

The Messenger

The Newsletter of the First United Methodist Church, Greene NY
March/ April 2018



From Pastor Michele:

Greetings from the downside of my first winter back in New York. It's been a glorious winter, too! Watch the snow come down, looking out over the pristine snow-covered fields, and seeing the deer make their way up to my bird feeders all brought me much joy. I feel down deep in my bones that I am home, finally, thanks be to God. Although I've avoided the flu so far, this cold season has certainly taken its toll, but it could always have been worse. Now I'm looking forward to springtime and the new life that it brings. As we enter into the season of Lent, I hope and pray that this newsletter finds you doing well also. God bless you!

Praying Like Jesus

But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray. Luke 5:16

When kids are small, they will pray about everything. They will thank God for the trees and bicycles, and even ask him to fix their broken toys. They are not shy about approaching God with any little thing that crosses their minds or happens in their lives. But it seems the older we get the less we bring to God. Sometimes in our lives, prayer seems to be reserved for dinner, crises, and maybe bedtime.

Prayer should occupy a much bigger place in our lives, and we can see why in Luke chapter 5. There, we not only see Jesus praying, but that this was his habit, and his need. We see him sneak away to spend time with his Father on a number of occasions throughout the Gospels. He does this for communion with the Father, for strength, and even help. And if Jesus needed to pray, you better believe we need to pray all the more. The place prayer takes in our lives really is a commentary on how we view ourselves, our circumstances, and our God.

A person who values prayer will make it a prominent part of their lives because they understand that they can't do "it" alone, whatever "it" is. They know they are not wise enough to make decisions on their own and are not strong enough to handle the circumstances they are in without divine assistance. We will pray when we understand we are not spiritual enough to grow in godliness in our own effort. A woman or man of prayer is therefore humble.

On the other hand, if prayer is not a major part of our lives, we are basically saying that we don't need God's help. We believe we can figure it out on our own. It means that we are looking for answers, comfort, and strength somewhere else – in ourselves, in another or in the world. A prayer-less person is prideful, and in a practical sense atheistic.

Prayer shows that we recognize our dependence on God. It shows that we understand that God holds all the power while we hold none. That he has all the wisdom we so desperately want and that he will graciously extend comfort to those who are hurting, depressed, or confused. Jesus, in his humanity, was not above needing help and comfort from his Father. Here are a few observations:

1. Jesus took time to get away and pray even when there was work to do and people waiting for him. He had his priorities set (Mark 6:45-46).
2. Jesus was inundated with temptations (Luke 4) and spiritual attacks. He relied on his Father and the Spirit in prayer to endure hardships (Luke 22:39-46).

(from Pastor Michele cont'd)

3. Jesus found grace in these times of prayer. It was during prayer that he found comfort, refreshment, and rest from the demands going on around him.

We all have busy schedules, rough weeks, people who rely on us, decisions to make, spiritual warfare to engage in, and difficult circumstances to persevere through. This means we need to follow Jesus' example and seek the Lord's help in prayer. But we are not simply called to imitate Jesus in all of this. The great Gospel truth is the Spirit helps us to pray when words fail, Jesus prays for us, and when we fail in prayer we have his righteousness to cover us. So, why would we not pray?!

If we are going to grow in prayer, we need to know and do certain things:

1. *Know* that God always hears our prayers and warmly receives them through his Son (Ps 116:1; Heb 7:25).
2. *Know* that God is ready to give good things to those who ask (Matt 7:11).
3. *Know* that God responds to prayer with the best possible response (even if that is the opposite of what we ask for).
4. *Do* set aside time to pray. Like Jesus, make this a habit. Even a few minutes alone to seek the Lord and his grace is enough.
5. *Do* take opportunities to pray with your family and friends. Occasions are more plentiful than we often realize. Is your friend hurting or scared? Take that time to pray with them. Are you feeling anxious or angry? Ask your friends to pray with and for you.
6. *Do* pray Scripture. Especially the Psalms. You will find direction and encouragement as you do this. Plus, you have the added joy of hearing God's word in the process.
7. *Do* use helpful tools. Find a book of prayers that you can read through. You can use them as a guide, or even pray through them throughout the day.

Remember, God doesn't only call us to pray. He invites us to pray. He offers us grace in praying. He accepts our imperfect prayers with great joy for we are in Jesus, and in him we are perfectly acceptable. Our hope in life is not that we will pray more or better, but that God always hears us and is ready to help. Our hope is in God. So why not talk to him right now?

Pray at all times and on every occasion. Eph 6:18

Pastor Michele can be reached by cell phone: 910-260-0660 or
Email: revmicheleclark@gmail.com

Grace and Peace to all,
Pastor Michele



The Women's Fellowship of First Congregational Church will be observing WORLD DAY OF PRAYER at 11am on Fri. Mar. 2. People around the world will be praying and worshipping on this day. The theme this year is based on Genesis 1:1-31 "All God's Creation is Very Good." All are welcome to the service followed by lunch – bring a sandwich. Cookies and beverage provided.



GREENE AREA CHURCHES COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES at Noon each
Thursday and **HOLY WEEK SERVICES -First UMC Greene/ North Fenton**

March 1: at Central Baptist Church
March 8: at First Congregational Church
March 15: at Central Baptist Church by First Assembly of God
March 22: at First United Methodist Church, with lunch

Sun. Mar 25 – Palm Sunday at First UMC, Greene –

DON'T FORGET to bring all the children to church so they can parade into the sanctuary waving palm branches and shouting “Hosanna!”

Thurs. Mar. 29 - a Maundy Thursday Service, 7pm at First United Methodist

Fri. Mar. 30 – Noon – Good Friday service, First UMC Greene

- Tenebrae on Good Friday, 7pm at North Fenton UMC.

We are invited to join our brothers and sisters in this Holy Friday event.

Holy Saturday, Mar. 31 – Prayer Stations of the Cross from 10am – Noon at N. Fenton UMC

The Stations will be set up throughout the morning so come anytime to experience and pray over what Jesus endured for you.

Easter Sunday Morning: 6:30am at the elementary school with Rev. David Hanselman

Breakfast follows at First UMC

First UMC Easter Service, 10:30am as usual.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The United Methodist Men have a few projects in motion.

1. Oneonta/ Binghamton area Men’s Communion and Breakfast on Saturday, Mar 24th at New Berlin UMC, 51 S Main St., New Berlin. Coffee Hour at 7:15am, Communion Service at 8am followed by breakfast.
Men and boys are encouraged to attend.
Call or email Dick Anderson (607-847-6350 or dimo@citlink.net.)
Deadline to register is March 21.
2. 12th Annual Methodist Night at the Ball Park held at NYSEG Stadium in Binghamton is Thursday, June 28 at 6:35pm. Tickets are \$9.00 for adults, \$6.00 for children.
Tickets are coming soon but it is never too late to mark your calendar for this event.
3. Men’s Retreat at Sky Lake, Friday and Saturday, Sept 7 & 8 with keynote speaker Bishop James E. Swanson, resident Bishop of the Mississippi Conference and President of General Commission on United Methodist Men. Other speakers will include Bishop Mark Webb and Rev. Mark Kimpland.

Save these dates – more details will be forthcoming as time grows nearer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HELPERS, ETC., FOR MARCH AND APRIL

- Mar 4: Nursery – Dylan Ketcham/ UPK-2nd - Loveless family - Communion (UMCOR coin offering)
- Mar 11: Nursery – Baileigh Estabrook/ UPK-2nd – Estabrook family
- Mar 18: Nursery – Gorsline/ UPK-2nd – Jenn Griffin
- Mar 25: Palm Sunday – children participate and stay for worship – Easter rehearsal

- Apr 1: Easter Sunday – Communion – children stay for worship
- Apr 8: Nursery – Kevin Rounds/ UPK-2nd – Evans family
- Apr 15: Nursery – Ketcham/ UPK-2nd – M. Rogers
- Apr 22: Nursery – Fish family/ UPK-2nd – Kay Clark
- Apr 29: One Room Sunday School

USHERS FOR MARCH

- Mar 4: Mary Webb & Edie Miller
- Mar 11: Esther Williams & Connie Smithka
- Mar 18: Judy Halstrom & Judy Kelly
- Mar 25: Lorna Eroshevich & Edie Miller

ATTENDANCE: January

February

7. 48	4. 40
14. 35	11.
21. 70	18. 31
28.	25. 85

LECTORS FOR MARCH & APRIL

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Mar 4: Youth | Apr 1: Youth (Easter) |
| Mar 11: Lisa Loveless (turn clocks AHEAD) | Apr 8: Debbie Barnes |
| Mar 18: Kristen Burghardt | Apr 15: Esther Williams |
| Mar 25: Dave Barnes (Palm Sunday) | Apr 22: Lorna Eroshevich |
| | Apr 29: |

COFFEE HOUR TEAMS FOR MARCH & APRIL

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mar 4: Team #1 | Apr 1: No Coffee Hour – Easter Sunday |
| Mar 11: Team #2 | Apr 8: Team #5 |
| Mar 18: Team #3 | Apr 15: Team #6 |
| Mar 25: Team #4 | Apr 22: Team #1 |
| | Apr 29: Team #2 |

BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH AND APRIL

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Mar 1. Matthew Carr, Barbara Hinman, Julie Dietrich | Apr 1 Madelynn Cummings |
| Mar 4. Betty Dietrich | Apr 2 Dylan Ketcham |
| Mar 6. Danielle Lord | Apr 4 Trevor Flohr |
| Mar 7. Sarah Mata, Gordon Hinman | Apr 6 Dana Ketcham |
| Mar 10. Ernest White | Apr 9 Jared Turner, Sierra Turner |
| Mar 11. Jeffrey Williams | Apr 11 Roger Baker |
| Mar 13. Jason Evans | Apr 14 Jane Moran |
| Mar 19. Sara Acevedo | Apr 19 Kiefer Evans, Millie Turner |
| Mar 20. Brian Hebbard | Apr 20 Elsie Nuzzi, Connie Smithka |
| Mar 22. Pastor Michele Clark | Apr 21 Ariel Moran, Andrea Trifunovic |
| Mar 25. Bethany Sortman, Jason Burghardt | Apr 22 Kortney Miranda, Jenn Griffin |
| Mar 30. Terry Hebbard | Apr 23 Barb Small |
| Mar 31. Irene Barnes | Apr 25. Gloria Dayton |
| | Apr 30. Lillie Gregware |

No Anniversaries Listed

ANNIVERSARIES

- Apr 3 Jan & John Carr
- Apr 30 Sarah & Lester Crampton

NATIVE AMERICAN NOTES AND NEWS

Oglala Lakota College is an accredited tribal college that was chartered by Oglala Sioux Tribe to serve the Pine Ridge Reservation offering a wide range of educational opportunities from community service offerings to master's degrees, bachelor's and associates degrees and certificate programs. Subjects range from Lakota studies, Lakota language and leadership, business, elementary education, construction, the sciences, social work, nursing, tribal law and information technology. It has collegiate basketball teams for men and women, intramural athletic activities, extra-curricular activities involving both students and the community at large, as well as transportation programs for students.

OLC was one of the first tribal controlled colleges in the United States. In 2011 it was recognized as a "*Beating the Odds*" institution by a report of the HCM Strategist, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This recognition was given for being a tribal college that produces a high number of Bachelor and Master Degree graduates. Student population enrolled for the school academic year 2016-17 was 1301 including undergraduate and graduate program enrollment both full and part time along with some enrolled on-line.



A **BIG** thank you to Earl Howell for using his gift and love for wood-working to provide us with our awesome Lenten Candelabra

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support during my surgery. Your prayers, cards and phone calls meant so much to me. I also thank God for friends like you.

God bless all of you!

Gloria Dayton

APPLEFEST UPDATES

We are happy to announce that the 2018 Applefest plans are officially underway. We are pleased to have added some new faces to our group as well as some familiar ones returning. Though we are in the early phases of planning, please prayerfully consider any contributions that you would be able to make, big or small. This could include; joining Kevin Rounds with our pie bakings, setting up the field, or praying for a beautifully successful day.

More than 30 years ago, the Applefest was originally started as a family friendly day for our community. However, over the years this has not only become a tradition for Greene, but for many of the outlying areas as well. Although David and I stepped back for a couple years to focus on our family, we still have had our ears open as we wandered around the event. Many of our craft and food vendors are impressed with our organization and the objective behind the Applefest.

Over the years, the Applefest to our church has become more than just supplying a family oriented time for our community. As a church, we are at a time where we have become dependent on our profits to keep going as well as donating to various organizations. Although the monies are helpful, we as a group, would like our primary focus to get back to what the Applefest founders true intentions were.

Please write the date of September 29th on your calendars. If you would like to inquire about how you can help out in any way, please contact either David or Leslie Gorsline and we will gladly point you in the direction. As a congregation we can come together and pull off such an amazing event. Let's continue to keep doing what we are well known for, while keeping God in the center of all we do.

God bless,

David & Leslie Gorsline, Applefest Chairmen

FINANCE COMMITTEE

By Scott Clark

Finance has the blessing of a full slate of auditors to check out last year's work and has suspended internal maneuvers to ease the budget crunch. Keep up the good work!

The following information will be found in each week's bulletin so that everyone can see the progress of our financial state:

For Love of God and Neighbor: Sun. Feb 25

Attendance – Worship 85/ Sunday School N/A

Offering – General Fund Budget \$1596.00

Adopt-A-Bill for Propane \$ 53.00/ Adopt-A-Bill for Upper Room \$ 25.00

Weekly Amount Needed: General Fund Budget \$ 1991.00

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL UPDATE

By Kevin Rounds

At our last ad council meeting we reviewed the 2017 and 2018 budget. We discovered that there were several areas for 2017 where we were over budgeted much higher than what we needed to be, and some other areas where we thought that we could tighten our belts some. So far we have projected a budget reduction of \$8298.00 which will be voted on at the next ad council meeting after we follow up on some additional information on line items. We also voted to move \$9,838 from savings to the general fund from items that we found to be there either in error or were no longer necessary to keep in savings. This will allow us a better flow of funds to pay bills. Copies of the budget will be made available when it is finalized. In our discussion we determined that our finances, although better than we originally thought they were, will still be tight in the months where we typically take in less tithing's.

MISSIONS

By Debbie Barnes

The Missions team has several projects in the works at this time. We are sponsoring a soup meal to coincide with Matt Williams visit to our church on March 11. He will be talking about Sky Lake opportunities. The luncheon will have at least 7 kinds of soups as well as roll/bread and crackers. The coffee hour team will provide the desserts. Many thanks for doing that. We will have the usual coffee, tea, juice and water choices for beverages. There will be a love offering and this will go towards our Sky Lake camper support. Missions offers monetary support to children going to camp each year making this opportunity more accessible for families.

The missions team is collecting clothing items for the primary, intermediate, and middle school. The primary and intermediate is in need of pants and underwear sizes 4T to 12/14. The middle school needs pants and underwear sizes 10- 16. All underwear must be new, but gently used pants are fine. The pants can be light weight knits (t-shirt type, sweatpants, or leggings. There is a gray basket on the table in the social room for this purpose.

We are also continuing the hurricane relief collection through June. This collection is the first Sunday of each month on Communion Sundays. The collection so far is a total of \$395.48. This is an important collection as many people in Puerto Rico are still without power and water.

The collection for the Souper Bowl Sunday totaled 221 items. During the months of March and April we are collecting more food items to supplement the food pantry. Let's try to fill our bucket many times!

We are looking into working on a Red Bird Project. More information will be reported as this progresses.

The Mission team is dependent on our congregation. We appreciate any and all support you have given and will give. Our goal is to help others in need. Thank you so much for your continued support.

Rev. Michele Clark, Pastor
 Email: revmicheleclark@gmail.com
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April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 EASTER Sunrise Service 6:30am Breakfast 1st UMC Worship 10:30am as usual	2 Rummage Sale items can be brought in anytime now	3. Choir Rehearsal 7pm	4	5 Soup & Scripture 6pm	6	7
8	9 Rummage Sale begins 4-6 pm	10 Rummage Sale 4-6 pm Choir rehearsal 7pm	11 Rummage Sale Bag Sale 4-6 pm	12 Soup & Scripture 6pm	13	14
15 Native American Ministries Sunday	16	17 Choir rehearsal 7pm	18	19 Soup & Scripture 6pm	20	21
22	23	24 Choir rehearsal 7pm	25	26 Soup & Scripture 6pm	27	28
29	30					

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March 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1. Lenten Service Noon – Central Baptist Soup & Scripture 6pm	2 World Day of Prayer, First Congregational 11am	3
4 Applefest mtg, Noon At parsonage Confirmation Class w/ N. Fenton & then to first UMC Chenango Bridge	5	6 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	7	8 Lenten Service Noon First Congregational Soup & Scripture 6pm	9	10
11 Sky Lake Sunday Turn clocks AHEAD	12	13 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	14	15 Lenten Service by Assembly of God at Central Baptist, Noon Soup & Scripture 6pm	16	17
18 Girl Scout Sunday	19	20 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	21 Finance 6pm	22 Lenten Service Noon First UMC Soup & Scripture 6pm	23	24
25 PALM SUNDAY Love Offering for GAC	26	27 Choir Rehearsal 7pm	28	29 Maundy Thurs. service 7pm	30 Tenebrae Service at North Fenton 7pm All Invited	31 Prayer Stations of the Cross at N. Fenton 10am – Noon All invited

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