



The Circuit Writer

Newsletter of Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church

“We are a faith community striving to be, to nurture, and to send forth disciples of Jesus Christ.”

Sunday Mornings

Nothing excites me more on a Sunday morning than seeing members of my church family at Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church. The vitality and friendly warmth of this congregation are inspiring and contagious.

There is an ongoing discussion within the greater United Methodist Church about church attendance. Questions such as: “How can we have more people in attendance on Sunday morning?” or “Do we have the right programming to attract more “bodies” to our church.” And of course, one of the big ones is: “Why are the Millennials not coming to church?” These questions are important and worth considering. But the health of a church community, local and national, Methodist or otherwise, is less dependent upon numbers and more dependent upon the lived experience of a peoples’ attention to the call of the Gospel story.

While it thrills me to see each of you walking through our doors on Sunday morning, and I am equally pleased that we are welcoming more visitors each week, I get the most excited when I tell my friends, my neighbors, and my colleagues about the things we are doing as a church community. The spiritual health of a church is not “are you in the pew on Sunday morning,” but are you living the life of discipleship everyday of the week.

We each have busy lives. Sometimes, due to health issues or simply physical/mental fatigue, we need to sleep-in on Sunday morning, or sit on our balcony or

back porch, drink coffee, and listen to the still, small voice of God that speaks deeply and gently to us from this magnificent creation. And sometimes, other duties, family duties, the work of Christian Discipleship call us away from Sunday morning, and it should. And we come to church for the spiritual renewal that only happens with seeing friends, with singing together, and with listening for the word of God from the word of God. *But at all times* we need to support the ministries of our church in prayer, presence, and resources.

Let’s be clear, I love seeing you at church on Sunday morning. We do good things here, for one another and for others. Our worship service is a nurturing space of reflection on what God would have us do with lives when we leave our sanctuary to live in the extended family of God outside our doors. Oh, and those Millennials? They are fine, and because of who you are in their lives, they will be fine. These young folk understand all too well the sacredness existence, the importance of being good to others, and the value of sustained ethical reflection. They want what all people truly want, to be safe and valued in God’s good world.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

mark

“As a Reconciling Congregation, EPUMC affirms the sacred worth of persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and welcomes them into full participation in the fellowship, membership, ministries, and leadership of the congregation.”

Volunteer Opportunity: Regional Food Bank

On Saturday, October 28th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., there will be a group of EPUMC friends working at the Northeastern Regional Food Bank near Albany Airport. We have been working there as a “top rate” volunteer team for the past five or six years.



We invite you to join us and to invite your friends!

This is a chance to help sort and/or repack donations to the Food Bank from individuals and businesses. You never know what you will be sorting! Make sure to wear shoes that protect your feet (no sandals). All school age children are invited with an adult.

Please sign up at church or contact Trish if you are able to help out. First come, first served!

Future dates will be: Jan. 20 and Mar. 17, 2018. We hope you will consider offering a few hours of your time to help a very worthy organization! Contact Trish Roeser for more information (951-5553 or patriciaroeser2@gmail.com).

School Supply Collection Drive

Thanks to everyone who donated school supplies to our recent collection drive. We had a wonderful response and received many needed supplies. The Students and Teachers in the Schenectady City School District are so very thankful to the generosity of Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church.

Communications Update

We continue to consider potential updates or upgrades to some of our print communications channels. These include our Wednesday News & Notes email blasts, the Sunday church bulletin and the monthly Circuit Writer newsletter.

You already may notice some adjustments in wording, organization or format. The content for News & Notes, for example, now appears in the body of the email.

Don't forget to check out our main bulletin boards when you're coming or going from the church building. Trish Roeser has refreshed the postings, starting with names and titles of new church officers, committee chairs, etc. Her initiative on this is most welcome.

As you notice any changes related to communication, please don't hesitate to provide feedback. We have a growing (though informal) to-do list in this realm. It's good to know how changes are going over with members, so we can recalibrate or gain a boost from your encouragement—or both.

A survey to better identify our members' needs and preferences for receiving information from the church remains on the agenda, but it has not yet been designed or scheduled. Stay tuned on that.

Our August 2017 Gifts

- Total gifts received (not including dedicated funds): \$10,941.00
- Sock Project: Bethesda House: \$102.37
- SICM Food Pantry: \$123.15
- Bethesda House Mission: \$10.00
- SICM Mission: \$10.00
- Things of My Very Own: \$72.77

For October

Liturgists:

01: Randy Roeser

08: Bill Gerstler

15: Rick Mausert

22: Judy Lott

29: David Orr

Teller Team:

Randy Roeser, Judy Lott, and Gary Hebert

Chancel Committee:

Janet Reitz and Rick Mausert

OUR PRESENCE

--09-03 52

--09-10 80

--09-17 68

--09-24 70

Growth Committee Proposals

The GROWTH Committee has been charged by the Trustees to review proposals submitted for funding and make recommendations regarding which ones are worthy of receiving funds from the church. Preference is given for proposals for new ministries or from established ministries wanting to implement a new project that is consistent with the mission and values of EPUMC.

The proposal forms can be picked up from the GROWTH mailbox in the coat area where all teams have mailboxes. We would ask to have the proposal in to us no later than October 30, 2017. Completed proposals may also be left in the same GROWTH mailbox. If you have any questions please contact Laurie Hoyt at hoytmenis@hotmail.com.

From SPPRC Team: Hosts Wanted for Home/Focus Meetings

We are hoping to bring back the EPUMC practice of Home Meetings or Focus Group Meetings. This is an initiative of the SPPRC Team. We are in the planning stages of this and hope to have it come together as groups are formed. The idea is to have groups form based on needs and interest. For example, a group may form based on retirees, parents of college students, knitters, parents of teens, runners, parents of pre-school age children and the list goes on. The group would be inclusive to all who would like to be a part of the group and share experiences and learn and grow together.

Since we are in the beginning planning stages of this we do need volunteers to host and begin to form groups. Groups could meet in individual homes, restaurants, church, parks etc. The idea would be to meet the needs of the group. If you are willing to be a host for one of these meetings please let Pastor Ledbetter know and we can begin this learning process together.

Bethesda House News

Bethesda sees on average 150 guests enter its doors on a daily basis. Some come for a specific service; others come just to spend time with others to break up their lonely days. But sometimes it is nice to break the routine of just visiting the center. That opportunity happened on September 1st when the annual summer BBQ took place at Central Park. Our chef and kitchen volunteers prepared and served wonderful traditional BBQ fare for our guests, residents, volunteers and staff. Burgers and dogs were cooked on the Pavilion grills, salads, chips and all the other trimmings were enjoyed by all. This may be the only chance for a majority of our residents and guests to attend a BBQ all year. It is wonderful that Bethesda House is able to offer this for them.

After-Worship Events

- Oct 01 Open
- Oct 08 Budget Forum
- Oct 15 SICM forum (tentative)
- Oct 22 Stone soup sandwiches
- Oct 29 EPUMC mission forum

- Nov 05 Markan study
- Nov 12 Charge conference
- Nov 19 Harvest dinner
- Nov 26 Stone Soup Sandwiches

- Dec 03 Markan study
- Dec 10 Markan study
- Dec 17 Markan study
- Dec 24 Stone soup sandwiches
- Dec 31 EPUMC mission forum

SICM Update

On Sunday, November 5, SICM's annual "Harvest for the Pantry Dinner" fundraiser will take place at First Reformed Church in Scotia. Contact Cheryl at Cherylgerstler@yahoo.com if you would like to buy tickets.

Trustees

1. The snowplowing for the church is set up.
2. The emergency lights throughout the building have been checked and are in working order.
3. We anticipate signing a contract with TSL October 1. They needed a couple inspections by the state first to deem the rooms adequate. The last inspection is scheduled this week.
4. We continue to look for a seventh trustee to join us.
5. The Fall Clean-Up is scheduled for October 21 with a rain date of October 28. Please come out and join the fun! There's always something for everyone and it's a great time to chat and meet new faces!

The Trustees will meet again on October 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Church Council Report

The Church Council met on September 19, 2017, with 11 members in attendance. The Council took the following actions

- Appointed Randy Roeser as Interim Chair, Bob Bour as Vice Chair, and Cathy Woodruff as Secretary. Their terms will expire June 2018.
- Established the timeline and responsibilities for the upcoming 2018 budget and stewardship campaign. The Council will revive the practice of holding a budget forum for interested congregants. The forum, which will take place after worship on October 8, will provide a detailed look at the expenses and income sources for our current account budget and an opportunity to ask questions. A series of stewardship messages from laity and the pastor will also be delivered in the weeks leading up to Stewardship Sunday on October 22.
- Scheduled the annual charge conference for November 12 after worship. The purpose of this conference is to approve the compensation for church staff in 2018 and transact other church business that requires approval by the church membership. Please plan to attend this important meeting.
- Agreed to hold periodic forums, after worship, for the church community to explore the meaning and implications of our mission statement. Forums will take place on the fifth Sundays of the month, when they occur. The first will be on October 29 and the next on December 31. All are welcome. The Council also slightly edited the mission statement for clarity to read, "We are a faith community striving to be, to nurture and to send forth disciples of Jesus Christ."
- Approved the addition of a line item to the 2018 budget to pay for the bread and non-edible supplies (gloves, sandwich bags, tablecloths, etc.) for our Stone Soup Sandwich ministry. Heretofore, individuals were funding these items out of pocket on an ad hoc basis.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Council will take place on October 17, 2017, at 7:00 P.M. Council meetings are open to all.

Randy Roeser

Election Day Hospitality

On Election Day we will again offer refreshments to our neighbors who come here to vote. Many people came into our room last year to chat, eat and look at the displays of what goes on in our church. I will be asking for donations of food and time so please consider helping this project. Election Day is Nov. 7 from 6 AM to 9PM.

Judy Lott 518 377-0262.

Mini-Missions Update

Thanks to everyone's support of the ongoing Mini Missions projects located on the small table at the top of the stairs by the sign up sheet shelf.

Box Tops: We collect Box Tops for Education. These are counted and mailed to the Red Bird Mission in Beverly, Kentucky annually.

This August 2017, we sent 300 Box Tops to Red Bird Mission. Over the past 6 years, the Eastern Parkway community has sent a total of 2,800 Box Tops and 1,200 soup labels. Please continue to clip and save these items for our collection. This may seem like a small number of labels, however, over the years, Red Bird Mission has collected enough to qualify for a number of vans - each van is a MILLION Box Tops!

Eyeglasses: We have an ongoing eyeglass collection through the Lions Club. This past year, at least 20 pairs of glasses were donated to Lions Club. Any kind of eyeglass, frame, lens, or case is accepted. Thank you for helping others who cannot afford this vision care.

Pennies: In another jar, we collect pennies (and any other coins/bills) for our missions groups. During the first 6 months of 2017, we have collected \$16.50. Every little bit helps! So, keep emptying your loose change in there!

Thanks for all your support! If you have questions or would like to help with any of these projects, please contact Trish Roeser.

October 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1. <i>Communion</i> <i>TOMVO</i> KS 4-6:30 (HR)	2. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) AA 8:00 (HR)	3. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) Finance 7 p.m.	4. CB 09:30 (CB) TA 2-6 (FH, CB) WND 6 (FH) Choir 7 (S)	5. FP 11:30-1 TA 2-6 (FH, CB)	6. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) OA 6-8 (CB)	7. ABS 8-9 (FH) ATC 11-1 (FH) Upper Union St. Harvest Festival
8. <i>Sock Project</i> Budget Forum 11:15 KS 4-6:30 (HR)	9. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) AA 8:00 (HR)	10. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) SPPRC 7 p.m. (CR)	11. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) WND 6 (FH) Choir 7 (S)	12. FP 11:30-1 TA 2-6 (FH, CB)	13. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) OA 6-8 (CB)	14. ABS 8-9 (FH) ADAH 12-3 (FH)
15. <i>SICM</i> <i>Collection</i> <i>Laity Sunday</i> KS 4-6:30 (HR)	16. BF 9-5 (CB) TA 2-6 (FH, CB) AA 8:00 (HR)	17. BF 9-5 (FH) TA 2-6 (FH, CB) Church Council 7:00 p.m. (CB)	18. BF 9-5 (FH) TA 2-6 (FH, CB) WND 6 (FH) Choir 7 (S)	19. BF 9-5 (FH) FP 11:30-1 TA 2-6 (FH, CB) KS 6-8:30 (HR) Trustees 7 p.m.	20. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) OA 6-8 (CB)	21. ABS 8-9 (FH) ATC 11-1 Fall Cleanup
22. <i>Stewardship Sunday</i> <i>Stone Soup Sandwiches</i> KS 3:30-6:30 (HR)	23. Newsletter Deadline TA 2-6 (FH, CB) AA 8:00 (HR)	24. TA 2-6 (FH, CB)	25. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) WND 6 (FH) Choir 7 (S)	26. FP 11:30-1 TA 2-6 (FH, CB)	27. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) OA 6-7 (CB)	28. ABS 8-9 (FH) Regional Food Bank 1-3
29. <i>Circle B Collection</i> <i>Mission Forum 11:15</i> KS 4-6:30 (HR)	30. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) AA 8:00 (HR)	31. TA 2-6 (FH, CB) Trunk or Treat 6-8				

CB: Circle B Room **HR:** Hearth Room

CR: Conference Room
FH: Fellowship Hall
N: Narthex
S: Sanctuary

AA: Alcoholics Anonymous
ABS: Aerobics
ADAH: Eastern Star

ATC: Al Tabari Court
BF: Berkshire Farm
FP: Farm Produce (Pam Schreiber)

KS: Kingfisher Sangha
MT: Music Together
OA: Overeaters Anonymous

TA: T-Time Adventures
WND: Wednesday Night Dinner