



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE BELL

1 Gilligan Road, East Greenbush, New York 12061-1715

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 6 Summer 2009

From the Pastor's Desk. . .

Members and Friends of the First United Methodist Church in East Greenbush:

Joy and I are in the final stages of packing up all of our stuff and getting ready for the truck to roll up and carry us away. We have been in a time of transition for some months now, just as you all have been in transition as you have been saying good-bye to Mari and Andy. And, I expect that this time of transition will continue for the next several months as we begin to know you-all and begin to be in ministry together in the name of Jesus Christ. We will arrive in East Greenbush sometime in the week of June 22. I plan to be in the office for the week beginning June 29, to preach and lead worship on July 5, and then we will have three weeks of vacation. (Seems like an odd way to begin in a new Church, but summer is a less intense time for the Church, and the only way we will get some breathing time this summer).

As I begin to work among you as pastor, there will be a lot of things I will need to know about your Church and your ministry. I will get to know the patterns and rhythms of your life together and your ministry in the community. I will also become a little like a 3 year old among you, asking "Why?"- working to understand "why" you do what you do the way you do it. My hope is that in asking why, I can begin to understand the deeper meaning of your life and ministry together, and get finally to how you understand your mission: what God is calling you- us to do and be as a Church.

Part of that will be unpacking the mission statement of the Church:

"The people of the First United Methodist Church of East Greenbush are called to know and share God's unconditional love as revealed in the Risen Christ."

I might be asking: "How is God working within you and among you to accomplish this mission?" This is a question for the whole Church, as well as for each group, committee, and function of the Church. Also, a statement that I saw last year that has continued to work in me is this:

"It's not so much that God's Church needs a mission, as that God's mission needs a Church."

How do we listen for and watch for what God's mission is in and for our Church, our community, our world, and how do we begin and continue to participate in that mission?

I have seen my ministry in these last years grounded in the words of Philippians 1:

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

Let us become partners in the Gospel, partners in discovering, rediscovering and participating in God's mission. Let us have confidence in God and one another and ourselves, that this partnership will produce good fruit, that we will be blessed to be a blessing. Let's continue to pray for one another and the Church. And: Bless!

Bob

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Sunday School Teachers

I wanted to thank all the teachers who put in their time for the 2008-09 Sunday School. It was a great success, and I am anxiously waiting for the 2009-10 Sunday School to arrive.

I will begin calling people in August to fill the 2009-10 classes. If you are interested in teaching in September or October, please call me at the church office, 477-9693 or at my home 783-8465.

Thank-you,

Heidi Gran

CHURCH NEWS

Summer Preaching Schedule



Summer time is vacation time for many and that's just as true in the church. . . Our new pastor, Rev. Robert Lowenthal will be with us for his first worship service here at FUMCEG on July 5th. Bob will then be on vacation from July 6 to July 26. The first Sunday of the month, July 5th will be Holy Communion. The following Sunday, July 12, Pastor Joe Ingraham will be with us leading worship. Then the last two Sundays of July, the 19th and the 26th, Pastor Dick Sears will be preaching.

Pastor Lowenthal will be back and leading worship for all Sundays in August. During Bob's absence, should you have an emergency, please call the church office for Pastoral support.

Thanks From Vermont

Andy and I were wonderfully touched by your gifts and generosity in these last few weeks. We are so thankful for our time together and our shared ministries. We also want to thank the Staff/Parish Relations Committee for the lovely reception and coffee hour on June 14th. It was such a joy to be able to share our last good-bys and shake a hand or give a hug to all of you who so patiently waited in that long reception line!

God bless your continued ministries together.

Mari and Andy Clark

Have You Seen This Missing Book?

A number of books have "disappeared" from the Church Library shelves. The Sunday morning bulletin for June 28 lists eleven books on the missing list. Please look around home and see if any of the wandering volumes have found a "temporary" home with you. Your help in getting the missing back home will be appreciated by Patty Chartrand as she works already to get the library ready for our new fall season.

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MORE CHURCH NEWS

A Pierce Thank You

Carrie and Lee Pierce would like to thank all those who participated in our anniversary celebration. When we started out, it was going to be a couple of special numbers from our children but how it grew!! We had a great time putting it all together and were pleased that so many of you came to share the day with our family. The kids and grandkids are all back to their busy summer activities - we have just spent an afternoon reading the wonderful cards and good wishes from all of you. It is a privilege for us to be a part of such a great church family.

Carrie & Lee

How Can I Serve?

During the month of August we have need for people to be Liturgists for Sunday morning worship. These are the people who assist the pastor by leading portions of the worship service such as the Call to Worship and the Scripture reading. Please call the church office and leave your name if you would like to volunteer to serve in August.

Our church is a Congregational Partner to the "Cornerstone" Protestant Campus Ministry at the University in Albany. One of the ways we work with the University students is by preparing an evening meal for the group once or twice a year. The meals are prepared locally and taken to the Chapel House on the University campus for the students. We will be again serving the first meal of the new school year, this year on Tuesday, September 1. If you are interested in helping with the planning, preparation and/or serving please call the church office and get your name added to the Cornerstone list.



Church Memorial Gardens

- ◆ The Original Church Sign has had all the thistles and some old shrubs removed by Dick Pearce from the front of the sign. Wow! That really shows off the beautiful sign.
- ◆ The Memorial Island continues to be planted with a 'see' of color - thanks to Violetta Dulay and all who help keep all the weeds from blocking our view.
- ◆ The Memorial Courtyard has had some new shrubs and perennial donated by Ruth and Bob Ostrander.- stop in and see what is new and take a moment to enjoy.
- ◆ The Herb Garden has really taken off since last year – check it out – it is located outside of the kitchen door.
- ◆ The Fellowship Hall Entrance, New Sign and the Sunday School Entrance will soon be re-done – any help and/or ideas for improvements are welcome.

As always your ideas and talents are welcomed and appreciated to keep our Church Gardens looking it's best - thanks to all who pull weeds, water our beautiful Church Memorial Gardens for all to share and enjoy.

Vacation Time?

Yes, we may be taking off for the mountains or for the beach or for any of a number of other destinations over the summer months. But, the church is still here in East Greenbush and many of the things basic to the operation of our church and church family go on just like the other ten months of the year. And when they do there are expenses they have to be paid. All this to remind ourselves that we need to keep up our financial support so that people and programs can continue, vacation or not.



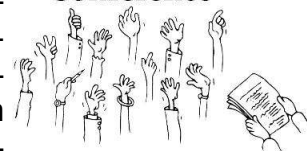
BEYOND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Saratoga Hosts Conference

The 177th Session of Troy Annual Conference was held June 10 thru June 13 at the Saratoga Springs City Center. This was the last full Conference session held by Troy Annual Conference, as the new Annual Conferences are to be created in 2010.

The sessions opened Wednesday evening with a Memorial Service and Holy Communion. One of the people remembered at the Memorial Service was Agnes Speers, mother of Nancy Keenholts. Nancy's father was a minister in Troy Conference. The full day session on Thursday began the legislative work and included the presentation of the 2010 Conference Administrative Budget in the amount of \$ 2,193,609 and the Conference Benevolence/World Service Budget of \$835,440. These two budgets were approved at the Friday session. There were 32 General Conference Constitutional Amendments presented and discussed. All were approved by over a two-thirds majority. That evening we celebrated the ministries of 11 retiring Clergy and the Commissioning of two probationary Clergy. Friday was a day of legislative and report sessions followed on Saturday by the ordination of three new Elders, including the Reverend Rebecca Clark, daughter-in-law of Pastor Mari and Andy Clark. That time of worship concluded with an invitation to Christian Ministry and Prayer. The session was concluded by the reading of Pastoral Appointments for the coming year. Printed copies of a longer summary of the activity at Annual Conference are available on the table in the foyer.

Troy Annual Conference



Annual Conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet, work and worship with over 400 of our Methodist brothers and sisters.

David C. Smith, Lay Member of Annual Conference

Boundary Change Timeline

July 1, 2010 Troy Annual Conference as we know it will transform into something new. At that time, new boundary lines will be drawn in the Northeast Jurisdiction. The Vermont portion of our current conference will be joining the New England Annual Conference. The Pennsylvania portion of our sister Conference, Wyoming Annual Conference, will be joining what is now known as the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference. The remaining portions of Troy and Wyoming Conferences together with Western New York Annual Conference and North Central New York Annual Conference will join together in one new, as yet unnamed, upper New York Annual Conference. At the time of the change, our current Bishop, Susan Hassinger will retire, again, and Bishop Marcus Matthews will become our new episcopal leader. Here are the key dates in the Time Line for changes. All dates are in 2010.



New Conference Boundaries

Final Clergy Session

- ◆ Troy Annual Conference—May 21, Silver Bay, N.Y.

Closing Session

- ◆ Troy Annual Conference – May 22, Christ United Methodist Church, Glens Falls, N.Y.

Uniting Conference

- ◆ Uniting Session for the upstate New York area churches—June 19, ON Center, Syracuse, N.Y.

Worship Celebration

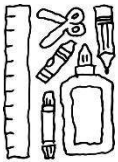
- ◆ The upper New York Conference—Sept. 11, Empire State Plaza, Albany, N.Y.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Emmaus is on the Calendar

October may seem like a long time away, but if you are thinking about attending a Walk to Emmaus weekend, now is the time to make you interest known. The Men's Walk is scheduled here at our church on October 1-4 and the Women's Walk for October 15-18. Not sure what the Walk to Emmaus is all about? Pick up a copy of the informational flyer about the Walk on the table in the foyer. If you do make the Walk you will not become part of any secret organization, you will not be a better person than the man or woman sitting next to you in church, you will not move-up on anyone's "special" list. If you do make the Walk you will be one inspired, challenged and equipped for Christian action in your home, church and place of work. Think about it! Answers are just a phone call or a conversation after church away.

OUR COMMUNITY AND BEYOND



SCHOOL KITS NEEDED

Vacation Cancelled For Those Needing Relief

Our mission efforts for those in need beyond our local church will not be taking a vacation this summer. United Methodists across the country will still be preparing the various kits used by people who have to deal with natural disasters, those getting ready for additions to their families, those getting ready to go to school or those who need help making their own clothes. Following the guidelines from UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) we can be a part of that church wide effort just as we have been in the past. Copies of the guidelines for **Cleaning Buckets** (formerly called flood buckets), for **Health Kits** and for **School Kits** are available on the table in the church foyer. The School Kits call first for the sewing of a bag for the school supplies. Perhaps you would be willing to make the bags that others might fill. Please call the church office to get on the list to do either part of that project. Disregard the "ship to" location on the kit guideline sheet. **Completed Buckets/Kits should be delivered here to our church.** We will arrange for their bulk transportation to one of the distribution centers. School Kits would make a great family project for July. Having those kits at church by Sunday, July 26th would be great for kids who can use them this fall.

Need Help? Dial 2-1-1

Want a place to get some answers and/or some information on issues concerning: food, housing, child care, employment, health care, senior care, substance abuse, mental health, financial problems, crisis counseling, legal matters, volunteer opportunities or other matters? Call Northeast Region 211. Get Connected. Get Answers. This is a source of free, confidential information and referral with the backing of the United Way. Call 2-1-1 Monday through Friday, from 9am to 5pm. Remember the number, 211.

Is There A Group For You?

Each Tuesday morning at 9:30am a study group meets at the church to discuss a book or other material of interest to its members. A recent study was a DVD based study of Paul. Early Monday mornings, 6:30am, a small group of men gather at the church for some time of reflection and study. New members are welcome in both groups. Neither group fills a need or interest for you? Consider starting another group to fill the gap. The summer is a great time to plan for a fall startup. Talk with the Pastor about your interests. Maybe — volunteer to be a leader.



Small Group Meetings

MISSION CONCERNS

A summer experience like none other — “SHARING THE GROWING EXPERIENCE” — your help is priceless!



SHARING THE GROWING EXPERIENCE

“Sharing the Growing Experience” grew from members of the Mission and Social Responsibilities Commission and a relationship with Nancy Scott, Goff Middle School teacher and Goff Organic Garden Director, to establish a cooperative gardening and educational adventure with members of the East Greenbush First United Methodist Church and the local community. The Goff Organic Garden abuts our church property, making it an exciting and worthwhile community service and outreach

mission project conveniently located close to our church grounds.

“Sharing the Growing Experience” grows vegetables by providing a needed community service of locally raised organic produce during the spring, summer and fall to local families. Since Memorial Day, when a group planting, weeding, and fostered friendships in our 2 plots (each 20' x 40') in the Goff Organic Garden, we have harvested and delivered each week to Concerns U. In these times of economic uncertainty this is something that we feel gives both to those that grow the produce and those that receive a sense of control and well-being. By helping to feed those in need during these times of economic stress this project imparts an important source of pride and community.

“Sharing the Growing Experience” invites you and your family to participate. We welcome all, all ages and all gardening experience. No age or gardening skill required; on the job training will be provided, if needed. Many hands made the work lighter and the time faster as well as fun. There are places to sit in the shade and enjoy some light refreshments and conversation, and for those that had not seen it before, a chance to tour the garden. Any amount of assistance you are able to contribute to this community service and outreach program would be appreciated, your help is priceless. Please let us know any of your ideas and how you can help with this project.

“Sharing the Growing Experience” Coordinators would like to thank you for volunteering your time and energy and your help by continuing to bring in plastic containers (like the ones you get produce and/or bake goods from the grocery store) for harvesting and transport to Concerns U. Please bring the clean containers to the church and place them in the basket by our poster. Susie Calyer (Susiecalyer@yahoo.com or 858-1102), Carrie Larson (cjlarson@nycap.rr.com) and Linda Marschner (lindamarschner@yahoo.com).

A Chance To Work With Kids

A activity, separate from ***“Sharing the Growing Experience”***, is also going on at the Goff Organic Garden during the summer – and it involves working directly with middle school age students in a Goff Student Summer School Program. The program runs from now until the end of August, meeting on Tuesday - Thursday mornings from 8 am to 12 noon. Volunteers should have a passion for gardening or a passion to learn more about it and they should like talking and working with middle school students of varying abilities. Volunteers are usually assigned a task and to work with a small group of 3-5 students. Interested in volunteering?

Please contact Nancy Scott, the Goff Middle School Teacher. The Goff Middle School phone is 477-2731, her school email scottna@egcsd.org or at her home phone 286-3784.



MILESTONES IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

BAPTISMS

May 31, 2009 Meadow Olivia Bulan, daughter of Daniel and Stephanie Bulan

May 31, 2009 Quinn William Lesperance, son of Jeff and Karen Lesperance



FUMC PRAYER LIST

Tying Up Loose Ends

- There are still openings at Skye Farm Camp or Covenant Hill Camp for a week in the mountains this summer. Don't let a financial hardship bar a member of your family from enjoying this great experience. Contact the church office for assistance or for more details.
- Our Trustees are still waiting to hear from the professionals working on the purchase of a new parsonage. They will announce any progress in their search as soon as new information is available.
- New church officers elected at our March 11, 2009 Church Conference take office on July 1st. Becoming our new Lay Leader will be Dave Smith. Replacing him as chair of the Administrative Council will be Matie Flowers. A complete listing of all the church officers and committee members is available in the church office.
- ♦ We are still collecting biographical information for the new members of our church who joined April 26th and for our Confirmation Class. Look in the September BELL for these introductions.

Dates to Save

Grab your pencils and mark these dates on your fall calendar so that you don't forget them. Do check the Sunday worship bulletins just in case there are any last minute changes.

BELL deadline for the September issue – Monday, August 24

Church office hours switch to fall schedule – August 31

Cornerstone Dinner (for students at SUNYA) – September 1

EmBELLishment rehearsals start - September 1

Sanctuary choir rehearsals start – September 10

Sunday School starts – September 13 – Rally Sunday

UMYF Car Wash – September 13

A special Sunday worship service to welcome our new pastor – A Mid-September date, TBA

Chancel choir rehearsals start – September 17

Cherub choir rehearsals start – September 17

First Coffee House – September 18

Fall Thrift Sale – September 25-26

First SOS (Supper on Sunday) – September 27

Emmaus weekends – Men October 1-4, Women October 15-18