



the

Circuit Writer

February 2012

The Newsletter of Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church

Kinney's Korner

"Let us bring a new age of God's love into this world because it is through expressing God's love that we come closer to God."

What do you think of when you think of the month of February? To some it is about the long winter season still dragging on and spring only being something that is on a horizon some where but not too visible yet. For others you may think of Valentines Day and you may remember the cards and hearts you made in elementary school. It is also a time when we make a special effort to special people to tell them we love them. And for others it marks the beginning of the season of Lent where we prepare for the celebration of Easter by giving something up. The method here is to give something up and every time you think about what you have given up you are to be called to a time of prayer or thought about God in your life or to pray for others less fortunate.

Is there a common thread running through all three of these thoughts on February? Of course I would not ask if I did not think there was one or else this would be a short article. Let's look at these three. Spring only being on the horizon but not yet here, expressing our love for others, giving something up to call us to a higher purpose. You might see where I am headed with this.

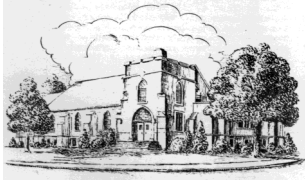
How often have we heard the promise of a better place a better life if we can only remain faithful through this life? Some characterize this as "pie in the sky by and by" theology. It has been often times preached in not so long ago pulpits and gatherings of Christianity. If we will be faithful to God for our short time span here then we will receive the reward of heaven when we go and re-join God in heaven. The difficulty I have with this is that God becomes a distant almost uncaring being who waits for us to demonstrate our being worthy of God's rewards and even God's love. What I do see on the horizon but not yet realized is our living better lives of faith and there by the world being a better place over all. On the not too distant horizon, a world where want and famine are only spoken of in the past tense. A world where all people and all life is valued because it is life and therefore a part of God's creation.

This leads into the freely expressing our love for all people of all places. I remember how difficult this was in grade school. How it felt not to receive a valentine from some people you had made one for. Let us see that no one is left out from our expressing God's love through our love for other people.

This brings me to the Lenten season and the practice of giving something up. Let me first say this is not done to demonstrate how faithful and how good we are. But it is a method to call us to a closer relationship with God through prayer and service to others. As Matthew quotes in 6:16 "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others they are fasting." Let us bring a new age of God's love into this world because it is through expressing God's love that we come closer to God. May our practices of Lent draw us closer to God and to each and every person we encounter.

See you in Church!

"As a Reconciling Congregation, EPUMC affirms the sacred worth of persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and welcomes them into full participation in the fellowship, membership, ministries, and leadership of the congregation."



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Church**

943 Palmer Ave.
Schenectady, NY 12309

Alan D. Kinney
Pastor

(518) 374-4306

epumc943@yahoo.com

www.easternparkway.
weebly.com

Marybeth Kalweit
Editor

**“We are a
faith community
striving to be,
to nurture,
and
to send forth
disciples of
Jesus Christ.”**

New Church Secretary and Office Hours

EPUMC's new secretary, Marybeth Kalweit, comes to us with non-profit, hospital, and hotel work experience. She has been attending our church for several years and has assumed roles as usher, counter, and gardener. Most recently she agreed to coordinate Wednesday Night Dinners.



A native New Yorker, Marybeth was born in Buffalo, attended college in Oneonta, and moved to Schenectady in the '70's. She and her husband Bill have 3 children and are looking forward to the birth of their first grandchild in May. She says she enjoys gardening, reading, walking, cooking (and eating), ice skating, organizing family events, and dreaming up projects for Bill to do.

Marybeth will be in the church office every week day from 10 am to 1 pm.

From Marybeth

As I muddled through my first few weeks as your church secretary, I came to realize the pivotal role this position plays in facilitating communications. I will do my best to keep information flowing in a timely manner. If you get it to me, I'll get it out.

I am most grateful for this opportunity to serve EPUMC and appreciate the good wishes, the assistance, the offers to help, and the constructive feedback I have received from many of you. I also appreciate your patience as I continue to learn how to fulfill the responsibilities of the job.

I'd like to use this forum to share a little story about a lifelong Methodist, my mother-in-law Jane Kalweit. Jane was a career nurse, who could be just a bit bossy sometimes. But she was a woman of great faith and often said she lived by 3 P's: Prayer, Patience, and Perseverance. She was very highly regarded in her church and community, and when Jane spoke, people listened.

On November 13, 2011, Jane passed away suddenly. A few weeks later, when I told my husband about this job opportunity, he said, "If you get this job, wouldn't Mom have been pleased?" To which I replied, "If I get this job, I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if she had something to do with it!"

Let's Make a Deal

There's gift card in the church office good for a complete oil change and tire alignment at Munro Muffler (a \$12.99 value). For a freewill donation to the church, it can be yours!

Do you have something similar -- a gift certificate, tickets, etc. -- that you can't use and would like to parlay into a donation to the church? (Not that moose head Uncle Ralph gave you for a wedding present. Save that for the Rummage Sale.) If so, let Marybeth in the office know and she will advertise it in the next Circuit Writer.

The heart of Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of outreaching love. Christian ministry is the expression of the mind and mission of Christ by a community of Christians that demonstrates a common life of gratitude and devotion, witness and service, celebration and discipleship. All Christians are called through their baptism to this ministry of servant hood in the world to the glory of God and for human fulfillment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY

Northeastern Regional Food Bank



On Saturday, March 10th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., there will be another group of EPUMC volunteers working at the Northeastern Regional Food Bank near Albany Airport.

We invite you to join us and to invite your friends!

This is a chance to help sort and/or repack donations to the Food Bank from individuals and businesses. You never know what you will be sorting! The first time we went in the fall, we sorted non-perishable food donations from the Boy Scouts' recent food drive. In January, on a bitter cold day, we sorted frozen food donations! We kept our jackets on for that one! The highlight afterwards was a tour of the enormous freezer. All ages are welcome from kindergarten on up. There are some large machines, so we ask that a parent comes with all young children for their safety.

A sign up sheet is at the church for you to sign up. Meet at the church at 12:35 if you need a ride, otherwise, meet us at the Food Bank. Contact Trish Roeser for more information (372-2273 or patriciaroeser2@gmail.com). Hope you can join us for some more fun !



Communion to the Home Bound

Would you be interested in receiving training and then taking the Sacrament of Communion to those people who are unable to attend Sunday worship? If so, please let Pastor Alan know. Receiving training is not a commitment to take the Sacrament to others but it would help you decide if this is a ministry you might be interested in pursuing.

SICM Emergency Food Pantry

As the number of individuals and families needing the Food Pantry increases, so does the amount of food and the number of volunteers needed. If you can help, please contact Gail at the SICM Food Pantry at 346-4035.

Book Collection

In addition to collecting food items, we are also continuing to collect gently used children's books to donate to SICM. These books can then be added to meals. You are welcome to drop off your books in the box located next to the SICM Food donation basket, which is near the sign-up sheets upstairs.

If you have any questions about SICM, its programs, or how you can help, please contact Cheryl Gerstler at 372-2561 or cherylgerstler@yahoo.com You are also welcome to visit SICM's website at www.sicm.us. Thank you for your support of this important ministry!

Welcoming and Greeting

Help plan new and different ways we can meet and greet people who are new to us each week in a meaningful, warm, and inviting manner. We need some people who will share their ideas or past experiences of how this might happen. We also need some people who are willing to help *make* this happen even more! If you sense a calling to this ministry, please talk to Michelle Marchese.



Lenten Studies

Journey to Hope Wednesday Evening Study

Starting on Wednesday, February 29th, at 6:45 pm, a class will be offered entitled "Journey to Hope." This gathering will continue for each Wednesday evening in Lent and will address such issues as: How do we experience Scripture and how does it relate to our living? What are the "mile markers" and how might they impede or enhance our journey? What are the visual images of the journey and how do these enhance our journey? Can we rethink outreach to others and to ourselves?

The learning format will be participatory and interactive. We will encourage everyone to share but not everyone has to share. We will encourage participants to journal during the week, but this will be shared only as you desire. Some of the ground rules we will operate under are: 1) that people can only speak for themselves; 2) we only will say what is comfortable; 3) passing or not speaking is permissible; 4) we will respect the opinions and gifts of others; 5) confidentiality will be respected and expected; and 6) we will be encouraged to talk and listen.

This will be an opportunity to hear and share how the Scriptures and other sisters and brothers of faith are a part of our own journey to faith. We will be looking at how we can assist or, at times, hold back others or ourselves from our journey towards hope.

This experience is open to all people of all ages. We will begin following the Wednesday night dish-to-pass dinner. A special thanks to Brother Paul-Allen for pushing choir practice back 30 minutes to afford us the space for this exciting time of journeying and growing together.

Rev. Kinney will be leading this group.



Genesis — A Good Place to Begin Sunday Study

Following coffee hour there will be a study class facilitated by Rev. Kinney and offered to all adults on the Book of Genesis. This will not replace the Sunday Forum but will be in addition to it.

We will explore some of the fascinating aspects and possible meanings that Genesis has and does carry within it. We will examine the Creation, Noah and the Flood, Abraham and Sarah, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob, and God's promises to and for Israel.

We will use some of the works of Dr. Amy Jill Lavine, a professor of Old Testament at Vanderbilt University, as well as our own experience and knowledge. We will encourage people to share their own insights and thoughts concerning Scripture and how it relates to our living today and how the past can help inform our present.

We will meet in the Hearth Room each Sunday from February 26th to April 1st.

Enjoy some coffee and fellowship and then come out to share and hear with others.

SAVE THE DATE

April 21st

Variety Show

Curtain Call Theater "Talk Back"

Next Fall is now on stage at Curtain Call Theater in Latham. Daily Gazette theater reviewer Matthew G. Moross called the play "a witty, provocative and insightful evening of theater." It's about family, faith, commitment, and unconditional love.



Eastern Parkway's David Orr has a leading role as Butch, the fundamentalist father of a gay man. The play opens with the son, Luke, in the hospital in a coma as the result of a car accident. Luke's boyfriend Adam, an atheist, is in the waiting room with Butch and his ex-wife, Luke's mother Arlene.

On February 5, after the matinee performance, there will be a "talk back" discussion of the issues presented in the play, in which Reverend Kinney will be participating.

Curtain Call theater is on Old Loudon Rd in Latham. Tickets are \$22 and can be reserved at (518) 877-7529. Come see why *Next Fall* has been called the funniest heartbreaker in town.

Gifts of the Spirit

Our Prayers

Harry & Dot Temple
 Ollie Clute
 Paul Hitchcock
 Rev. Dr. Brolin Parker
 (Dist. Superintendant)

If you have prayer requests you wish to have included, please contact Marybeth in the church office.

Our Presence

12/24 183
 12/25 36
 1/1 49
 1/8 121
 1/15 94
 1/22 88
 1/29 76

Our Gifts

1/1 \$3,122.50
 1/8 \$6,511.65
 1/15 \$1,564.55
 1/22 \$1,189.00
 1/29 \$2,453.61
 Human Relations Sunday \$81.00
 SICM Food Pantry \$149.71
 Bethesda House Sock Project \$64.60

February 5

*Communion
 Sock Project*

February 12

February 19

SICM Sunday

February 26

Scriptures:

Isaiah 40: 21-31
 Psalm 147: 1-11
 1 Corinthians 9: 16-23
 Mark 1: 29-39

2 Kings 5: 1-14
 Psalm 30
 9: 24-27
 Mark 1: 40-45

Isaiah 43: 18-25
 Psalm 41
 2 Corinthians 1: 18-22
 Mark 2: 1-12

Hosea 2: 14-20
 Psalm 103: 1-13
 3: 1-6
 Mark 2: 13-22

Lay Reader:

Diana Carter

Judy Tomisman

Desiree Chaires

Randy Roeser

Acolytes:

Isaac Menis
 Matthew McClennon

Kaitlyn Gerstler
 Talyah Chaires

Alice Menis
 Jeanna Brown

Isaac Menis
 Matthew McClennon

Cashiers:

Sandra Goble
 Tom Prater
 Sam Thompson

Chancel Committee:

Bill & Norah Pattison

Ushers:

Brenda Morrow
 Carl Veglia

February Meetings

13	7:00 pm	Finance
14	9:30 am	Circle B
15	7:00 pm	Trustees
21	7:00 pm	Missions Coordinating Team

Senior High Youth Group

February 12 & 26
 6:30 pm
 Sr. High Room



Junior High Youth Group

February 12 & 26
 6:00 pm
 Jr. High Room