

# The Reporter, July 2022

First United Methodist Church  
66 Chestnut Street  
Oneonta, NY 13820



*Pixabay*

## Summer Fun for everyone at FUMC!

The pandemic brought many hardships, but even as it's easing somewhat, we're continuing some of the creative initiatives that we came up with when we couldn't gather safely inside – because they're fun!

**Campfires in the Courtyard** Mark your calendars for intergenerational campfires in our courtyard on Chestnut Street from 6:30 – 8 p.m. on these Sundays: July 10 & 31 and August 14 & 28. We'll make s'mores and share stories and songs. Bring your kids and fur babies, and a folding chair if you have one. All ages welcome.

**Playtime in the Park** And especially for our younger families (although all are welcome), we'll meet for Play Groups at the Wilber Park playground on Thursdays July 14, July 28, August 11, and August 25 from 4:30 – 7 pm. Drop in as your schedule permits; snacks provided as we catch up on a blanket in the grass.

**Worship in the Park & Church Picnic** The church picnic returns this summer on Sunday, August 21! We will be having our 10 am service at the Wilber Park Pavilion, followed by lunch. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Laura Hurley at [lfhurley@hotmail.com](mailto:lfhurley@hotmail.com). Suggestions are welcome. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Here's to a happy and healthy summer enjoying God's beautiful creation!

## Pastor's Page

### Celebrating World Refugee Day

Each June 20, the globe comes together to honor World Refugee Day. The United Nations General Assembly launched the holiday in 2000, and since then, the worldwide community has spent the day focused on ways to improve the lives of refugees. On June 26, we celebrated World Refugee Day here at FUMC with a special speaker, Rev. Ameen Aswad, representing the Otsego Refugee Resettlement Coalition, and received a special offering. Even if you missed church that day, it's not too late to participate in this important effort.

You may make your donation through PayPal on our website, noting "refugees" in the memo, or send a check to the church with "refugees" in the memo line. The time to give is now. Thank you in advance for your generosity to this vital mission of our church and community.

Since last month's *Reporter*, the Coalition, with Margaret Parish, Mark Wolff, Carli Ficano, and myself representing FUMC, has learned that we will likely be welcoming some families from either Ukraine or Afghanistan under a special program called "humanitarian parole." (The word "parole" here has nothing to do with the criminal justice system; all of those who will be sent to us will have been heavily vetted and approved for resettlement in the US.) The Coalition is working closely with The Center in Utica, which has been successfully resettling refugees for more than forty years. Funds raised by our World Refugee Day offering will be used for initial costs for housing, food, transportation, and other basic needs for our new families. Many persons from diverse faith communities across the county have stepped up to serve on the Coalition's committees: Housing, Health Care, Education, Employment, Culture (including languages, food and religion), Communication and Messaging, and a weekly Steering Committee. If you would like to serve on a committee or attend the bimonthly virtual meeting of the Coalition, or if you would like the Housing Form or the Volunteer Form sent to you, please contact me and I'll get you connected.

Honored to be making ready to welcome new families,  
Rev. Marti Swords-Horrell  
Pastor

Pastor Marti will be on vacation from July 10 (evening) through July 25. If there is an urgent need for pastoral care during this time, please contact the church office (607-432-4102 or [secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org](mailto:secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org)) and one of our retired clergy will be contacted.

### Summer Worship Themes

Our summer schedule of two in-person services on Sundays, 8:15 and 10 am, will continue through September 4 (Labor Day weekend).

**Sunday, July 3** 8:15 and 10 am. We'll dip into a series called "Prophet Margins" from time to time this summer, focusing on the work of faithful Hebrew prophets. This week, Elisha invites the powerful Aramean commander Naaman to "Wash and Be Clean". Read 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; Galatians 6:(1-6) 7-16; and Luke 10:1-11, 16-20. Holy Communion will be celebrated at both services; if you're worshipping remotely, please have a piece of bread ready and something to drink in a cup.

**Sunday, July 10** Our series continues with “What Do You See?” This is a question God asks the prophet Amos. Let’s open our eyes to the challenges and opportunities God puts before us for ministry and mission. Please read Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Colossians 1:1-14; and Luke 10:25-37.

**Sunday, July 17** Please welcome our guest preacher for both services, the Rev. Jess Lambert, ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Jess lives in Cooperstown with her husband Fr. Nathan Ritter, rector of Christ Church Episcopal, and their two children. Rev. Jess and Fr. Nathan are both graduates of Yale Divinity School, Pastor Marti’s alma mater (Pastor Marti is on vacation this Sunday and next.) Scriptures for the day include Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52; Colossians 1:15-28; and Luke 10:38-42.

**Sunday, July** Allison Bookhout will bring the message at both services today, addressing these scriptures: Genesis 18:20-32, and Luke 11:1-4. Come and worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!

**Sunday, July 31** “Cords of Kindness.” Caring for children, whether as a parent, an aunt or uncle, grandparent, neighbor, coach, teacher, or nursery worker here at church, is hard work sometimes. Very rewarding work as well, but not always easy. Today we hear God’s perspective, through the work of the prophet Hosea. Please read Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107:1-9, 43; Colossians 3:1-11; and Luke 12:13-21.

**Sunday, August 7** “Learn to Do Good.” Isaiah the prophet asks the people of God: does our weekday life match our Sabbath words? Please read Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; and Luke 12:32-40. Holy Communion will be celebrated; if worshipping remotely, please have ready a piece of bread and something to drink in a cup.

**Sunday, August 14** “Yielding Wild Grapes.” Tough words from Isaiah the prophet, which Jesus also takes up in his preaching later. Please read Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19; Hebrews 11:29-12:2; and Luke 12:49-56.

**Sunday, August 21 – Annual Park Service & Picnic!** We’ll hold our 8:15 service in the Embury Room as usual, but then gather for prayer and praise at the large pavilion at Wilber Park (near the playground) for worship, followed by our annual church picnic! (See related article in this issue.) Bring your family, including fur babies, dress casually, and enjoy God’s beautiful creation. Scriptures for both services include Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; Hebrews 12:18-29; and Luke 13:10-17.

**Sunday, August 28** “Cracked Cisterns.” Wait, is our goodness leaking out, is that why we need to gather so often for a fill up of God’s love? In this last Sunday of our occasional series, “Prophet Margins”, Jeremiah seems to think so. Read Jeremiah 2:4-13; Psalm 81:1, 10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; and Luke 14:1, 7-14 to prepare.

**Sunday, September 4** Season of Creation – Ocean Sunday. On this Sunday we worship with the oceans of Earth, created by the Wisdom of God. We join the Psalmists and call the sea to roar with songs of praise. With our Creator, we rejoice with whales, dolphins and other sea creatures. Scriptures for the day include Job 38:1-18; Psalm 104:24-26; Ephesians 1:3-10; and Luke 5:1-11. Holy Communion will be celebrated; if you are worshipping virtually, please have a piece of bread ready, and something to drink in a cup.

## SPRC Update

Keshia Genzardi, our child care provider, has tendered her resignation after over 27 years of providing care for our little ones! What an amazing commitment! She is expecting her 1st child at the end of summer and needs to devote her time and energies to this new journey for them and Eric.

There is now an opening for a child care provider. A job description and application can be found on the website [www.Firstumc-oneonta.org](http://www.Firstumc-oneonta.org) or by contacting the church office at 607-432-4102 or [secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org](mailto:secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org)

## From the Church Office – Paper vs. Email?

**Newsletters** We are updating our mailing lists for sending out the newsletter. If you would like to switch from paper to email (or vice versa), please let us know. You can also tell us you'd like to stop receiving it – we won't be offended!

**Giving Statements** Our new software for tracking pledges, plate offerings, and special offerings allows us to send giving statements in both paper and email formats. Again, if you have a preference, please let us know.

You can contact the church office at 607-432-4102 or [secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org](mailto:secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org).



### Celebration of Life for Hollice Carol Bunn

Saturday, July 16, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Wilber Park Upper Pavilion

Wilber Park Drive

Oneonta, NY

It's hard to believe it's been over a year since Holly passed on March 30, 2021. We miss her so much and think about her all the time, particularly during those annual milestones of birthdays and holidays.

We hope that you can join us on Saturday, July 16 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. in the pavilion in the upper level of Oneonta's Wilber Park to come together, share memories and celebrate the loving memory of our Holly. Holly never let anyone leave her place hungry, and she'd be scandalized if we didn't feed everyone, so we will have food on hand catered by Brooks' Barbecue (Holly's favorite). Bring your appetites and your stories to share, and we hope to see you there.

If you have any questions or need directions, please email Mark at [malanstevenson@gmail.com](mailto:malanstevenson@gmail.com) or call at 801-540-4540.

## Just Be Green

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement has provided “tools to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God’s call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors.” Here is what we can do as a church to meet these ends.

**As a church, WE CAN:**

**Focus on love.** We can love our neighbors by “seeking justice, especially for those humans and non-human animals and organisms that are harmed by the climate crisis.”

**Learn and teach.** By “recognizing creation justice as a faith issue, we seek to understand the connections between science, the natural world, and our call to be good stewards.” Many FUMC members are already involved in watching videos, attending webinars, and reading and sharing books and articles about the connection between faith and the climate crisis. Continuing these practices is necessary to answer God’s call.

**Embrace zero waste.** FUMC is currently using this tool by providing recycling bins, and setting up a compost system after Saturdays Bread and church meals so that “we can keep food waste from landfills and return the nutrients to the soil.” We need to continue this practice and work to do the same things in our personal lives.

**Reduce greenhouse emissions.** Teleconferencing for meetings saves gas. This is a good practice to continue in the post pandemic. Also, using email and bamboo toilet paper not wrapped in plastic “saves trees, which naturally reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.”

**Plant for the future.** “Pollinators are essential—and endangered.” The Green Team is heading an effort to have a pollinator’s garden at FUMC. We can also set up pollinator gardens at our own homes to expand the effort as well as engage young people in these activities to “help the next generation love and care for nature.”

**Make our building more efficient.** FUMC has an on-going effort to “identify and fix energy leaks” around the building as well as changing to LED lighting. Our grounds are not suitable for geothermal energy alternatives suggested by Creation Justice Ministries; however, solar energy is a possibility in our church and homes. Grants may be available to offset expenses.

**Consume less meat.** “Helping members understand the connections of meat to climate change” can help reduce greenhouse gas. Church members making meatless dishes for potlucks and sharing meatless recipes can help in this effort.

**Clean up.** “We can focus on recycling, reusing and donating unused items as a church and as individuals. Our rummage sales and thrift store are steps in the right direction. We can also, outside the building, “organize clean-up for a nearby road or waterway and use the event to teach people about creation care.”

**Collaborate with others.** We can partner with another church or organization to identify a climate justice and pitch in, together, to make a difference.

**Speak up.** Incorporating creation justice in sermons and liturgy beyond the special times like Earth Day or the Season of Creation, worship leaders can raise awareness of God’s charge to humanity to tend the “garden” we have been given to steward. Advocating for these efforts (letters, emails, phone calling), will help people become prophets, speaking God’s word to those with the power to change systems that perpetuate harm and injustice.”

Green Team members found that FUMC is already doing more about climate change than many other churches across the nation. We need to stay the course with our activities, look for situations in which we can improve as a church and as individuals, and spread the word

## First United Methodist Church Oneonta

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