SARATOGA SPRINGS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Embracing Everyone
May 2017

175 Fifth Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
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THE MESSENGER

From the Pastors' Desk

UMC WEST
Embracing Everyone

During the past two years we have been building our small group ministry as one of the four ways we sought to live out our vision – To embrace everyone through deep meaningful connections to grow closer to God and transform lives. Many small groups have formed throughout the church and are deepening our connections with one another. Currently 12 new small groups have formed. These groups include bible studies, book groups, covenant groups, and fellowship groups. They meet at the church, in people's homes, and some even in local restaurants. All of these new groups are exciting endeavors deepening our church community's relationships with each other and with God.

As part of our vision to deepen the church's small group ministry, our vision team felt called to reconnect to the west side of town where our ancestral roots lay and where there is a community who may not feel welcomed in our church building. To reach out to the west side, the team developed a new ministry called UMC West. This ministry used the small group model to begin a grassroots approach to meeting new people. The UMC West small groups look a little different than some of our other groups. For example, Pastor Drew has been leading Pints with the Pastor and attracting a dozen folks to come out and discuss life and theology. Pastor Heather and Laura LeCours facilitate a book club with 12 women from the church and community.

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Additionally, Al LeCours and Joe Watts have begun a book study meeting on the west side in a restaurant. Overall there are about 40 people engaging in UMC West small group ministries. As a result, UMC West is beginning to gain momentum and excitement within the west side neighborhoods. With this new growth and recognition, the UMC West leadership feel God calling us to expand how we are doing ministry.

Just as this inclination of God's new plan for UMC West was moving in our hearts, we received a phone call from SSUMC members Mary Chen and Yong Li. They called to ask us to meet with them for prayer over a difficult situation in their business affairs. As we prayed together it became clear that God was opening a pathway to expand UMC West. Mary and Yong Li own a property on the west side and have been looking for a new tenant. They described feeling God leading them to meet with us about the space but weren't exactly sure why. Upon prayer, discussion, and visiting the space it became clear it is a perfect gathering space for small groups and expanding our UMC West ministries. *continued on next page*

UMC WEST*: continued from previous page*

As the discussion progressed from a dream into a potential reality we realized there are many things one doesn't learn in seminary that would come in handy during conversations like this. So we enlisted some

folks smarter than we in this area to participate in the conversation. Al LeCours brought legal expertise, Laura LeCours brought congregational expertise, and Steve Conklin added his expertise as the chair of Trustees. After more prayer and discussion, we determined this was worth investing in. Thus we sought the approval from the trustees and church council to expand our ministry by renting this space from Mary and Yong Li. Both groups unanimously offered their support.

The church in 2017 looks different than it did in 1950, 1970, 1990, or even 2000. This means we must take risks to enter new and different ministry ventures. This new space will allow us to reach new people so they can find the warm embrace of a loving community such as ours. This new opportunity offers our church an exciting new way to live out our vision. As United Methodists, we claim the world as our parish, and so we will boldly follow this claim as we expand our ministry into new places with new people.

Grace and Peace,

Pastors Heather and Drew

Mission Minute

Emily Lasher to Speak at Third Thursday

Emily Lasher, granddaughter of Bill and Joanna Lasher, will offer a presentation about her mission trip to Nicaragua at the Third Thursday Fellowship potluck on Thursday, May 18. Emily is a senior in high school and a member of the Cobleskill United Methodist Church. This past December, she participated on a Mission of Peace to Nicaragua where she attended Project Chacocente, a community where relocated families from the city dump in Managua are able to live with a much-improved quality of life. The Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church made a contribution towards the significant cost of Emily's trip. We are looking forward to Emily's talk and hope that members of the SSUMC congregation will be able to attend this informative event.

May 18th 6pm
Fellowship Hall

Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means

Many lifelong United Methodists have fond memories of their confirmation class. Sometime during adolescence, they met with a group of their peers, some adult leaders, and their pastor. They may have gathered weekly in the church basement, during a youth Sunday school class, or maybe for a weekend retreat at a campground.

When the classes were complete, they then stood before their congregation, where the pastor and others put their hands on them while a blessing was said. Some then received a special lunch or a gift from their church.

Although confirmation is not a sacrament in The United Methodist Church, it is an important marker along our spiritual journeys.

At baptism, we are initiated into the new covenant in Jesus Christ and membership in the Church, Christ's body in the world. For many, this happens when they are very young.

We recognize children are members of their human families, but no one expects them to clean their rooms or empty the dishwasher until much later. In the same way, "baptized infants are members of the Church—the family of faith—but are not yet capable of sharing everything involved in membership," By Water and the Spirit, The United Methodist Church's official statement on baptism teaches; confirmation is an opportunity to respond to the grace of God available to us, as acknowledged in baptism, and to promise to live as a person of faith. "What God offers us must be accepted in repentance and faith," as the baptismal liturgy states. "Confirmation and reaffirmation are our responses of commitment, profession of faith, and rededication."

After the confirmands answer for themselves the same questions their parents and/or sponsors did when they were baptized, the pastor will say to the confirmand, "Remember your baptism and be thankful." This can cause some confusion for those baptized as infants too young to have memory of the occasion.

The intent is to remember that you were baptized. "It is not the particular event that you are remembering," clarifies the Rev. Taylor Burton-Edwards, director of worship resources with Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church. "It is what has happened to you because of it—what God has done in you—that matters."

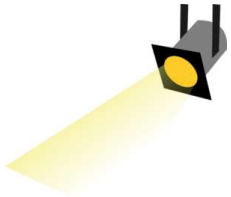
Typically, the confirmand then kneels before the pastor who, along with parents, sponsors, and others, lays hands on her head. The pastor speaks words that are nearly identical to those said during the laying on of hands following baptism, "The Holy Spirit work within you that having been born through water and the Spirit, you may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ."

Finally, confirmands are asked to take the same vows of membership in The United Methodist Church and their local congregation that all who join are asked.

Because our journey in the Christian faith is not intended to be a solo venture, throughout the service there are places for the congregation to participate. In different parts of the service, they renew their baptism vows, profess their faith together with the confirmands, promise to do all in their power to support these newest professing members, and with them renew their covenant to be the body of Christ for the world.

This year at SSUMC we will have the opportunity to confirm fifteen youth as members of our church family. We are proud of the work this year's confirmands have put towards their spirituality, knowledge, and understanding. We will celebrate their commitment to the church on Pentecost Sunday June 4th at both services. Please Join us as we welcome these youth into membership and rejoice as they make a new beginning on their spiritual journey.

In the Spotlight: One More Day
by Colleen Farnan



The One More Day project came about after a recent SSUMC Mission Team meeting. At the meeting, Mike Finocchi, Executive Director of SOS (Shelters of Saratoga) spoke about services that his agency offered to our homeless neighbors. This triggered the effort to raise funds for the One More Day Project. Greg Erwin, a SSUMC Mission Team member and Pastor Heather Williams decided to spearhead this project. The purpose of the effort is to expand funding for one particular program, the Drop In Center.

Greg became interested in the issue of homelessness last summer and felt that homeless people in our city were getting a "raw deal." He read a series of newspaper articles about homeless people congregating in downtown Saratoga. Greg was appalled after reading the negative responses from some city residents. Some expressed the opinion that homeless people should be rounded up from the streets and taken out of town. Instead, Greg believed that our community could do better than that.

As a result, Greg contacted Mike Finocchi from SOS to find out more about the homeless population. When Mike explained the problems of homeless people as well as services provided by SOS, Greg developed a better understanding of the issue. This led to Greg inviting Mike to speak at our church's Mission Team meeting. At the meeting, Mike explained some of the programs available at SOS such as the Shelter, Code Blue, and the Drop In Center.

The discussion at the meeting focused in on the Drop In Center at SOS in particular. Mike explained that the purpose of the Drop In Center is to take people off the streets so they can obtain access to services. There are a wide range of services provided in this program. People might want to take a shower, do laundry, eat lunch or meet with a counselor. Because this program is only offered two days a week, Pastor Heather asked about the cost of expanding the Center's schedule for an additional day. Mike indicated that the cost of increasing the schedule for one day was $8,000. This discussion led in turn to the idea of the One More Day fund raising project to expand this worthwhile program.

Both Greg and Pastor Heather followed up with a tour of the SOS Drop In Center to see the program in action. Pastor Heather was impressed that the Center was a safe place for homeless people as well as providing resources to them. The staff was working to engage people to go to the shelter if possible. Overall, Pastor Heather saw the Drop In Center as a way to transition from the homelessness to a more stable life. Greg also felt visiting the program was a valuable experience. He could see that the program had practical advantages (showers and laundry) as well as a way for homeless people to be in touch with a social organization.

Pastor Heather and Greg wanted to involve the entire community in this project. So they contacted and met with the Mayor Yepsen. She expressed interest in working with the business community to contribute to the expansion effort. Also, both Pastor Heather and Greg have reached out to other area churches for financial support. As part of this, Pastor Heather has spoken to area clergy to enlist their financial support to expand the program.

So far, $2,000 toward the $8,000 goal has been raised. The Mission Team as well as the Church and Society Committee have made donations toward the $2,000 on behalf of our church.

Greg related that there is a need to expand the SOS's Drop In Center's program which provides much needed services to the homeless population in Saratoga. He said that the Saratoga Springs community has the funds to achieve this goal. Greg feels that the whole community can make this program expansion happen.

For further information about the project, contact Pastor Heather or Greg Erwin. To donate to the program expansion, those interested can make a check out to SSUMC and write One More Day in the memo.

Kids Corner News!

May 2017

SSUMC Children's Ministries Newsletter

Save the Date!

May 12-13 Confirmation Class

May 20 Small Wonders Kiddie Carnival

May 26-29 Skye Farm Family Camp

June 4 Confirmation

July 10-14 Vacation Bible School

Programs for kids at SSUMC

➔Sunday school classes for preschool through 5th grade at 9:00 and 10:45 services

➔Childcare available at Sunday morning services for babies & toddlers

➔Youth group for grades 6-12 every Sunday at 10:45

➔Children's choir rehearses between services each Sunday morning

Our church is part of the Upper New York Annual Conference, which offers 5 awesome camps with over 200 programs. Summer Camp provides endless laughter, meaningful worship, and important friendships.

The closest camp to our church is Skye Farm, located in Warrensburg. Many members of our congregation have attended and still dedicate much of their time and talents to Skye Farm. Camperships are available for those who need help paying for camp. For more information about camp, feel free to pick up one of the camping brochures at church, visit campandretreats.org, or contact Katie Igler.

Small Wonders Christian Preschool is a ministry of SSUMC. It is our mission to provide a great start to a child's education while providing a loving Christian environment.

Believe it or not, we are nearing the end of the school year. Soon our Small Wonders will be home spending summer with their families, so we will make the most of our time together while we can. Snack outside, nature walks, farm field trips, the Kiddie Carnival…there's tons of fun to be had! If you want to see what else the little ones are learning, visit the classrooms and take a look!

The Sunday School Home Connection

The Deep Blue Kids theme for May is Peter Rocks! During Lent the children learned about Peter and his denial of Jesus. In this unit they will learn about his strong leadership in the early church and his call to spread the word about Jesus and God to everyone. Through his position of power he brought many people to believe and taught them how to spread the love of God.

Are you a leader living in God's word? **Your child undoubtedly thinks of you as a strong leader.** Can you use that power to help your child believe and spread the love of God. Showing your child a strong example of God's love will help them be a stronger part of their church family and grow closer to God.

For more information about what your kids are learning in Sunday School, visit www.deepbluekids.com or talk to your child's teacher!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT SSUMC

JULY 10-14, 9-11:30 AM

For children entering pre-k through 5th grade

Kids experience the Bible stories through science, crafts, games, music & more!

$30 per child, $60 family maximum

Registration forms available at saratogaumc.org

Adults & Youth interested in volunteering please contact Katie Igler

Do you have questions, concerns, or ideas about the Children's Ministries at Saratoga Springs UMC? Are you itching to volunteer with some kiddos? Are you curious about Small Wonders Christian Preschool? Call or e-mail anytime!

Katie Igler, Director of Children's Ministries

584-3720 x114 christianed@saratogaumc.org

Youth Group News

In the past month, the youth have spent their time learning and organizing. We are happy to say that our Easter egg hunt was a great success and there has already been talk about making this event a fixture of the church. During our Youth Group sessions there continues to be time spent discussing how God works in our everyday lives. We have been taking advantage of the wonderful weather we have been given on Sunday mornings this past month and have spent a good amount of time outside, playing in God's creation to close our youth group sessions each week.

The upcoming month holds more opportunity for us to be outside in God's creation. We are planning more of our time out and about as the weather grows warmer. Our first way of doing this will be on a hike May 7th. We will be going up to Moreau Lake State Park and spending the afternoon hiking the ridges above the Hudson. This trip is open to families and whoever else may like to join us for this outing. If you are interested in joining us for this trip, feel free to contact Paul for more details.

This month holds with it time of change, as the school year winds down and the flowers begin blooming all around us. We hope to gain a unique understanding of God's working through this season and through our lives as we live into the Easter spirit in our studies and adventures this month!

2017 Youth Events

May 7	Hiking
May 14	Mother's Day
June 2-4	Annual Conference
June 4	Confirmation
June 25	Year-end Party

Confirmation

Our next confirmation class is May 12th and 13th. This fifth class will center around the commitment of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. The confirmands and mentors will be invited to participate in a work project on May 13th to understand the need for service to our church, community, and world.

UMW Page

There will be a UMW meeting on Tuesday, 5/2, at 7 pm in the church lounge. Come see old friends and make some new ones!

Spring Gathering

Our Spring Gathering is going to be Mothers in Action, at our church here in Saratoga Springs on May 6, 2017. We have two community agencies coming to speak – Angel Names Association and WAIT House.

Angel Names mission :

The Angel Names Association is a nonprofit, 501(C)(3), charitable organization dedicated to assisting families of stillborn children through programs designed to provide financial assistance for end-of-life expenses and counseling services, as well as funding for stillbirth research.

WAIT House mission:

To provide stability to youth who present themselves as homeless. This will be accomplished through the immediate provision of coordinated services: reunification of families where appropriate, the provision of supervised emergency and transitional housing with the goal of personal responsibility and self-sufficiency.

The UMW will be collecting items for WAIT House. WAIT House is in need of:

Paper towels, toilet paper, peanut butter, cereal, canned tomatoes, salad dressing, applesauce, gravy, coffee, sugar, rice, drinks mixes, ketchup.

Gift cards (in any Denomination): Price Chopper, Hannaford, Target, Wal-Mart, Lowe's, Home Depot, Stewarts, and any gas station.

Baby Items: Diapers (all sizes but especially 3,4,5), wipes

Please no clothing.

Non-Food: Feminine Products, Shampoo, Conditioner, dish soap, laundry detergent, liquid hand soap, hand sanitizer.

Every woman of the church is invited to this informative day. The morning starts at 9:15 with coffee, tea and refreshments. We will have the speaker from WAIT House speak in the morning and Angel Names in late morning or early afternoon. Lunch is provided by the Saratoga Springs UMW. The cost is $6.00. If interested please see or call (583-4282) Sue Douglass.

UMW Reads
Meets Monday May 8, 7:00 PM in Lounge.
The selection will be the novel "The Nest" by Cynthia D'Apix Sweeney. Come join us!

Living Springs Circle
will meet May 19th, at 10:00 AM in the kitchenette.
Refreshments will be served!

Ruth Circle
We will meet May 22nd in the Activity Room of Woodlawn Commons, 156 Lawrence St, at 1pm
ALL are invited to come!

MAY 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunday Worship Youth Group (10:45) Book Study (10:45) Fresh Start (6:00)	**1**	**2** AcaBella (2:00) Yoga (6:00) UMW Meeting (7:00)	**3** Chancel Ringers (6:30) Chancel Choir (7:30)	**4** Joy in the Morning (7:30) God's Bells (6:00) Joyful Hope Choir (7:00)	**5**	**6** UMW Adirondack District Meeting
7 Sunday Worship Youth Group (10:45) Book Study (10:45) Caregivers (1:30) Fresh Start (6:00)	**8** UMW Reads (7:00)	**9** AcaBella (2:00) Yoga (6:00)	**10** Chancel Ringers (6:30) Chancel Choir (7:30)	**11** Joy in the Morning (7:15) God's Bells (6:00) Joyful Hope Choir (7:00) Pints w/the Pastor (7:00)	**12** Confirmation Class 4pm----------→	**13**
14 Sunday Worship Youth Group (10:45) Book Study (10:45) Fresh Start (6:00)	**15** Trustees (6:00)	**16** AcaBella (2:00) Yoga (6:00)	**17** Chancel Ringers (6:30) Chancel Choir (7:30)	**18** Joy in the Morning (7:30) God's Bells (6:00) 3rd Thursday (6:00) Joyful Hope Choir (7:00)	**19** Living Springs Circle (10:00)	**20** Small Wonders Kiddie Carnival (10:00)
21 Sunday Worship Youth Group (10:45) Book Study (10:45) Fresh Start (6:00)	**22** Ruth Circle (1:00) Church Council (7:00)	**23** AcaBella (2:00) Yoga (6:00)	**24** Chancel Ringers (6:30) Chancel Choir (7:30)	**25** Joy in the Morning (7:30) God's Bells (6:00) Pints w/the Pastor (7:00) Joyful Hope Choir (7:00)	**26**	**27**
28 Sunday Worship Youth Group (10:45) Book Study (10:45) Fresh Start (6:00)	**29** Memorial Day	**30** AcaBella (2:00) Yoga (6:00)	**31**			

SARATOGA SPRINGS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Church Life

Job openings at SSUMC

The Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church is seeking a Children's Choir Director and a Director of Youth Music Ministries. While these are two separate positions they can be filled either by separate candidates or one candidate. Responsibilities include training and preparing the children's choir/youth music team to participate in worship once a month from October-June, with work beginning in September 2017. The successful candidate(s) will encourage children ages Kindergarten through 5th Grade and/or youth grades 6-12 to participate in the choir/music team, conduct weekly rehearsals, and meet for planning purposes with the pastors, the Director of Music, and music staff. A stipend will be provided, commensurate with the candidate's experience and background. A more detailed description of the positions is available upon request.

Interested persons should direct e-mail inquires to Jobs@saratogaumc.org or call the church office.

May

2nd 7pm – UMW Meeting

7th 1:30pm – Caregivers Group

8th 7pm – UMW Reads Circle

9th 1pm – Quilters Group

11th 7pm – Pints w/The Pastor

18th 6pm – 3rd Thursday Potluck

19th 10am – Living Springs Circle

22nd 1pm – Ruth Circle

22nd 7pm – Church Council

Frobenius Concert Postponed

This year's spring Frobenius Concert scheduled for May 12th has been postponed until the Fall. Please stay tuned for future details.

LADIES OF THE CHURCH

will be having a movie night. More details coming soon… To get on the email list for all LOTC events, email Katie at katieigler@gmail.com

Trip to Vermont!

On June 16th join us for a day at Hildene—Robert Todd Lincoln's lovely home in Manchester, Vermont. We will meet in the church parking lot at 8am and carpool to Manchester. All are welcome—we need a commitment by June 1st to determine luncheon order. The cost will be $15.00 for admission and guided tour and $14.00 for a catered lunch. Please call Susan Holloway @ 584-6906 or email at skhtrav@gmail.com

Pancake Breakfast

The pancake breakfast fundraiser to support our 17th annual mission trip to Maine will be on Sunday, June 4th from 8:00-10:30am. Please have breakfast at church and make a free-will donation to support the trip.

Fellowship Hosts

May 7th
Church & Society, Missions, and Joy in the Morning

May 14th
Hospitality and "Birthday People"

May 21st
Music Teams

May 28th
Trustees, Finance & Staff/Parish

In Our Prayers : Diana Barker, Pat Ashley (Mary Beth Delarm's Mom), Natalie Bollerud, Christine Luczak, Frank Crouch, Kristin Elmendorf Cimini, Katelyn Hogan, Kathy Flannagan, Charles Salaway (Nora's son), Bob Waldron, Mary Hibbert, Clayton Chubb, Carl Klain, Donna Bailey, Emery Miller (Lil Robertson's cousin), Patty Gandee (Rosie Spring's Aunt), Don Carpenter, Ray DeRidder, Thomas Family, Alden Barton, Ryan Vaughn, Sandy Mercaldi, Peggy Evans, Linda Griffing, Marti Ladue, Barbara Peck, Barbara O'Brien, Patricia Squailia. Sue Zutterling, Virginia Cooley, Ethel Clark, Shirley Bozony, Marge Bramhall, Helen Smead, Rev. Walter Taylor.

For Those Who Mourn the Loss of: Barbara Thomas, Louise Hunter, Daniel Delarm, Glenn Root, Robert G. Nichols, Linda Carpenter, Sherwood (Woody) Carver, Ed Meyer, Byron Evans, Margaret Tomkinson, Dorothy Robinson (Dale Walton's Mom) Rachel Zareski Walts, Jim Malinski, Dr. Rachel Streit, Carolyn Vallelunga, Robert Dake, Lori Bussing, Edna Lloyd, Theron Robinson.

For Those Around the World: Those serving their country at home and abroad, victims and families involved in violence, victims of recent natural disasters, victims of terrorism throughout the world.

To add or remove a name from our prayer requests list, please contact the Church Office at 518-584-3720.

The Mission of Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church is to spread God's word as we embrace persons of any age, gender, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, economic condition, and physical or mental ability as full participants in a loving community of worship, fellowship, study, and outreach.

Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church
175 Fifth Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-3700

Non-Profit Organization

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Permit #6

Saratoga Springs, NY

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Dated Material-Please Deliver Promptly

We invite you to join us for Worship on Sundays at 9:00am & 10:45am, with Coffee Fellowship between the services.

Pastors

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Our Vision:
Embracing Everybody through deep meaningful connections
To grow closer to God and transform lives