



MARCH 2011

THE TELESCOPE

First United Methodist Church of Delmar

www.delmarmethodist.org

Special Lenten programs being offered on Wednesdays

During Lent, we'll offer a warm and meaningful program each Wednesday evening.

This series will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 9 at 5:30 pm with the preparation of ashes by burning the palm leaves from last year's Palm Sunday – then a simple supper, and a family-friendly Ash Wednesday service. The next four Wednesdays during Lent we will begin about 5:30 pm with fellowship and supper, followed by a variety of programs from 6:30-7:30 pm. (See enclosed flyer.)

OUR CHURCH IN MISSION

► We can help the AUMS Food Pantry by supporting the Feinstein Challenge. For the 10th consecutive year, Alan Shawn Feinstein will divide \$1 million among hunger-fighting agencies, matching amounts raised in March and April. The more donations received, the bigger the share for AUMS. Last year AUMS received \$11,000; their goal for 2011 is \$15,000. Groceries can be placed in the AUMS grocery cart and money and checks can be placed in the money container on the cart or taken to the church office. Please make checks payable to FUMC and note Feinstein Challenge on the memo line.

Our Church Family

Congratulations to: Gretchen and Mitchel Normand on the birth of their first daughter Raelynn on Feb. 4. Raelynn's proud brothers are Philip, Mitchel, Joseph, Benjamin and Joshua; grandparents, Debbie and Karl Parker; and great-grandparents, Shirley and Art Warner.

In our thoughts and prayers: Lorraine Dickinson, Gail Ames, Nancy Diederich, Gianna Gisotti (Gisotti and Jachym families), Isabella Cook, George Marion Boswell, Jr. (Boswell-Penc family), Ginny Diederich (Nancy and Lee Diederich), Richard Alba (Gwen Moore), Trina McCandless (Sarah Slingerland), Calvin Sutliff (Roger & Pat Sutliff), Barbara Palmer, Rob Heineman, Eleanor Haverly, Eleanor Riddell, Gerrit Milbert, Gail Garson, Jean Richardson (Hyacinth Mason), Paul Vandemark, Joan Kapral, Patti Hardy (Pam Skripak), Susan Mincher (Ellen and Bob Kanuck), Cassie Riordon & Jay Edgar (Marc Edgar), Mary Jane Hughes (Lynda Conway), Ray Scheesley (Ten Eyck Family), Gil & Elsie Faustel (Karen Tedesco), Jim King (Julie Bushart), Mary Storm, Chris Sheridan (Dick & Jeanne Herrmann), Edwin Busch (Joan House).

'Ministry Fair' April 3

See and hear about some of the ministries your church is involved in during Fellowship Hour on April 3. Many of our Ministry Teams will have tables set up with representatives from the teams ready to tell their Good News about their ministries. Goodies (of the edible sort) will be at each ministry table to entice everyone to roam, mingle and learn more about these ministries. And there will be door prizes!

Pre-K Craft Corner continues on Thursday afternoons

We gave it a test run and our Pre-K Craft Corner turned out to be so popular that we plan to keep it going. It's a great opportunity for preschoolers and their parents/caregivers. The Craft Corner meets at 1 pm on Thursdays in the Nursery, any Thursday the Bethlehem Central School District is open. There will be a craft planned (painting, play dough, glue, etc.) that you might not do at home, and then the children can have free play. Coffee will be available for the grown-ups. Invite your friends to join in the fun! Contact Christine Reynolds, rreynol5@nycap.rr.com, or Chris Follo, chrisfollol@nycap.rr.com, for information.

RPMs plan Iowa flood-relief trip

RPMs will make their annual mission trip to Iowa in April to help with the continuing home repairs required by floods in 2008.

The RPMs pay one-third of the cost out-of-pocket, run fundraising events to get another third – and the final third comes as gifts from the congregations. You can support their work by making your contribution payable to RPM Seniors and delivering your check to Church Office. Your contribution is tax-deductible. And after the group returns, contributors will be treated to a complimentary dinner at which the participants will share their experiences.

Charge Conference notice

Minutes of the Feb. 6, 2011 Special Church Conference are available and on display in the Church Office. The minutes include the 2011 budget and a report from the Nominations Committee which lists the leadership positions of the church.

One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing is a special offering celebrated April 3 to support UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).

UMCOR receives no funds from Church World Service Funds (an ecumenical fund) nor from United Methodist apportionments. Special envelopes will be available April 3, or you make a notation on your check made out to FUMC that it is for One Great Hour of Sharing.

The offering is an important way of ensuring that UMCOR has the resources it often needs on short notice. Should an emergency arise somewhere around the world, UMCOR can step in to help victims of a disaster. UMCOR has assisted in humanitarian efforts in New Orleans, Haiti, Iowa, the Philippines, and even in our Adirondacks.

Rev. Dr. Brolin Parker to become Albany District Superintendent

The Rev. Dr. Jim Fenimore will step down as Albany District Superintendent this July. The Rev. Dr. Brolin Parker, who presently serves as the Senior Pastor at the Saratoga United Methodist Church, will become our new Superintendent.

Rev. Parker says, "We can make a decision about the attitude we bring to our new Annual Conference. We can choose an attitude of ordeal or adventure. I choose the attitude of adventure and am hopeful my colleagues and churches will prayerfully consider that avenue as well."

Rev. Parker holds two doctorates, one in American Colonial History and another in Art History. His master's is in theology and his bachelor's degree is in history, sociology and political science. Rev. Parker describes himself as "a person of prayer, of deliberate silence, of spontaneous hilarity and of gracious hospitality."

Council of Churches sponsors program to witness baptisms

The Capital Area Council of Churches (CACC), of which we are a member, supports the Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism program. In 1982, theologians from the major Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church issued an international document outlining common agreement on Baptism, the Eucharist, and Ministry.

The Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism is one attempt to practice Christian unity. The pastor from the local church calls the witness coordinator 3-4 weeks in advance of a scheduled baptism. The coordinator contacts witnesses and assembles a group representing several denominations.

Each congregation determines the appropriate level of participation for the witnesses within its own baptismal liturgy. This may range from simply recognizing the group's presence to inviting the group to stand with the family at the baptismal font. Witnesses make an annual commitment to attend a minimum of two baptisms.

We, as Christians, celebrate one baptism; this Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism program is a sign that we are one in Jesus Christ.

Would you like to be a witness? Would you like our church to be a part of the Ecumenical Witness program when we provide baptisms? Let's talk as a church, an Administrative Council, and individually.

– Rev. Janice

New executive director for CACC

The Capital Area Council of Churches conducted its 37th Annual Meeting at on Feb. 8 at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Ravena. This ecumenical fellowship includes over 90 congregations, representing seventeen Anglican, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Unitarian Universalist denomination traditions.

Men to breakfast March 5 with Dr. Hafeez Rehman

Please join us for men's group on Saturday, March 5 at 7:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

Along with the usual good fare and comradery, Dr. Hafeez Rehman, president of Ahmadiyya Muslim community, Albany Chapter, will speak and answer questions about Islam. Ahmadiyya Muslim community is an organization with branches in more than 120 countries. The local mosque is located in Rotterdam Junction.

The meeting was highlighted by the introduction of the Rev. Fr. George Brennan, the newly appointed Executive Director of the CACC and the first Roman Catholic priest to serve as such since the Council's founding in 1941. Dr. Brennan additionally serves as the parish priest of a church in Copake.

Ecumenical activities sponsored or supported financially by the Council include: The Crop Walk, Church Women United World Day of Prayer, Incarceration Prevention Program, Schuyler Inn Ministry to homeless families, and various chaplain ministries including the off-campus interfaith chapel at UAlbany, area nursing homes, Albany courthouse and jail, the Albany Airport meditation room, ecumenical witnesses of baptisms in member churches and sponsorship of the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial Service and the Scholarship program. FUMC and the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Albany are lead supporters of the Council, both financially and through service.

AARP driving course on April 18

On April 18, Ray Bell will be giving the six-hour AARP Safe Driving Course in Fellowship Hall from 9 am to 3:30 pm (with a half-hour break for lunch). Completion of the course will reduce insurance premiums for your automobile and can remove points on your driver's license. The cost is \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for non-members. People taking the course should bring their driver's license with them.

An update on Heifer International

Heifer is actively involved in more than 920 projects around the world. Every animal given through Heifer International provides a better future for a family. But many of you may not know that Heifer animals are often a part of a large-scale transformation of entire communities.

For instance, in Latvia, where orphaned children make up 10 percent of the population in the Gaujiena area, Heifer is partnering with the orphanage and boarding school to provide a variety of tools to achieve self-reliance. From training in marketing, veterinary care, gardening and more, along with chickens, ducks and goats, this com-

prehensive project can change the future of an entire community.

Communities partner with Heifer to dream big about full-spectrum change. Proposals include ideas like starting a mill for the production of swine feed in Thailand or drawing tourists to the Carpathian Mountains in Poland.

In Heifer's own backyard is a southeast Arkansas cooperative, The Delta Sprouts, established to serve the people of Chicot, Desha and Drew counties. These counties struggle with poverty, poor nutrition, unemployment, decreased population from economic flight and limited jobs due to lack of education. To create the maximum benefit for participants, the project will provide heifers, goats and sheep to 17 families (who in turn will pass animals on to another 17 families); assist 116 families in producing food and income for their families; and establish two learning centers for livestock and horticulture education. The project will also establish three farmers' markets, a greenhouse and one community kitchen

'Minglers' wanted for Coffee Hour

Remember the first time you went to Coffee Hour? Looking around for a friendly face, someone to talk to? It can be hard entering a crowd of strangers that you don't know. So Membership and Evangelism would like to ask those of you who enjoy meeting new people to be our officially designated "Minglers." Every once in a while, probably every other month, when you got to Coffee Hour, you would put on one of the church's spiffy aprons and be the Official Mingler. If you saw someone new, you would introduce yourself and get to know him/her.

If you think this is something you might like to do, please contact Ray or Pam O'Brien (439-1672). Together, we can show visitors what a welcoming community we really are.

Mary Marthas to hear chorus program on March 10

Mary Marthas will meet Thursday, March 10 at the church at 12:30 pm sharp, no later, to proceed to Bethlehem Town Hall to hear the Bethlehem chorus spring program. After the program we will meet back at the church lounge for our business meeting and dessert. For further information contact Aggie Clark at 439-5578, Barb Logan at 439-4782, or Shirley Milbert at 475-1298.



PASTORAL MESSAGE

Lent: Our journey to Easter is ours – no one path is more perfect than another

Rev. Janice Palm

Lent seems like an awkward time. We all know, perhaps, that Lent leads toward Easter but less certain for many of us is how to follow a Lenten path.

Lent begins in the middle of the week rather than on a Sunday. Our church life is centered on Sunday, when we have our primary worship and Sunday School. So **Ash Wednesday** (March 9), the beginning of Lent, sneaks up on us and often passes us by.

As if that isn't enough, the date of Easter varies each year depending on the vernal equinox and phase of the moon. Unlike Christmas, Easter moves around; this year it's not until **April 24** – about the latest date it can be. And because **Lent is the 40-day season before Easter**, Lent and Ash Wednesday also move around.

But counting back 40 days doesn't get one to Ash Wednesday. Sundays are saved as feast days and the celebrating of the Resurrection, so Sundays are not considered *of* Lent even though they are *in* it!

Lent has curves. Some of us begin the Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday with a cross-shaped smudge on our forehead or hand. Some choose to give up a habit or pleasure as a prayerful reminder of what God gave up. In attempts to become closer to God and Jesus, some add a special daily or weekly study, activity, or time of prayer. Some simply move from Sunday to Sunday following the scriptural readings, and make the

leap straight from Palm Sunday to Easter – bypassing Holy Week's difficult and tragic twists.

The Good News is that no one particular Lenten journey is more perfect than another. Our journey to Easter is ours. No one else can travel there for us, and yet, we all end up at the same destination: Easter morning. Each of our journeys through Lent have the potential to change us so that we are in a different place on Easter.

To provide a pathway for you leading to and during Lent, several offerings will be available. There will be special prayers available. There will be two Soup Sundays (March 6 and April 3) in our lounge providing nourishment in food and company and space/time to relax. Tuesday evenings offer Upper Room study and prayer.

Ash Wednesday will begin a four-week Wednesday series of simple meals and fellowship followed by a choice of programs. Ash Wednesday's worship service in the Hummel Chapel is geared for the whole family. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, April 17, when we will celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Wednesday of Holy Week, April 20, will provide a program for pre-schoolers. Holy Thursday we will celebrate a meal and Maundy Thursday worship around the Table celebrating Jesus' Last Supper.

Good Friday, the day that Jesus died, the Hummel chapel will be open for prayer from noon until 6 pm. Then on Easter we will celebrate Jesus' resurrection!

Mission notes about Emmaus' immigrant support ministry; the Overflow Shelter, and the Focus Churches' Winter Breakfast Program

The **Refugee and Immigrant Support Services** of Emmaus Methodist Church (RISSE), located at 715 Morris St. in Albany, offers a number of programs to assist refugees and immigrants, perhaps the most important of which is a daily after-school (4 to 6 pm) tutorial program for children whose families are from countries such as Burma, the Congo, and Iraq. Volunteers are needed to serve as conversational English partners for the kids (this can mean playing games, reading, crafts, etc.); to teach computer literacy skills to small groups (using the volunteers' own laptops); and to lead enrichment workshops, such as music, to complement the strong art program. Jen Bailey is one of the volunteer tutors. Her reaction after her first day with the children is particularly telling: "If I could say one thing about my first experience, it is how much the kids seem to want help. I was immediately approached by students, who did not know who I was, but said 'can you help me?' They want our help, they want us to be there, they need our help." Ask Jen for more information about her experiences or contact Colleen Cook at cook.colleen@att.net.

School supplies, including coloring books, crayons, glue sticks, stickers, activity books, art supplies, child-sized musical instruments, and calculators are items needed for the after-school program. If you have items to donate, place them in the Emmaus collection bin on the second floor landing in the education wing here at FUMC.

The **Emergency Overflow Shelter** in Albany operates during the winter months to provide warm, overnight lodging for individuals who

cannot access other homeless shelters for various reasons. Our church provides a hot meal for the 19 individuals and staff members every Saturday evening. Beverages and salads / vegetables are needed. Check the sign-up board in Fellowship Hall to see if there is a date when you could provide one or the other.

The shelter is also in need of powdered coffee creamer and laundry detergent. A collection box for donated items is in our Church Office hallway, near the Nursery.

Volunteers are needed to assist as cooks, servers, and dishwashers with the Focus Churches' **Winter Breakfast Program** at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Shirley Noble tells what it's like to be a Tuesday morning "floater": "Getting to the church by 6:30 am is sometimes a chore, but once I'm there, it's an amazing experience. At 7 am, the people who have been waiting out in the cold and snow for the doors to open come in for breakfast. As they get their coffee, hot oatmeal, and cheese omelet, they always take time to say 'good morning' and 'thank you'. Although I'm not one of the cooks, I'm thanked by everyone for providing the breakfast. I'm thanked for giving someone a spoon, for handing over a napkin, for refilling the juice pitcher, and for finding some butter. I'm thanked for treating people with respect and courtesy. I overheard one man saying that he never expected that circumstances would bring him to need this breakfast program, but he is so glad that it exists. Needless to say, I have become a regular volunteer." Contact Shirley for more information (439-0142).

Upcoming events of note

Saturday, March 5	7:30 am 7 pm	Men's Ministry Breakfast RPMS Coffee House	Fellowship Hall Delmar Reformed
Sunday, March 6	12:30 pm 5:30 pm	CARE Corps "Sunday's Soup"	Room 207 Lounge
Monday, March 7	7 pm	Administrative Council	Room 207
Tuesday, March 8	7 pm	Trustees	Room 207
Thursday, March 10	12:30 pm	Mary Marthas	Lounge
Sunday, March 13	11 am 7 pm	Fair Trade Sales RPMs meeting	Fellowship Hall Delmar Reformed
Monday, March 14	7 pm	Staff Parish Relations Team	Room 207
Saturday, March 19	8:30 am	Women-in-the-Middle	Tool's
Monday, March 21	7 pm	Finance Team	Room 207
Friday, March 25	6 pm	Friendship Club	Fellowship Hall
Sunday, March 27	12 noon 2 pm	Confirmation Class session "Seussical the Musical" (Church Family Life)	FH/Lounge BCHS
Monday, March 28	7:15 pm	Education Team	Room 207
Saturday, April 2	7:30 am	Men's Ministry Breakfast	Fellowship Hall

Regular weekly schedule

Sundays	9:30 am 9:45 am 10:45 am 11 am 11 am	Worship (Sanctuary) Church School (classrooms) Fellowship Hour Junior/Intermediate Choirs/Youth Singers Theological/Social Issues	Sanctuary Classrooms Fellowship Hall 219/Choir Room/218 Lounge
Mondays	10:30 am	Community Playgroup	Nursery
Tuesdays	8 am 10 am 3 pm 7 pm	Men's Breakfast Treasure Cove Rev. Iona "Coffee Talk" Upper Room Study Group	Four Corners Lounge Perfect Blend Library
Wednesdays	10:30 am 10:30 am 5:30 pm	Bible Study Community Playgroup Lenten program (3/9, 16, 23, 30; 4/6)	Delmar Place Nursery Fellowship Hall
Thursdays	6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Bell Choir Chancel Choir	Room 201 Choir Room

The April edition of the Telescope will be produced on Wednesday, **April 6**.
Final copy deadline for that issue is **Friday morning, April 1**.

See our on-line calendar at calendar.yahoo.com/delmarmethodist

TWO SPECIAL FUN EVENTS IN MARCH!
RPMS Coffee House on March 5; BCBS musical on March 27

Music and desserts not to be missed – Saturday, March 5 at 7 pm

Tickets are available at the door, at Delmar Reformed Church, for the RPMs annual coffee house fundraiser for their spring mission trip. Tasty desserts and coffees, and music by Acoustic Hartland – all in a comfortable café setting. Only \$15 – or \$25 for two.

“Seussical the Musical” – BCBS – Sunday, March 27 at 2 pm

One of the best shows in town will be at Bethlehem High School. Come and be entertained and be proud of this town’s incredible young talent in the cast of “Seussical the Musical.” A block of tickets is being secured. Pizza party will follow the performance in our Fellowship Hall. Tickets for the show and the pizza party are estimated at between \$10-\$20. Chairperson/contact: Jane Lang, e-mail jjlang3@mindspring.com.

'A Christian community, growing together in faith and in service to God'

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