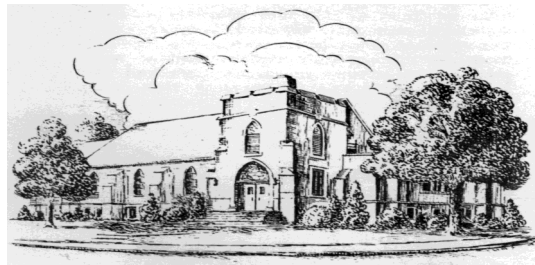


# The Circuit Writer

Eastern Parkway UMC  
943 Palmer Avenue  
Schenectady, NY 12309

*"On a journey  
together."*



## March 2011

***"I think a bishop who doesn't give offense to anyone is probably not a good bishop."***

*James Thomson (Scottish poet, 1700-1748)*

I had my first real personal encounter with a bishop when Bishop C. Dale White came to my home church in Saranac Lake for our sesquicentennial celebration. After he preached I was part of the group who took him out to dinner. I have since had conversations with other bishops, in various settings. It is the bishop who ordained me, Susan M. Morrison, with whom I've spent the most time, and the one who taught me the most about the need to step forth from time to time with courage in the pursuit of justice.

One of the things I've learned about bishops, though, is that I appreciate them most, and I believe them to be at their best, when they are offering prophetic leadership. Recently 33 retired United Methodist bishops, including 2 under whom I've served, issued a letter of counsel calling on the church to end the ban on homosexual clergy. In the past our bishops have spoken out against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in encouragement of protecting our natural resources. They are our prophetic leaders.

On **Sunday, March 6**, Bishop Marcus Matthews will be with us to preach, and to share in a forum following worship. The focus of the day will be on diversity. I can't say what prophetic word the Bishop might bring, but I encourage you to come and meet him, to hear him, to question him, and to celebrate our greater United Methodist connection. Having Bishop Matthews come and share with us, as one of 940 churches in the Upper New York Conference, is an honor. Please come and experience it.

Peace for the journey,

***Pastor Steve***

p.s. Please invite others to come!



**Open hearts, Open  
Minds, Open Doors.**

Some of what's  
inside...

Outreach	2
Lay Participation	3
SICM update	4

***"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."***



## **Outreach; Extending the Love of Christ to Those Outside Our Walls**

"It is really as simple as that." A member of a church I served uttered as we discussed the Gospel of John and the commandment given by Jesus that we should love one another. The person who uttered these words was a Corrections Officer who had worked in maximum security prisons and was a recovering alcoholic. He quit drinking and joined the United Methodist Church as an adult after an encounter with the risen Christ while driving his car. He became an active member of the church and one of the most loving individuals I have ever met. He was transformed by God's love and sought to share that love with others. The Gospels demands a lot of us but they also promise that the very presence of God, the Holy Spirit, will give us the ability to do all God calls us to do.

### **Provide Shelter for the Homeless, Feed the Hungry, Visit the Prisoner**

The Gospels and the Old Testament make it clear that God calls us to reach out in love not just to our friends and neighbors but to those who are on the margins of society. It is though at times difficult to know what the right thing to do is. This month we have the opportunity to provide assistance to the chronically homeless and those who are victims of disasters in a way that maximizes the chances of making a lasting difference in an individual's life.

On Sunday, March 13 there will be a special offering to support the ministries of Bethesda House. Bethesda House has adopted the philosophy that the first thing that should be done for a homeless person is to provide them with housing, as opposed to requiring participation in an assistance program as a precondition to receiving housing. This approach has been shown to decrease emergency room visits, and increase the likelihood of the person actively participating in programs to address underlying issues. It is also ethically sound in that it assumes that housing is a basic human right and not something which must be earned. Finally, it also has been shown to be more cost effective than other approaches.

Sunday, March 20 is One Great Hour of Sharing. This offering provides the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) funds they need to respond immediately to disasters without having to wait for funds from an Advance Special Offerings. UMCOR teams evaluate the needs after a disaster, seeking to provide aid to those not receiving assistance from other organizations. It also makes sure that it has staff members or individuals from partner agencies on the ground to assure aid gets to those it is intended for. UMCOR efforts go beyond immediate assistance to providing resources to enable individuals to become self-sufficient. 100% of funds given to UMCOR provide assistance to those in need, administrative costs are provided by our giving through Church World Service Apportionments.

If you can't be in church for either of these Sunday's, you can mail your special offering to the church at: Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church, 943 Palmer Ave, Schenectady, NY 12309-6216. Please mark "Bethesda House" or "One Great Hour" on your check.

## **Damien Center Dinners**

Sign up sheets until summer for our monthly Damien Center dinners are on the table in the hallway outside the Narthex. The dates for EPUMC to serve at the Center are on the following Thursdays: March 17, April 14, May 19, and June 16. If you are able, please consider helping out by coordinating one of the monthly dinners, sharing your culinary talents in preparing a dish to share with the guests, or going along to serve at the Center. Food can be dropped off in the kitchen at EPUMC before 2:30, or you can meet the servers at EPUMC at 5:00 when they pick up. Guests at the Damien Center are truly appreciative, and EPUMC has earned quite a reputation for the delicious meals we have brought in the past. Thanks in advance for helping out!



# March Scriptures

## Mar 6

Last Sun after Epiphany

Exodus 24:12-18  
Psalm 99  
2 Peter 1:16-21  
Matthew 17:1-9

Bishop Matthews  
Communion  
Sock Project Sun

## Mar 09

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17  
Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

## Mar 13

1st Sun in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7  
Psalm 32  
Romans 5:12-19  
Matthew 4:1-11

Bethesda House Sun

## Mar 20

2nd Sun in Lent

Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18  
Psalm 119:33-40  
1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23  
Matthew 5:38-48

Food Pantry Sun  
One Great Hour of Sharing

## Mar 27

3rd Sun in Lent

Isaiah 49:8-16a  
Psalm 131  
1 Corinthians 4:1-5  
Matthew 6:24-34

### Lay Participants for March

#### Lay Readers:

**Mar. 6.** Randy Roeser  
**Mar. 13** Sue Williams  
**Mar. 20:** Tymesia Nabors  
**Mar. 27:** Bob Bour

#### Acolytes:

Isaac Menis & Naionna Grisby  
Sam Smith & Emma Bour  
Kaitlyn Gerstler & Rebecca Morrow  
Alice Menis & Emma Bour

**Chancel Committee:** Judy Lott & Randy Brooker  
**Cashiers:** Sue Rehbein, Marilyn Esmann & Carolyn Canova

### Office Hours

The church office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9:00am-2:30pm and Tuesdays & Fridays 9am – 11am.

Pastor Steve 's office hours are generally Monday through Thursday, 9am-12pm. Everyone is welcome to stop in but it is best to call

Tue., Mar. 1  
Circle B , 9:30 am

Tue., Mar. 1  
Church Council Mtg, 7 pm

Sun., Mar. 13  
Jr. & Sr. Youth Groups  
6:30-8 pm

Mon., Mar. 21  
Trustee Mtg, 7 pm

Mon., Mar. 28  
SPRC Mtg, 7 pm

Fri., Mar. 18  
Game Night, 7pm

Tue., Mar 29  
Stew & Fin Mtg, 7 pm

**The Food Pantry alert for March** is for small jars of grape or strawberry jelly. Cash donations are most welcome as the Food Program can purchase much more through the Regional Food Bank than anyone can buy at a local store for the same amount of money. For example, the Food Pantry can purchase items for 16 cents a pound at the Regional Food Bank.

The third Sunday of every month is Food Pantry Sunday at EPUMC.

### Wednesday Night Dinners...

are held in the Fellowship Hall at 6pm. Bring a dish to share—beverages and place settings are provided.

Mar. 2—Regular dinner celebrating February birthdays and anniversaries.

Mar. 9—Join us for WND before we carpool to Faith UMC for Ash Wednesday service at 7pm.

Mar. 16, 23, 30—Regular dinners

A reminder that if the Schenectady and/or Niskayuna schools close for inclement weather, there is no WND.

**GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT ~ FULFILLING OUR PROMISES ~  
PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, SERVICE ~ JANUARY 2011**

<u>Our Prayers</u>		<u>Our Presence</u>		<u>Our Gifts</u>	
Norma Quackenbush	01/02	96		01/02	\$3132.12
David Spawn	Clara Marks 01/09	96		01/09	\$2387.50
Olly Clute	Dan Pachucki				
Andy Peck	Donna Spawn 01/16	96		01/16	\$2834.66
Kelly O'Brien	Nancy Denning 01/23	107		01/23	\$1102.04
	Jeremias Franca				
Inner Peace ~ World Peace	01/30	94		01/30	\$ 3672.01
<i>If you have prayer concerns, joys, prayers of thanks or celebration you would like included in this section, please submit them to the office at 374-4306 or epumc943@yahoo.com</i>		<u>Our Service</u>		Food Pantry	\$ 108.56
		Thanks to those who organized and chaperoned our youth retreat.		Sock Project.	\$ 105.26
				SICM Mission	\$ 214.00
				Human Relations	\$ 31.00

## March Birthdays

04—Rebecca Stacy

05—Jeff Roeser

08—Hannah Lott

11—Kate Batzinger; Harry Temple

12—Eric Harrell

15—Nancy Curran; Lois Wilson

17—Alice Menis

19—Dick Goble; Alexander Lott

20—Lynn Lucas

23—Desiree Chaires

27 -Gary Gridley

28—Jonathan Conrad

## March Anniversaries

16—Gordie & Olly Clute

29— Harry & Dot Temple

## SICM Update

**SAVE THE DATE: SICM Day of Service** On Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:00AM -12:30PM, you are invited to volunteer along with other groups from SICM congregations to help with service projects in our community. There will be opportunities at SICM programs as well as other non-profit organizations and member congregations. More specific information will be coming soon. If you are interested in being a part of the EPUMC Team for this opportunity to help others, please contact Cheryl Gerstler at [cherylgerstler@yahoo.com](mailto:cherylgerstler@yahoo.com) or 372-2561.

**Easter Basket Supplies Needed** Easter Baskets will be distributed through the Food Pantry again this year and the following donations are requested: Healthy Snacks, Baskets, Candy, Coloring Books, Crayons, and Craft Supplies. (Note: One of the service projects on April 9<sup>th</sup> will be to assemble these baskets.) You may drop off your donations in the basket marked 'SICM Easter Basket Supplies' at church upstairs by the Mission Table.

**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 marked box also located by the Mission Table at church. Thank you to all those who have continued to donate already!

**Emergency Food Pantry Volunteers Needed** As the number of individuals and families needing the Food Pantry increases, so does the amount of food, and the number of volunteers needed. To volunteer, contact the Food Pantry at 346-4035.

March 2011

## Eastern Parkway UMC

943 Palmer Avenue

Schenectady, NY 12309

Ph: 518-374-4306

Fax: 518-374-4308

epumc943@yahoo.com

www.easternparkway.weebly.com

April newsletter deadline is

Thur., Mar. 10.

Dated material

Deliver Promptly

Change service requested

**Sunday Morning Schedule: 10:00 am - Worship**

**Nursery care is available from 9:45am –12 pm**

**Handicapped accessible**

**Hearing Assists**

**PASTOR**

Steven M. Smith

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:**

Paul-Allan Carey, FSD

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

Barbara J. Paul

**NURSERY ATTENDANT:**

Faye Dohring

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Mon, Wed.-Thurs: 9am—2:30pm, Tue. & Fri. 9am-11 am

**OUR MISSIONARY:**

Jeremias Franca

**Bishop Marcus Matthews**

**will preach at EPUMC on Sunday,  
March 6!**

**Ash Wednesday Service**

Wednesday, March 9, 7pm

Faith UMC

811 Brandywine Avenue, Schenectady

**EPUMC's Youth Sponsored Annual Variety Show**

**Saturday, April 2, 7pm**

Many performances are in the works, but we need more.

What will YOU add to the roster this year?

Contact a Sr. High Youth, or Bo / David ([bopedersengeel@yahoo.com](mailto:bopedersengeel@yahoo.com), 727-9392;  
[opher2001@yahoo.com](mailto:opher2001@yahoo.com), 727-9391).