

UNION CENTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
128 Maple Drive
Endicott, NY 13760

APRIL NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events:

- Five 4 Five Youth Event
- Prayer Vigil
- Silent and Live Auction



PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear brothers and Sisters,

Praise the Lord for Easter. Praise the Lord for Jesus who is the Resurrection and Life. He came, He saw and He conquered death. He is alive for ever-more. He is our eternal contemporary. We are Easter people, because of His victory. We are more than conquerors through Him, who loves us. We can live victorious lives in a Good Friday world. Because our Savior lives we can do life and death well. The Lord of creation must love women; He made so many of them. The Lord of Redemption must love women for He used them as the witnesses to His birth, mission, passion, death, and Resurrection. It was a woman who was the first to know about the Incarnation from an angel. It was the woman who was the first to believe in the incarnation of Jesus. Women were the last to leave the crucifixion on Good Friday. Women were the first to come to the tomb of Jesus on Easter morning. The Lord has wired the women with a special DNA, so that they have a great capacity to love to the end. That women were the first witnesses of the resurrection is really a cool thing. The testimony of women was not acceptable in courts of law at that time. Only men were considered to be credible witnesses, so this actually gives greater credibility to the resurrection story. If someone had made up the story, if it was fabricated, they certainly would not have made women the first witnesses. They would have made it Peter or John or some other respected man. But women were, in fact, the first witnesses in the gospels. That's what really happened. Because Jesus' body was placed in the tomb just moments before the Sabbath began, there wasn't time to complete the burial procedures before the Sabbath, and Sabbath laws forbade work on the Sabbath. Thus, as soon as the Sabbath was over on Saturday at sundown, the women went to the local shop and bought burial spices. By then it was dark, so they waited through another long night until first light on Sunday morning, when they went to the tomb. They certainly didn't expect the resurrection; they had an important job to do, embalming the body. They were overcome with grief as they trudged along on their sad mission. Only as they made their way to the tomb did it dawn on them, "What about the stone? Who will roll the stone away for us?" It was far too big for them to move by themselves. Who could move it? In a way that stone is a reminder of life's insurmountable problems and barriers for us. They block our way. They are too great for us to move on our own, and we don't know what we can do about them. As they arrived at the tomb, the women looked up, and saw that the stone was already rolled back. God takes care of barriers even when we cannot. The women did not know whether this was good news or bad news, but the way things had been going, they probably expected the worst.

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Their hearts were pounding as they cautiously approached the tomb. Had someone stolen the body? God forbid, had they desecrated it? Was someone still inside? They didn't know what to expect as they stepped inside. Their eyes began to adjust to the low light, and they were startled to see a young man sitting there. Their hearts leaped in fear. The text says they are "startled" or "alarmed." Terrified might be a good word. The visitor was, of course, an angel. In the Bible angels strongly resembled people—no wings, no halos, no special glow. And usually when angels appeared, people were terrified. So here, as in most cases, the angel's first words were, "Don't be alarmed. Settle down. Don't be afraid." Then he gave them a message that changed them and the world forever. It is a message that truly breaks the bounds of life's limitations. It contains two parts, each having an implication—a "therefore" or "so what"—connected with it. The first part of the message is, You're looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here. He has been raised from the dead. Their minds probably could not get around this, because it was not at all what they expected. He confirmed that they were in the right place. "Look, this is where they laid his body." The implication is, "Look, this is the place. But the body is gone. It's not here. He is risen!" This is arguably the most important, and one of the best-attested, facts of history. The fact of the resurrection is very convincing. If the resurrection didn't happen, a lot of other things would have to be explained. For instance, 1) how do you explain the empty tomb? Some have argued that the disciples came and stole the body while the Roman guards slept. But if a Roman guard was caught sleeping on duty, he was executed. They had pretty good motivation to stay awake. Even if the whole group had slept, wouldn't the noise of the disciples moving the stone have awakened even one of them? The disciples themselves were grief-stricken and distraught. They didn't have it in them to pull off such a theft. Furthermore, almost all of the disciples were martyred for preaching that Jesus is alive. Is it conceivable that under the pain of torture and death not one of them would ever break and tell the truth if they had stolen the body? You say maybe somebody else stole the body? Who? The Jews? The Romans? They both wanted to show that Jesus had not risen, so why wouldn't they produce the body if they had it? It would have been easy to kill the whole Christian movement in those early years by simply coming up with the body. But they couldn't do it. Besides, a thief would not take time to take care of the grave-clothes. They would have taken the clothes along with the body. The tomb was empty. This is the news these women encountered that first Easter morning when they stepped into that empty tomb. He is risen! And because he is risen, there is an implication for them, a response. Go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter. The women were the first believers to be specifically told to tell others about Jesus. You will be my witnesses. It is the mandate of the whole church because Christ is alive. The specific mention of Peter is a tremendous blessing. Remember Peter had failed Jesus - big time. He denied that he even knew him. But the resurrection revokes death, sin, and failure. It shows God is greater. It's the promise of a new start. It proves our past can't limit us or hold us back. This hints at Peter's restoration a short time later despite his huge failure. It reminds us that Jesus doesn't give up on us, his disciples, no matter how badly we have failed. Because of the resurrection, there is hope of a new and positive future. Jesus goes ahead of you. His promises are true. That's the second part of the angel's message. The implication or response implied by that is trust him. Trust him. He said he would come back from death and he did. If he can do that, he can keep all of his other promises as well. He will be with you. He will never abandon you. He will forgive your sins. He will restore you to God. He will restore purpose and meaning to your life. He will give you joy and peace. He'll give you power to live a new life. He has proven himself faithful. He keeps his promises, so trust him. The women at the tomb were overwhelmed. They were dumbfounded, to say the least. They stood in awe and wonderment. They didn't know what to think. Mark says that they fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered, saying nothing to anyone because they were too frightened to talk. Obviously their silence was temporary. You can't keep news like this secret.

The fact that their story is written here shows that they did share it. They did tell others, though initially they were dumb because they were afraid. Fear kept them from telling others what they knew about Jesus. The resurrection transforms a hopeless end into an endless hope. Because Jesus rose from death, we can trust him as our Savior. The resurrection shows that our faith does not depend on our own adequacy. It depends on the power of God. The disciples failed repeatedly, yet the gospel went forward by God's power, not by their successes. Failure is not the end. Don't we need to hear that? Failure is not the end. The Risen Lord is at work, even through our failings. Like the first disciples, our greatest need is not just to see or hear about the resurrection, but to have the resurrection happen to us. Lloyd Ogilvie says, "The most powerful historical proof of the resurrection is the 'resurrected' disciples. Dull, defeated people became fearless, adventuresome leaders. Cowards became courageous; the timid became triumphant; the inept did the impossible. 'He is risen!' became the joyous chant of a new life without limits" (Life without Limits, p. 283). Jesus said, "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19). The resurrection life is the same as eternal life. It is far more than just time with the ends knocked out. It is a new quality of life that includes God in our day-to-day experience and is powered by his Spirit. The message of Easter is that the resurrection can happen to us now. Paul says in Romans 6, "Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised as he was." That's not just by and by when we die. We are raised to new life right now. He says, "Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. Now the power of God lives in us, rather than the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also share his new life. We are sure of this because Christ rose from the dead, and he will never die again." And Paul concludes, "So you should consider yourselves dead to sin and able to live for the glory of God through Christ Jesus" (vs 5-9, 11). Because Jesus broke through death, we can live a new life without limits. Think back to those things that limit you. With Ogilvie we can say that we, by ourselves, are not able. But with the confidence of the resurrection we can know that he is able. Listen to the undaunted faith of those early Christians in whom the resurrection was more sure than their own pulse beat, 'He is able to strengthen those who are tempted' (Hebrews 2:18); 'He is able to save those who draw near to God through him' (Hebrews 7:2); 'He is able to keep you from falling' (Jude 24); 'He is able to subdue all things unto himself' (Philemon 3:21); 'He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day' (2 Tim 1:12); 'He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think' (Eph 3:20)." Easter is not just a celebration of something that happened 2000 years ago. It is the celebration of the power of the Risen Savior over sin and death, that gives us new life today. Jesus's resurrection power in us frees us from the old boundaries and limits and the "NOs" that had kept us bound. The Bible says that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives (Romans 6:4 NLT). He is Risen. Hallelujah! Christ is Risen indeed! Brown

"No, we can never think that Jesus died in despair or "of a broken heart," as some have said. He was dying in victory, not defeat. He foresaw, if anyone ever did, that future which is more real than the present."

-- Frederick C. Grant

"Rise heart: thy Lord is risen. Sing His praise without delays, Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise with Him mayst rise: That, as His death calcined thee to dust, His life may make thee gold, and much more, just."

-- George Herbert

"Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted."

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime."

-- Martin Luther

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? This is so true that even Satan cannot deny it. Christ's resurrection and victory over sin, death and hell is greater than all heaven and earth. You can never imagine his resurrection and victory so great but that in actuality it is far, far greater."-- Martin Luther

Missionary News

Hi all, Thanks so much for your prayers! I had an awesome trip to England. God abundantly answered your prayers, including in the following ways:

- **Opportunities to introduce wholeness prayer principles to the group** (taking thoughts captive, bringing them to God-including any roots, getting His perspective, and applying it)
- I introduced basic wholeness prayer principles to the whole group for 10 minutes during our first evening together.
- Three other leaders helped me facilitate an optional wholeness prayer workshop one afternoon, which included 2 skits, basic principles being introduced in more depth, and a time for question and answers. About 1/2 of the people on site attended. We began the seminar with a testimony from someone who'd experienced a breakthrough earlier that day!
- **Fruit from praying using wholeness prayer principles**
- He gave many people spiritual and emotional insights and breakthroughs, including growing in hearing His voice, as we prayed together using wholeness prayer principles
- **Networking**
- I was able to network with many leaders about the Empowered to Lead training program for team leaders that I'm coordinating the development of God provided strategic connections in abundance throughout the week.
- **Protection**
- I stayed healthy, was blessed with safe travel, got sufficient rest, and didn't lose anything.
- **God's glory**
- God was glorified in multiple way throughout the week. He wove together teaching, worship, networking with one another, times of silence and solitude, and so much more as He worked in multiple lives, including my own.

I also had a great time sightseeing in London for a day, while I was waiting for my ride to the conference site. As I transition back into life in Bandung for a bit, I'd love your prayers for:

- Good use of my time.
- Good fruit in the things I'm currently involved in, including:
- Coordinating our upcoming retreat and team leader meetings in late July.
- The timely, effective development and use of the Empowered to Lead training program for team leaders.
- Writing, including materials related to wholeness prayer and growing in hearing God.
- Continued good health and protection for our whole family.
- God to get much glory! Thanks ! Jean

A note from Dave

Thanks for your prayers for my travels and interaction over the past six days. I'm sitting in the airport of Padang, West Sumatra, listening to the call to prayer. I've been to a lot of airports around Indonesia, and this is the first time I've ever heard the call to prayer broadcast (loudly!) over the PA system as an announcement. It's one small indicator of how seriously many people in this province take their faith. I'm on my way back home to Bandung, on the last leg of the trip I asked you to pray for on Monday. [message sent on arrival] God has answered your prayers in wonderful ways. The visit to East Java went well. I think many of the workers there (both expat and Indonesian) were encouraged by the time together. The evening meeting with the missions committee in Surabaya went way better than I expected. I was really delighted to discover that they've been a lot more active than I had realized. Their group (15-20 people) does ministry in about 4 different work groups, each doing different kinds of mission-related activities. They meet all together every week or two to report to the whole group what each work group has accomplished since the last meeting. They were very appreciative of our time together, and more than one of them mentioned that the beginning of their season of active ministry was the two day retreat where I shared with them a little over a year ago. (I didn't speak directly concerning the structural issues I had alluded to in my last message, but a respected leader had spoken prophetically to one aspect of it a week before my visit.). The strategic planning meeting (retreat) in Sumatra over the past 3 days was everything we had prayed and hoped for, and even more. Roads, visas, and all other potential hindrances were worked together to enable us to meet and interact in accordance with the plan we had felt by faith was the Lord's best. We sensed the Lord's presence and guidance in a powerful way during our time together, and it became clear that the team is turning a corner into a new season of unity, clear vision, productivity and zeal to see Jesus' name made great among all the unreached groups of their focus area. It was thrilling to be a part of this event. Thanks again for praying. God has worked greatly in answer to your requests. I'm looking forward to a few days at home before the next trip. Blessings on you.

Dave





Good Morning,

The Biblical writers loved to tell true fish stories. We read about an amazing catch in Luke 5. In the Post-resurrection events of our Lord we read about another amazing catch in John 21. Jesus' relationship with the disciples began and ended with a miraculous catch of fish. The disciples met him in the midst of a miracle. It is important to obey Jesus. Sometimes the Lord puts us in situations where it seems like there is no answer. We have tried everything. We thought we knew what needed to be done. It worked before, so we think we already know how to handle it, and now someone tells us a simplistic answer that drives us up the wall. Perhaps the Lord is asking us to do something beyond what is simplistic; it may even seem like something foolish. It is counterintuitive. We have been fishing on the left side of the boat, and now you think fishing on the right side of the boat will make a difference? We have been working all night and you think one more cast is going to change anything? Remember that the disciples were professional fishermen. They knew all about fishing, so they had to be humble enough to do what Jesus said rather than trusting what they had personally learned about fishing. Jesus wants each one of us to have a teachable spirit. I am convinced that having a teachable spirit is one of the most important characteristics that you can have in life. There are some people to whom you simply cannot tell anything, because they think they already know everything. They do not desire your advice. King David, in his great penitential prayer said, "Restore unto me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me" (Psalm 51:12). We meet God when we come to the end of our resources. The disciples had been fishing all night. They had done all they could do. They knew the best fishing holes. They knew how to use their tackle. They were experts at their trade, but they still had no fish. They were at the end of what they could do. Their resources were spent. That's when God showed up. The point where we give up is often the exact moment that God shows up. Simon Peter was certainly at the end of his resources. He had boasted that if everyone else left Jesus, he would still be faithful. Yet, he wasn't. He had failed. He played the coward. He fell when he boasted that he would stand. He failed Jesus. When he first met Jesus he was very aware of his sinful heart. Before Peter had been called to be a disciple, at the first miraculous catch of fish, the Bible says, "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'" (Luke 5:8). At this second miraculous catch Peter would have liked to have said the same thing, but he was too ashamed to say anything. It is interesting that the Greek word for charcoal fire is found in only two places in the New Testament. One is in this story where Jesus is cooking fish for the disciples' breakfast, and the other is when Peter stood warming himself after the arrest of Jesus in the courtyard. It was there that Peter denied the Lord and saw Jesus look at him as the cock crowed. As he smelled the charcoal fire on the shore this day, he must have been taken back again to that shame filled moment in the courtyard. Peter realized that he was at the end of his resources. He knew now that there was nothing good left in him. Paul had the same moment of realization when he said, "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" (Romans 7:18). If anything good was going to come out of him it had to be through Jesus. It was good for him to give up thinking that he was someone special and realize that he could fail like everyone else, because that is when he really began to understand his weakness, the forgiveness of God, and the power of a new life. It was in his brokenness that he experienced Jesus in a new way. It is good to come to the end of our personal resources and realize our weaknesses, so that we can give in to God utterly. We just turn the control completely over to him, and forget about personal success. We realize we cannot do anything on our own anyway, so we ask him to completely take over, and determine that we will do whatever it is he wants us to do. We stop trying to make things happen and we start to let him have his way. Amazingly, that is when things begin to happen.

When we come to the end of ourselves we come to the beginning of God. When we come to the end of what we can do that is when we are ready to see what God can do. When the disciples came to the end of their resources, that is when they had a miraculous catch -- 153 to be exact -- and all large fish. The catch was so large that they could hardly get the net to shore. But, in spite of the pressure on the net, it did not break or tear. And when they arrived on shore, Jesus already had breakfast for them. You have to wonder where Jesus got the fish. The fish were already on the fire before the disciples reached shore, and there was bread as well. Did Jesus go to the market, or did he miraculously create the bread and fish as he did when he fed the multitudes? Jesus was always making something out of nothing, and he has not changed. He is still the same today. When everything you have tried in life turns out to be nothing, he can make something out of it. He creates fish and bread and wine. He gives health where there was only sickness. He gives strength when there was only weakness. He gives life where there was only death. He gives hope where there was only despair. He gives forgiveness where there was only shame. He is the God of new beginnings. When we reach the end of ourselves, we come to the beginning of him. Consider this. The fish were not on the other side of the lake; they were just on the other side of the boat. The answer is often as close as your willingness to obey and do what God is asking. There is an interesting story in the Old Testament about a Syrian General named Naaman. One day he awoke to find that leprosy was beginning to spread across his body. His slave girl, whom he had taken captive in one of his battles against Israel, said to his wife: "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy" (2 Kings 5:3). So Naaman went to Elisha, the prophet, who did not even come out of his house, but had his servant go out and tell him to bathe in the Jordan River. He was to dip himself in the Jordan River seven times. Naaman was furious. He felt insulted that he had to bathe in a river of Israel. Besides, he wanted something miraculous, something stupendous, to happen. He said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy". So he refused to obey and submit to what the prophet told him, and stormed off in a rage. Then one of his servants tried to reason with him, saying, "If the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'" Then the Bible says, "So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy" (2 Kings 5:14).

The answer was closer than he realized. It was humbling, but it was the thing he needed to do. It did not make sense at the time. He thought he had better water where he lived in Syria, but the answer was closer than that.

In Jesus our Lord,
Brown

SKY LAKE VOLUNTEER WORK DAY 5-3-08

We need your help! The Annual volunteer Work Day sponsored by the Sky Lake Buildings and Gropunds Committee is scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 3 beginning at 8:00 am in Founders' Lodge on the East Shore. Volunteer Work Day is an excellent opportunity for individuals, families, and youth groups to help Sky Lake cleanup after the winter season. there are projects for all abilities ranging from planting flowers, cleaning trails, making benches, and a whole lot more. If you aren't an "early bird", feel free to arrive anytime after 8:00 am. There is no set ending time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

India Night.

Saturday evening, the First of March, we held our first ever India Night, a great time of fellowship, friendship, and fun around Indian food. The foods included salads, snacks, sweets, fried rice, curried beef, curried chicken, and fried fish. The foods were authentic Indian, aromatic, spicy, and mildly hot. Banalata, Saibalini, Caleb, Prasant, Ashok, Diane, Kim, and Sandhya were the cooks. They also served and cleaned up. Those who came were blessed. The fellowship was sweet. Those who missed out on the chance to sample from all of the Indian foods, you will get another chance on **Saturday April 19, at the fundraiser for the building fund.** On that day, all proceeds will go to the building fund. There will also be a silent auction, a white elephant sale, and various other events.

SHOEBOXES FOR SOLDIERS -After returning from our EXCEL weekend, where the focus was "surrender, service and scripture", the youth group has decided to begin this New Year with a service project for the soldiers related to members of our church family. You can help. We will be collecting the following items through the month of February and will send our shoeboxes early in March. If you would like to donate any of these items and you do not live in the area you may send a donation or your purchased item to: Union Center UMC, 128 Maple Dr., Endicott, NY 13760. Thank you in advance for blessing the troops.

Batteries, powdered drink mixes, toothbrushes and toothpaste, shaving cream and razors, soap, playing cards, phone cards, gum and hard candy, popcorn, bug spray, lip gloss, magazines, game and puzzle books, granola bars, small hand held games, breath mints, paperback books, DVDs, combs and brushes.

A PRE-SUMMER PICNIC AT UNION CENTER UMC!

On Sunday May 4, 2008 after second service we will be having a pre-Summer picnic featuring a potato salad and macaroni salad cook-off. Come join the fun!

PRAYER VIGIL

Saturday, April 12, 2008. Prayer will start at 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Purpose of the prayer vigil, prayers for our building project, our April 19th fundraiser and personal needs. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

A Note to Secret Pals—How fast time flies, we have started our fourth month with Secret Pal. We are all enjoying Secret Pals, but there are some who have joined with us and they have not yet heard from their Secret Pal. It is important for you to remember that you have chosen someone to be a blessing to.

Some ideas for things to do for your secret pal:

- 1) Birthday or un-birthday or anniversary cards.***
- 2) A thinking about you note or a card.***
- 3) Make them some cookies or cupcakes.***
- 4) Send them a small gift (books, candles, flowers, seasonal items)***
- 5) Drop clues as to who you are to see if they can figure it out.***

Thank you and if you have any questions please contact Marti Holmes.

INDIA MISSION TRIP

There is a short term mission's trip, planned for India. It will leave on June 16, 2008 and return on June 30. We will be visiting the two children's homes, the leper colony and various churches. We are going to visit the Epic Center of the recent violence against Christians in Orissa. We are supporting 160 children in two children's homes, we are supporting 16 Pastor's and we are also caring for a small leper colony. The recent report from India they have burned 50 Churches and 1,000 houses belonging to Christians. Over 5,000 people have been made homeless. Please pray for them.

Saturday Evening Worship Service.

Some people have expressed a need for a Saturday evening worship service. This will be an opportunity for us to reach people who have to work on Sunday mornings. This will be a contemporary worship service with praise and worship music. Please be in prayer for this ministry of outreach. We are targeting late spring to start this ministry.

Pastor Brown Naik

This is to confirm our discussion of a few days ago. I am giving 50 shares of IBM stock to "The Union Center United Methodist Church." The stock certificate will arrive in your possession about 15 Jan. 2008 unless you make other arrangements. The value today is about \$109.00 a share or approximately \$5,450.00 Total. I am planning on repeating this gift of \$5,000 each year for a total of 5 years. I would prefer these funds be recorded as a gift to The Church as a "Woodward-Ketchum-Young Memorial" and be used to help build the new wing. In addition we would ask that the present South "DINING ROOM SUNDAY SCHOOL WIND" BE NAMED "THE WOODWARD-KETCHUM-YOUNG WING" in memory of these three families who have been so much a part of the church for the last 140 years. I anticipate there may be gifts to this fund by other family members and friends.

Howard B. Woodward

Update: We have received \$5,000 toward the building fund as part of the first installment. Praise the Lord.

A Note from the DuBois Family

GIFTS TO THE UNION CENTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FROM THE CHILDREN OF ERWIN & RUTH DUBOIS

August, 8, 2007

We are proposing the following gifts to the Union Center United Methodist Church to help fund the building of the new wing to the church. The first \$25,000 gift will come from the proceeds of the Erwin DuBois estate and from the sale of the DuBois farm. The second gift is a challenge that we are giving to the church members. We will match, dollar for dollar, up to \$25,000, any new contributions to the building fund starting Sept 1, 2007 and ending December 31, 2008. This gift is contingent upon the sale of the DuBois farm. Additionally, due to these gifts, we would ask that the wing be named after Erwin F. DuBois and Ruth I DuBois since the church was such a huge part of their lives and they gave generously of their time, talents and gifts. Sharon Hammond, Dawn Cox, Roger DuBois, Ron DuBois and Dick DuBois. **Update: We have received \$2,500 toward the \$25,000. Also, we have received around \$11,000 toward the matching fund of \$25,000. Praise be to Jesus! Amen.**

- What:** Silent and Live Auction
When: Saturday April 19, 2008, 6:00-8:00pm
Where: Union Center UMC
Why: To raise money, excitement and awareness of what the Lord can do as we collect money for the building fund.

Look over the following list and see if there is any "themed basket" that you would like to adopt or think of another idea of what you could donate!! REMEMBER, it doesn't have to be anything elaborate or expensive!!! And why do it alone?? Get together with: your Sunday school class, women's group, men's group, walking partner, your kids, the Youth group, you name it and give a basket from the group! Thank you for your participation!

Let one of us know today which one you'd like to adopt!!! Get the items together and to the church the week of April 14th!! It's that easy!

Pampered Chef gift basket

PartyLite gift basket

Avon, Mary Kay, etc. gift basket

Gift certificates for a haircut

Gift certificate for piano lessons

Gift certificate for counseling

Gift certificate for audiology services

Gift certificate for balloon bouquet

Gift certificate for whatever your specialty is (do you do yardwork, oil changes, painting, raking leaves??)

Donation of a quilt, wall hanging, needlepoint, etc

Donation of a painting

Basketful of kitchen gadgets (spatulas, towels, cookbook, measuring spoons, etc)

Baking basket (cake mixes, frosting, cookie mixes, frosting spreader, wax paper, etc)

Relaxation basket (candles, bubble bath, towels, etc)

Basket of books (in good condition, add a bookmark, carrying bag, etc)

Baby basket (baby bibs, onesies, baby toys, diapers, bottles, parenting books, etc)

Kid's basket (crayons, coloring books, stickers, doodle pad, little toys, etc)

Cat Lover's basket (cat nips, toys, treats, etc)

Dog Lover's basket (dog biscuits, rawhide bones, leash, etc)

Chocolate Lover's basket (anything and everything chocolate)

Gardening basket (gardening gloves, bulbs, seeds, tools, knee pad, etc)

Car care bucket (sponges, car wash solution, towels, glass cleaner, etc)

Tools for the handyman (screwdrivers, wrench, tool belt, etc)

Music basket (CDs of hymns, Christian music, etc)

Donation of collectibles (Boyd's bears, Beanie Babies, Lladro, etc)

Basket of candles (votives, votive holder, tealights, jar candles, accessories, etc)

Dessert of the month (offer to make the winner a dessert each month, or every other month!)

Sweet tooth basket of goodies (cookies, candy, fudge, etc)

Sugar-Free basket of goodies (perfect for the diabetic - everything sugar-free!)

Let's stay in and watch movies (DVD, popcorn, soda, candy, etc)

Already donated:

Coffee Lover's basket, original watercolor paintings, Overnight "Bed and Breakfast" stay at a beautiful Lakehouse. If you have questions, more ideas or want to make a donation, please contact Deborah Eckhardt 772-2472, Chris Doyle 754-2399, Robin Bartholomew 349-9221, Jim Holmes 748-7963 or Liz Haas 862-9288.

Charge Conference Change Gatherings... There will be three chances for clergy and laity to have input in the redesign of Charge Conferences for Fall 2008. There will be a 10 AM meeting on Wednesday, April 2nd at 1st Endicott UMC. There will be a 7 PM meeting on the same day (April 2nd) at Vestal UMC. And there will be a 10 AM meeting on Tuesday, April 8th at at Waverly UMC. We will discuss two things at these meetings: Changes to the forms; and, designing Cluster Conferences that might bring some excitement to your people. I hope BOTH laity and clergy will plan to attend one of these meetings! I want to know what would help you!

Talk to Dave about General Conference Thanks to those who elected us to General Conference, each District is represented by the clergy and laity representing you at General Conference, April 23-May 2nd. Each of us are offering an opportunity for people to come and talk to us about the big issues coming before the GC this year. There will be a chance to talk with Dave Masland on Thursday, April 10th at 7 PM at 1st UMC Endicott in the Fellowship Hall. The goal of this meeting is NOT for you to find out how Dave intends to vote on any particular issue (The assumption is that you elected him because you trust him to weigh all factors and discern God's leading in each case!), but rather to have a chance to share your feelings and beliefs regarding the issues. Dave will share a brief overview of some of the major issues coming before the GC, and then the floor will be open to you.

Join us in Praying for General Conference! I hope you are already praying for the General Conference and for the delegates and will continue to do so. You might also be interested in "A Future with Hope" the devotional guide for delegates and others for the forty days prior to the Conference. It is available as a booklet from Upper Room Books (800-972-0433) or as a free downloadable pdf from <http://www.gbod.org/gc08/pdfs/devotional/2008GC.pdf>

Safe Sanctuaries Training Event on our District... Spring Basic Level "Nuts and Bolts" Safe Sanctuaries Training Classes (for people doing direct weekly ministry with children and youth): Saturday, April 12 at Newark Valley UMC; 8:30 to noon. Registration for classes is expected and can be done on the Conference Web site.

Spring Lay Speaking Classes Set... The Binghamton District Lay Speaking Committee announces that a four-night school will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 6, 8, 13 and 15 at the Apalachin UMC. Six courses will be offered this year... Basic Lay Speaking (taught by Susan Davis); Basic Lay Speaking for Youth (taught by Annette Snedeker); Basic Refresher Course (just two nights, May 6 and 8, taught by Marty Bovee); Go Preach (taught by Nancy Adams); Lay Speakers Lead in Prayer (taught by Nick Keeney) and, Stand and Deliver (taught by Marilyn Ochs and Al Bailey.) Registrations are available on the Conference website, from your pastor, or thru a mailing going out to all current lay speakers. Classes are from 6:30 to 9 PM each night.

United Methodist Men's Convocation coming soon! The convocation will be held at Pocono Manor April 11-13. The theme this year will be "Brothers in Prayer." Great speakers, worship and service opportunities will fill the weekend. Each church has been mailed a flyer. Sign up now... and get a group of men from your church to join you! Questions and Brochure requests should be directed to Ed Zandt at ezandt@aol.com or Ken Summers at theosum@webtv.net.

Can Your Church (Or Our District) Field a Softball Team? There is a UM Church Softball League in the Binghamton area that is currently looking for new teams to join! This is a competitive Fast Pitch League... some women play (and often are the pitchers) though the existing teams are made up of mostly men. Ages range from 15 to mid-60's. Season runs from May to August. If you are interested finding out how to join the league, please call or write Tom Lamphere at 607-797-3915 or tjlamphere@aol.com. Allow me to offer THIS idea... since so many churches are too small to field a full team, but might have people intrested in joining a team, I would like to suggest that we see if a "District Team" (or two) could be formed, made up of folks from a number of churches. What we'd need is someone to agree to serve as team captain, find a place to practice and play, put together a team contact list, call practices, attend league meetings, etc. Is there anyone out there who would be interested in that? Let me know if you are!

"United Methodist Night at the Ballpark!"... Mark your calendars now! the United Methodist Men of our District is sponsoring a night at a Binghamton Mets game. It will be held on Thursday, June 26th at 7 PM. Cost of tickets will be just \$8. It will be a fund raiser for UMM and missions... portions of all proceeds will go to "Meals for Millions" and "The Upper Room Prayer Ministry." The goal is to get hundreds of United Methodists together for this game! Each church is asked to identify a man to sell tickets. More information will be coming.

I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me
find Me. Proverbs 8:17

Following Events at General Conference

General Conference, the worldwide gathering of United Methodist which takes place every four years, will be held **April 23 to May 2**, in Fort Worth, Texas. General Conference is the top policy-making body of our denomination. Plans are in place to offer streaming video and pod casts of many of the major events at the session. News reports will be issued frequently, and we will have blogs available from some of our representatives in Fort Worth. To keep track of what is happening at General Conference, we will create a special page on the Wyoming Conference website. You can find it, with links to all major news sources by going to www.wyomingconference.org/GC2008.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Titus 2:11,12

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Andrew and Nicole Ewing on the birth of their new son, Liam, born February 18, 2008!

Proud grandparents:

Al and Bonnie Ewing

Proud Aunt and Uncle

Alex and Mary Ewing

Cousins:

James and Andrew

Congratulations and God bless!



Happy Belated birthday to:

Katelyn Lee—3/20/08

Sue Cobb, Nursery Home Coordinator

The Relay For Life of Western Broome is coming soon, June 14 and 15 at Sammon Field, Vestal. Please help us to promote the Relay in our Western Broome community by including the following announcement (or facsimile) in your church bulletin in the coming weeks.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Relay For Life of Western Broome will be held June 14 and 15 at Sammon Field, Vestal. Relay For Life is an overnight celebration of life and cancer survivorship. Teams of people from the community have fun while raising much needed funds to fight cancer. Contributions to the Relay For Life help the American Cancer Society fight cancer in four ways: research, education, advocacy and patient services.

If you are interested in joining a team, volunteering your time or making a donation to support the Relay For Life of Western Broome, contact Gina Chapman, (607) 766-6907 or call 1-800-ACS-2345.



APRIL 2008



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Out of difficulties grow miracles		1 Trustees mtg. 7pm	2 Every Wed. Soup Supper/ Bible Study 6pm	3 Staff Parish mtg. 7pm	4 Every Friday TV Ministry Cable channel 4 7pm	5
6	7	8 Men's Cell group 6pm/ Women's Grp. 6pm	9	10	11 Five 4 Youth Concert	12 Prayer Vigil 6am-3pm
13	14	15	16	17 COM MTG. 6:30 PM/ ADMIN. BRD. 7:45 PM	18	19 Building Project Fund-raiser!
20	21	22 Men's Cell group 6pm/ Women's Grp. 6pm	23	24	25	26
27 Healing Service 6pm	28	29	30			The Lord is my light and my salvation-whom shall I fear?

YOUTH CONCERT--On Friday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m. there will be a "Five 4 Five" concert held at the Sarah Jane Memorial United Methodist Church. Five 4 Five is a national tour that features five bands in concert for just \$5. The bands are: ***DIZMAS, THE SEND, A DREAM TOO LATE, CHILDREN 18:3, AND CAYERIO***. The event is being sponsored by the Union Center, Boulevard, and Hawleyton United Methodist Churches, Sarah Jane Memorial UMC, First Presbyterian Church of Endicott, and First Baptist Church of Owego. Tickets are available at itickets.com or by calling 1-800-965-9324. Tickets can be purchased directly from Union Center UMC—Pastor Brown, umcgospel@aol.com or by calling, 607-748-6329. First Presbyterian Church—Jeremy Finn, JMFin@hotmail.com or by calling 748-1544. Hawleyton United Methodist--Ray Haskell, wpuckey@stny.rr.com or by calling 669-4373. First Baptist Church Owego--Rev Marlene Steenburg, mcsteeburg@aol.com or by calling 607-232-2302. Boulevard United Methodist Church--Rev Tony, blvdumc@stny.rr.com or by calling 607-797-5675.

ALUMNI CHOIR--Will be sharing a special worship service on Sunday, June 16, 2008 during both services. Those who have sang in the choir in the past and those who sing at present are invited to join us for a special rehearsal. Please contact Aric Phinney at 786-8812 for more information.

PRAYER VIGIL--A prayer vigil will be held on April 12, 2008 starting at 6:00 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m. The purpose of the vigil: our building project. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

BUILDING PROJECT FUNDRAISER EVENT--April 19, 2008 starting at 6:00 p.m. This event is to raise money, excitement and awareness of what the Lord can do as we collect money for the building fund. We will also be serving Authentic Indian dishes. All the funds received will go to the building fund.

WOMEN'S BANQUET--Saturday, May 17, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. Guest speaker will be Jane Divine, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

MEN'S BANQUET--Saturday, June 7, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. Guest speaker will be Bishop Larry Simpson.

THE CONTINENTALS-- Will be in concert on July 11 and November 14, 2008.

VBS--July 25-August 1, 2008. Shannan Meilunas is the coordinating this VBS program.

CHICKEN BBQ/TENT MEETING-FUND RAISING FOR THE BUILDING--August 9, 2008.

UPCOMING 2008 WEDDINGS

May 10, Danny and Sarah
 May 24, Robby and Ashley
 July 12, LeAnna and Billy
 July 19, Mike and Amber

TEEN MISSION TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA

The following is information about our teen work trip to Philadelphia. If you have any questions, please call Jeremy Finn at 743-4511.

Depart: Sunday, April 13th 6:00pm from First Presbyterian Church

Return: Saturday, April 19th 12:00pm

Work will include replacing 17 windows and gutting an office building at Bethanna Residential Treatment Center in Southampton, PA. We will be staying on the Bethanna Campus throughout the week.

Cost: \$60.00 per student

\$60.00-100.00 in spending money is also recommended to cover the cost of extra evening activities. On Wednesday we will have a day of rest and go to Point Pleasant Beach, NJ for fishing and visiting the boardwalk. A fishing boat will be rented for students that desire to do that. Other evening activities will include going to center city Philadelphia, parks, and other activities.

Students should bring sleeping bag, sleeping mat, work clothes such as long sleeve shirts, pants, work boots, sneakers, work gloves, beach items, and toiletries. All meals will be provided. Light packing will be appreciated.

SHORT TERM INDIA MISSION TRIP

A team led by Dr. Timothy Devine and Dr. Todd Mansfield has gone to Orissa, India. This team consists of six people. They will be visiting the two children's homes that we support. One hundred and sixty children live in these two children's homes. They will be training the local pastors. They will be staying part of the time, in the house where I grew up and visiting with my mom. Please pray for the team for the Lord to bless them and give them His favor and anointing.

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
 Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!
 Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
 Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!
 Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
 Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
 Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
 Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!
 Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
 Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
 Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
 Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!
 Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
 Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
 Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!
 Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!
 Hail the Lord of earth and heaven, Alleluia!
 Praise to thee by both be given, Alleluia!
 Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia!
 Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!
 King of glory, soul of bliss, Alleluia!
 Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!
 Thee to know, thy power to prove, Alleluia!
 Thus to sing, and thus to love, Alleluia!





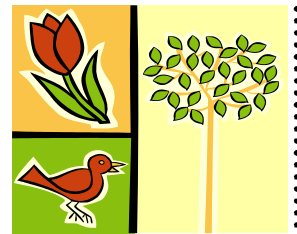
The March Seniors luncheon at Maine Federated Church will be on Wednesday, April 30th at 12:30 p.m. Menu will be Chicken Tetrizzini. Program will be Barb Cole, Wildlife Rehabilitator. Asking people to bring in pet food, paper towels or bird seed for her.

Ladies from our church attended Binghamton After 5 Christian Women's monthly meeting at Boscov's Greenery Restaurant in Binghamton on Tuesday, February 19th. Neil Zimmer demonstrated how to turn wood into beautiful wood items. Our ears were treated to some beautiful music by Ken Barber. And the speaker was Mary Jane Battista "Ready or Not". It was a great Christian event. It is held every month on the third Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Dinner price is \$11 and reservations are required. Call Margaret at 669-4211 for reservations.

REST - A WAY TO THE DIVINE: Songs and Psalms, Thoughts and Prayers will be on April 26, 10-3p.m. at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Endicott. \$15 includes lunch. Checks made payable to Jo Ann Bevelacqua, 609 Anson Rd, Endicott 13760-3807. Call Jo Ann to register at 786-0491, deadline April 11th. "Gentle Teachings" by Kris Kearns presenting with Andrea Schaffer.

IF MY BODY WAS A CAR - This is the time I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish and my paint job is getting a bit dull. My headlights are out of focus and it's especially hard to see things up close. My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather. My white-walls are stained with varicose veins. It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns in efficiently. But here's the worst of it .. almost every time I sneeze, cough, or sputter, either my radiator leaks or my exhaust back fires!

- Three things in life that, once gone, never come back - Time, Words, Opportunity. Three things in life that can destroy a person - Anger, Pride, Unforgiveness
- Three things in life that you should never lose- Hope, Peace, Honesty
- Three things in life that are most valuable - Love, Family and Friends, Kindness
- Three things in life that are never certain - Fortune, Success, Dreams
- Three things in life that make a person- Commitment, Sincerity, Hard Work
- Three things in life that are truly constant - Father, Son, Holy Spirit



Closing Prayer: Almighty God, we thank you that you created wisdom and recognized the value of wisdom and filled everything you made with wisdom. Wisdom sends knowledge and new understanding like rain and increases the honour of those who receive wisdom. May the great power reach into every part of this country, yea, this world. Set everything in useful order and help us to remember that "the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil understanding. (Job 28:28) Amen.

Dear Friends,

Praise the Lord for this Holy Season. Praise the Lord for Easter. Praise the Lord for the way our Lord came, and saw and conquered. Praise the Lord for your faithfulness and partnership in ministry at our Union Center UMC. We had a very special year last year. We spent over \$15,000 in the church renovations including the new windows, the new carpets in the classrooms, the carpet and renovations of the Ketchum house for the church office, and the painting of the church exterior including the stucco work. We also spent over \$15,000 for the renovations in the parsonage, including renovating the kitchen and the installation of hard wood floors in three rooms (the living room, and two bed rooms). All these bills have been paid except that we owe \$400 (four hundred) towards the kitchen appliances. Since November 2007 we spent nearly \$11,000 towards local missions, including help for needy families. We have given nearly \$20,000 to foreign missions. We need around \$3,000 every week for our operational budget, this includes utilities, salaries, local ministries. We praise the Lord for all of you who tithe regularly and faithfully. I would like to prayerfully invite those who have not been able to tithe regularly, take the Lord at His Word and trust Him fully. Tithing is a step of faith and an act of obedience. Tithing is also a part of our joyful worship of Jesus, our Lord. **Malachi 3:10,11**--Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house; and thereby put Me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts.

Serving the Lord together,
Pastor Brown

If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all His commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 28:1

We are planning for a special time of worship, praise and thanksgiving on Sunday, April 27 at 6:00 p.m. followed by Communion service. We will be praying for healing and restoration. Please come and join us as we pray for one another and claim the healing power of Jesus on everyone.

And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Revelation 12:11

Surely He has borne our grief's and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:4,5

Nothing But Nets, an anti-malaria campaign of The United Methodist Church and other partners, raised more than \$18 million from 60,000 donors during its first year.

A new report issued by the United Nations Foundation said the total was raised as of Dec. 31, 2007, to buy and distribute insecticide-treated sleeping nets for families in Africa.

The sum includes more than \$9.4 million donated by individuals, \$3 million in matching funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and \$5.7 million contributed through "Idol Gives Back," a two-night "American Idol" television special benefiting organizations that help children in poverty.

More than 700,000 nets have been distributed in the Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Chad, Mali, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The United Methodist Church is a founding partner in Nothing But Nets. Other partners include the U.N. Foundation, Sports Illustrated, the National Basketball Association's NBA Cares, Major League Soccer, the Mark J. Gordon Foundation and VH-1.

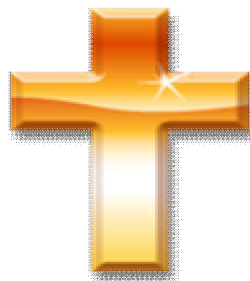
"Nothing But Nets has developed a unique set of partners over the last 18 months, ranging from multimedia organizations to professional sports leagues to faith-based groups to foundations," the report states. "These partners are key to the success of the campaign, for it is through partnerships that Nothing But Nets has been able to reach mass constituencies and engage diverse segments of the American public in this global effort to prevent malaria."

"It's been more like a movement than a campaign."

—Bishop Thomas Bickerton

During 2007, the campaign attracted broad participation across The United Methodist Church through local churches, youth groups, annual conferences and individuals. Organizers also partnered with a number of bishops' offices to host special malaria awareness events in Miami, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Houston, Detroit and Minneapolis.

"It's just phenomenal what we've been able to accomplish in such a short time," said Bishop Thomas Bickerton, United Methodist spokesman for the campaign. "It's been more like a movement than a campaign. The reality is that we can save a child's life for such a small amount of money, and that message has really touched people's hearts and compelled them to get engaged."



The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. Deuteronomy 28:12