

THIS WEEK AT UPC

Sunday, December 2 – 1st Sunday in Advent

9:00a Adult Sunday School
10:00a Worship Service – Communion
11:25a Children’s Sunday School
11:45a United Ringers choir rehearsal
12:15p “Tall Tales to Get Out of Prison in 1640”

Monday, December 3

Noon Bible Study
6:00p Session meeting

Tuesday, December 4

9:30a Tai Chi
5:00p Community Meal (Team 1)

Wednesday, December 5

9:00a Sewing Group
12:30p Spiritual Formation Team meeting
7:00p UPC Choir rehearsal

Friday, December 7

7:30p Nukporfe African Drumming & Dance
Ensemble @ Binghamton University
Watters Theater

Saturday, December 8

1:00p Decorating for Advent/Christmas
7:00p Bronzissimo Handbell Choir Concert
@ Christ Episcopal Church

Sunday, December 9 – 2nd Sunday in Advent

9:00a Adult Sunday School
10:00a Worship Service
11:25a Children’s Sunday School
11:45a United Ringers choir rehearsal

Looking Ahead

Monday, December 10

Noon Bible Study
6:00p Session meeting

Tuesday, December 11

9:30a Tai Chi
2:00p Good Shepherd Fairview Auxiliary
Christmas Tea
5:00p Community Meal (Team 2)

Wednesday, December 12

9:00a Sewing Group
9:30a–12:30p Care & Share Project
7:00p UPC Choir rehearsal

Sunday, Dec. 16 – 3rd Sunday in Advent

9:00a Adult Sunday School
10:00a Worship Service
11:25a Children’s Sunday School
11:45a United Ringers choir rehearsal

Monday, December 17

Noon Bible Study
1:30p Property Team meeting

Tuesday, December 18

9:30a Tai Chi
5:00p Community Meal (Team 3)

Wednesday, December 19

9:00a Sewing Group
7:00p UPC Choir rehearsal

Sunday, Dec. 23 – 4th Sunday in Advent

9:00a Adult Sunday School
10:00a Worship Service
11:25a Children’s Sunday School
11:45a United Ringers choir rehearsal

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:00p Worship Service

Tuesday, Dec. 25 – Merry Christmas!

Building Closed

Pastor Kimberly on vacation thru Jan. 13

Special Notices ~ Service Opportunities

TODAY, Sunday, December 2, 12:15pm – Tall Tales to Get Out of Prison in 1640: Controversy and Conscience in Seventeenth-Century Forced Confessions

What would you say to get out of prison? Doug Jones, a professor of Christian history at Binghamton University, will talk with us about injustice and its historical place in society.

We'll look at the last sort of source one would expect to treat as a trustworthy historical document: the confessions of folks who've been shoved into a corner by Protestant authorities and forced to tell their stories. What's interesting about these narratives is that they are neither accurate nor entirely disingenuous. Like memory itself, forced confessions are endlessly complex, and can speak some truth even as they contort the past to meet the demands of prying authorities. This talk explores one such confession: Abiezer Coppe's 1651 petition to Parliament, calculated to secure his release from Newgate where he had been imprisoned months earlier for blasphemy. Understandably, historians have tended to dismiss this document as insincere. We'll learn that there's more to the story.

We hope you'll join us for this conversation. No previous knowledge necessary, all are welcome.

DATE CHANGE: Decorating for Christmas – Saturday, December 8, 1-3pm

Would you like to help decorate the church for Christmas? We're having a decorating party on **Saturday, Dec. 8**, starting at 1pm. We need many hands to get the work done! Join us for a festive time of fun and fellowship!

Worship with Us on Christmas Eve – Monday, December 24 at 4:00pm

Christmas truly is the most wonderful time of the year. We hope you spend it with us during our beautiful Sunday morning services throughout Advent and our family-friendly service of carols and candlelight on Christmas Eve, Monday December 24 at 4:00pm.

During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ's coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. As Advent leads us to Christmas, we invite you to join in the opportunities offered at UPC. The church is decorated in the holiday spirit and we are filled with cheer as we prepare to welcome Jesus Christ into the world.

Actors needed for Advent

We are doing dramatic readings of our Advent scriptures this year and we need some more actors.

We are doing it in a Tableaux reading style, with a narration and a small group of actors creating frozen scenes. We will do this for each Sunday in December. Aside from the narrator, none of the actors will speak. The only requirement for you is the ability to stand still.

If you are interested in participating on December 16 or 23, please contact Pastor Becky or the church office so we can schedule another practice.

Special Notices ~

TODAY, Sunday, December 2, 3:00pm
Choruses for CHOW Concert,
St. Cyril's Church, 148 Clinton St.

This benefit concert will feature the Southerntiersmen barbershop chorus, the Endwell Community Chorus, and *a capella* groups from both SUNY Broome (the Stinging Singers) and Binghamton University (the Binghamton Crosbys). Proceeds from the concert support the Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse (CHOW), which distributes over 2 million pounds of food each year through its network of nearly 100 partner agencies (pantries, community meals, and non-profit organizations).

Admission: \$12 at the door. Donations of non-perishable food items will also be accepted at the concert.

**Nukporfe African Drumming
and Dance Ensemble –
Friday, December 7, 7:30pm at
Binghamton University Watters Theater**

A concert of traditional African music will be performed by a full ensemble of drummers and dancers, directed by James Burns and our own Elikem Nyamuame. African dance-drumming typically juxtaposes several art forms together including storytelling, pantomime, oral history and community wisdom. It is an excellent way to introduce authentic African culture to anyone who may have little understanding of modern Africa. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

Educational Offerings

Bronzissimo! Community Handbell Choir
Concert – Saturday, Dec. 8, 7:00pm
at Christ Episcopal Church

Bronzissimo! presents a concert of classic carols and holiday favorites. The concert is free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be collected at the performance.

Free parking is available at the MetroCenter lot, adjacent to Christ Episcopal Church. You can trade in your parking ticket for a token when you get to the concert.

Bronzissimo! is a community handbell choir composed of experienced musicians from across the Southern Tier, ringing 5 octaves of Schulmerich handbells.

**“The Star of Bethlehem” – Fridays, Dec. 7 & 14,
7pm at Kopernik Observatory**

This fascinating documentary explores the mystery of the Star of Bethlehem by relating scientific knowledge about astronomy and historical clues from the Bible. An unusual star is claimed to have appeared in the sky at the time of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. This movie is an investigation into the story found in the Biblical Gospel of Matthew about this “Star of Bethlehem.” It includes the words of Roman and Jewish historians alongside those of ancient prophets. Come learn about this ancient mystery and draw your own conclusions.

See the movie trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUH7ZnqHLuI

Doors open at 6:30pm and the movie begins at 7pm. Admission: \$5 adults, \$3 seniors/students, \$16 family max, includes telescope viewing after movie (if clear). Kopernik members are free.

Christmas Gift-Giving Opportunities

Mom's House: If you took one of the gift requests for Mom's House, gifts must be **wrapped** and returned to the church office **no later than Wednesday, December 5**. (Binghamton University students organize this project, so gifts must be collected before the semester ends.)

Gift tags on the tree in the front of the sanctuary are for the following programs:

Broome County Council of Churches' Faith in Action Volunteers (FIAV) – "Silver Bells": Bells at Christmas are a symbol of celebration and joy. Our participation in the Silver Bells program will bring joy to the older adults in our community during the holiday season. Many of the seniors served by FIAV are homebound with little or no family in the area. Just a simple gift and the idea that someone is thinking of them can mean so much.

The silver bell tags list the first name, age, and gift wish of an older adult served by FIAV. Each gift should be **unwrapped** with its tag in a securely closed bag. Return gifts to the church by **Sunday, December 9**, or at the church office no later than Wednesday, Dec. 12.

Broome County Urban League: Help the children in the after-school program and their families to have a merry Christmas. These are the white tags and are labeled with the age and gender of a child along with their favorite character or some gift suggestions. Some of the tags also include the child's siblings, so you can provide gifts for the family if you wish. Gifts (with their tags) should be returned **unwrapped** by **Sunday, December 16**.

Broome County Council of Churches' Jail Ministry (BCJM): Serves men and women in jail, those recently released, and their families. These are the colored tags, and each tag lists an item from the Jail Ministry's wish list. BCJM's wish list is also posted on the church bulletin board, and copies are available from the church office and on our website.

Gifts for children & families should be returned **unwrapped** by **Monday, December 4**. They will be assembled on Wednesday, December 5, starting at 12pm at Sarah Jane Johnson Memorial UMC, 308 Main St., Johnson City. Packages will be available for delivery around 3pm (and days following) by anyone willing to deliver them to homes.

White paper bags are available from the BC3 office at 3 Otsenigo St. (on Binghamton's south side, near the Tompkins St. bridge) that can be picked up and decorated for the inmates' Christmas gifts. Return decorated gift bags to the BC3 office by **Tuesday, Dec. 18**.

Gifts for inmates should be returned **unwrapped** by **Tues., Dec. 18**. Gift bags for inmates will be assembled at the Sheriff's Office on Thurs., Dec. 20, starting at 6pm (RSVP required).

BCJM provides two stamped Christmas cards to every inmate, which they can mail out to their loved ones. Serving a population often well over 500, BCJM would greatly appreciate donations of first-class stamps.

Educational Offerings

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention – Tuesdays, 9:30–10:30am

Back by popular demand! Cindy Burger is resuming her Tuesday morning Tai Chi classes here at the church. This free program is designed to not only be relaxing, but enjoyable, too! We use gentle Sun-style Tai Chi routines that are safe, easy to learn, and suitable for beginners.

Tai Chi is an art and an exercise from ancient China that was created based on the laws of nature and promotes health and relaxation. Evidence has shown that the slow gentle movements of Tai Chi can help those with arthritis increase their strength, flexibility and stamina, reducing their pain and improving their balance to prevent falls.

This program was developed in collaboration with the Arthritis Foundation and is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Instructor Cindy Burger is certified by the Tai Chi for Health Institute.
www.taichiforhealthinstitute.org

Christmas flower order forms are due **Sunday, December 9**. Join in celebrating the Savior's birth with kalanchoe plants and poinsettias. See the order form insert for details.

~ Special Notices

Everything You Wanted to Know About Transgender, Non-Binary, and Intersex People... But Were Afraid to Ask – Tuesday, December 4, 6pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 183 Riverside Dr., Binghamton

Have you ever wondered... what the term "transgender" actually means? ...what the difference is between gender identity, gender expression, biological sex and sexual orientation? ...what it's like to experience life as a gender-expansive person? This fact-filled forum will put an end to misinformation, confusion and fear!

A panel of transgender, non-binary, and intersex community members will talk openly about navigating in a world that is locked in on the notion of only two genders. Significant time will be allotted for

audience questions. The panel is prepared to help clear up any confusion regarding questions or issues you might have.

This program is brought to you by Gender Equality New York and hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton. Doors open at 5:30pm; program begins at 6pm. This event is free and reservations are not required. All are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

Prayer of the Week

Accept surprises
that upset your plans,
shatter your dreams,
give a completely
different turn
to your day,
and — who knows? —
to your life.
It is not chance.
Leave the Father free
himself to weave
the pattern of your days. .

—Dom Helder Camara, from
"A Thousand Reasons for Living"