 - Attended meetings, including the City Council, and rallies in support of a Sanctuary City & the NY Health Act
 - Distributed items to those in need through our SUSTAIN Ministry program
 - Presented *Mission Moments* during Worship on: United Methodist Women (UMW); Morning Wakeup AA Group; Intersectional Justice Activities Update; CROP Walk; NY Health Act
 - 2nd Hour programs offered: Needlework Ministry; Ministry Team Meetings; Spring Spectacular Luncheon; Flowering Plant Sale; Presentation of the Floral Cross; Photo Show; and Children's Easter Egg Hunt

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:

June 28; articles due June 15



UM Historical Society—1st Meeting
Saturday, June 17, 10:30 AM

The Upper NY United Methodist Historical Society will gather for its first meeting Sat., June 17, at Esperance-Sloansville UM Church, 175 Main St. in Esperance. Meetings will rotate among different areas of Upper NY Conference. The meeting will start at 10:30 am to set goals, etc. for the Society (such as projects, meetings, and publicity) with a spaghetti lunch at noon. The meeting is open to all, free of charge (free-will donation for lunch). A program on Methodism in Schoharie County will be held (the first Methodists came to area in late 1700's and the first Methodist societies were established around that time.) After lunch at about 1:00, free optional tours will be held of the unaltered Duanesburg 1793 Christ Episcopal Church and the 1807 Friends Meeting House and home to agents on the Underground Railroad. Also open that day is the 1836 Esperance Methodist Church, Esperance Museum buildings and the 1824 Old Stone Presbyterian Church. Questions? Contact Ken Jones at kjones8@nycap.rr.com or at 875-6854.



'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.**

Websites and E-Mail Addresses

First United Methodist Church—

E-Mail: fumcschenectady@yahoo.com

Website: www.fumcschenectady.org

Upper New York Annual Conference—

Website: www.unyumc.org

Albany District Office—

E-Mail: albanydistrict@unyumc.org

Website: www.albanydistrict.org