



“With great power comes great responsibility”
~Uncle Ben in Spiderman

Have you ever thought of Jesus as a superhero? I have. Maybe it’s because the little boy inside of me still loves stories of Good vs Evil, and how Good always wins the day. As I consider Jesus in this way, I imagine that his story would make for a great superhero comic.

Consider the origin story: God looks down upon a world where evil runs amok. Oppression, famine, human violence, natural disasters, and so much more happening – all separating God’s beloved creation from the Love of God. So, God steps in (imagine all of this being read in the voice that movie preview voiceover guy . . . you know who I mean):

Jesus, born to a lowly virgin in a lowly stable, no clothing for him, no bed. He is destined to become the Savior of the world! He defies corrupt authority, tends to the sick, helps those who are oppressed, always does right in a world that strives to do wrong. And in the end, not even death could hold him . . . coming to a Sanctuary (instead of theater) near you this March.

During the season of Lent, we are going to consider Jesus in just such a way during our worship services and through small group opportunities to discuss how we see Jesus as a hero . . . and how we might follow in this example as his church.

When I think of superheroes, I smile as I think of one of the youngest members of our congregation who just loves Spiderman. And in the movie Spiderman, Uncle Ben, before he dies, says to young and confused Peter Parker, “With great power comes great responsibility.”



Jesus had great power . . . and he has shared that power with us. How are we using it? Are we striving to “Do no harm, do good,” and follow the command to “Love God and others?” The truth is, we all have power. What does God require of us? The prophet Micah tells us, that we are called to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Those are demanding expectations!

Thankfully, we have the greatest and most inspiring hero to guide us in our journey.

As we move through the season of Lent, I encourage all of you to take on a spiritual discipline that will help

you to live into the words the prophet spoke. Devote time each day to prayer. Engage in weekly meetings with a spiritual friend discussing how God is working in the world. Expand your giving and generosity. Study the scriptures more. Join one of the study groups offered during the season.* Whatever you choose to do, I pray that it will lead you to become the superhero Jesus desires you to be.

So, to close this message to you in both a theological and “superhero” way, I end with the tag line from the 2011 movie Green Lantern: “In our darkest hour, there will be light.” May we trust in the light, and let us share the light with the world!

Peace, Pastor Gary

***Throughout Lent, Study Groups will meet:**

- Starting Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, from 10:30 to noon and continuing throughout Lent on Wednesdays;
- Starting Thursday, Feb. 27 and continuing throughout Lent from 5-6:15 pm on Thursdays;
- Starting March 1, Sundays from 7:45 to 9:15 am and in between services from 10:30 to 11:00 am

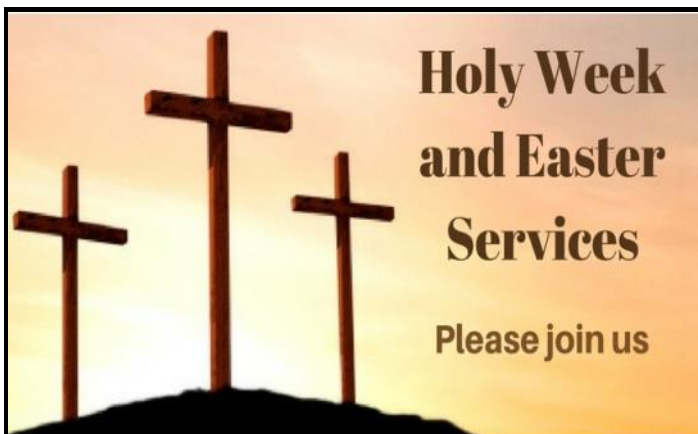


Let's celebrate the following people who joined our church in the month of March.

How might we recommit ourselves as disciples?

ELAINE COWLES	1964
JOHN CURLETTE	1964
KATHLEEN BRYDEN	1971
DOUGLAS TANNER	1971
CAROL TANNER	1971
Kelly Blakeslee	1997
JEFFREY BRYANT	1997
KIMBERLY BRYANT	1997
SUSAN FULLER	2000
LINDA CURLETTE	2002
PETER KNEISS	2002
JEAN KNEISS	2002
CHERYL PERRILLO	2002
JAMES TROSSBACH	2003
SHARON TROSSBACH	2003
JENNIFER HAMPSTON	2006
SAMANTHA ADAMS	2010
DESTINY ALLEN	2013
ERIC ALLEN	2013
LINDA MARTIN	2013
RANDY FULLER	2013

Who's Next?



**Holy Week
and Easter
Services**

Please join us

Maundy Thursday

April 9

Worship at 7:00 pm

Good Friday

April 10

Worship at 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday

April 12

SUNRISE SERVICE

5:45 am, Meet at New Scotland Presbyterian parking lot for processional to Thacher Park

— OR —

6:00 am, Meet at Thacher Park Overlook

6:00 am, Worship at Thacher Park Overlook

6:45 am, Breakfast at New Scotland Presbyterian

At FUMCV:

9:30 am, Traditional Worship

10:30 am, Fellowship

11:15 am, Modern Worship

11:30 am, Easter Egg Hunt



1st	Sun	7:45 am	Lent Study Group	14th	Sat	10:00 am	Odyssey of the Mind
		9:30 am	Traditional Worship			10:00 am	AA
		10:30 am	Fellowship in Social Hall	15th	Sun	7:45 am	Lent Study Group
		10:30 am	Lent Study Group			9:30 am	Traditional Worship
		11:15 am	Modern Worship			10:30 am	Fellowship in Social Hall
		11:30 am	Children's Church			10:30 am	Lent Study Group
		12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN			11:15 am	Modern Worship
		2:30 pm	Financial Peace Univ.			11:30 am	Children's Church
		3:30-5:00 pm	Ballroom Dancing, SHall			12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		6:00 pm	AA Meeting			3:30-5:00 pm	Ballroom Dancing, SHall
2nd	Mon	5:30 pm	Girl Scouts			6:00 pm	AA Meeting
		6:00 pm	Monthly Girl Scouts	16th	Mon	7:30 pm	Church Leadership Mtg.
4th	Weds	10:30-12 pm	Lent Study Group	18th	Weds	10:30-12 pm	Lent Study Group
		12-7:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN			12-7:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		7:30 pm	AA/Al-Anon			7:30 pm	AA/Al-Anon
5th	Thurs	12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN	19th	Thurs	12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		1:00 pm	Women's Bible Study			1:00 pm	Women's Bible Study
		5-6:15 pm	Lent Study Group			5-6:15 pm	Lent Study Group
		6:00 pm	Odyssey of the Mind			6:30 pm	Choir Practice
		6:30 pm	Choir Practice	21st	Sat	10:00 am	Odyssey of the Mind
6th	Fri	5:30-7:30 pm	"First Friday" Pot Luck Dinner			10:00 am	AA
7th	Sat	10:00 am	Odyssey of the Mind	22nd	Sun	7:45 am	Lent Study Group
		10:00 am	AA			9:30 am	Traditional Worship
8th	Sun	DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS				10:30 am	Fellowship in Social Hall
		7:00 am	UMM Breakfast			10:30 am	Lent Study Group
		7:45 am	Lent Bible Study			11:15 am	Modern Worship
		9:30 am	Traditional Worship			11:30 am	Children's Church
		10:30 am	Fellowship in Social Hall			12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		10:30 am	Lent Study Group			3:30-5:00 pm	Ballroom Dancing, SHall
		11:15 am	Modern Worship			6:00 pm	AA Meeting
		11:30 am	Children's Church	23rd	Mon	1-3:00 pm	Crafty Friends
		12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN			5:30 pm	Girl Scouts
		3:30-5:00 pm	Ballroom Dancing, SHall	24th	Tues	12-1:00 pm	Free Community Lunch
		6:00 pm	AA Meeting	25th	Weds	10:30-12 pm	Lent Study Group
9th	Mon	12-2:00 pm	Crafty Friends			12-7:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		5:30 pm	Girl Scouts			7:30 pm	AA/Al-Anon
10th	Tues	12-1:00 pm	Free Community Lunch	26th	Thurs	12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
		6:30 pm	Missions Team Meeting			1:00 pm	Women's Bible Study
11th	Weds	10:30-12 pm	Lent Study Group			5-6:15 pm	Lent Study Group
		12-7:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN			6:30 pm	Choir Practice
		7:30 pm	AA/Al-Anon	28th	Sat	10:00 am	Odyssey of the Mind
12th	Thurs	12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN			10:00 am	AA
		1:00 pm	Women's Bible Study	29th	Sun	7:45 am	Lent Study Group
		5-6:15 pm	Lent Study Group			9:30 am	Traditional Worship
		6:30 pm	Choir Practice			10:30 am	Fellowship in Social Hall
						10:30 am	Lent Study Group
						11:15 am	Modern Worship
						11:30 am	Children's Church
						12-4:00 pm	Karie Jean's Closet OPEN
						3:30-5:00 pm	Ballroom Dancing, SHall
						6:00 pm	AA Meeting
				30th	Mon	5:30 pm	Girl Scout's Meeting



Prayers are Requested for:

Team Vital
Armand Baker
Zoe Brewer
Loretta & Thom Cammer
Schyler Castle
Rosemary Charlton
Carmella Childs
Dylan Dunney
Scott Garke
Jean Kohrs
Lexi Lane & family
Linda Lee & Devin
Chris Lysogorski
Bob Maclin's family
Edward Murtaugh
Marie Nicholzen

Osterbauer Family
Norman Parks
Lynn Paska
Pearce Family
John Pittz
Sherry Pittz
Matt Ramsey
Ashley Rickles
Jacqueline O'Brien Robinson
Romand Family
Glenn Schultz
Catherine Schwabe
Tracy Starczewski
Jennifer Robinson-Steipp
Malik Thomas

Alex Martinez Tidd
Griffin VanLare
Nancy White
Lochlan Woodard
& his Family
Doris Wyley
Euni Yang

In Military Service

Jacob Adams
Ariel Burns
Luke Burns
Adam Ellis
Nick Frandsen
Scott Matthews

*If you want someone put on or taken off the Prayer List,
 please contact Dianne Luci, 518-765-4536.*

Capital Area Council of Churches

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship was established in 1973 to honor the memory of the life and work of Dr. King and to preserve the legacy of the nonviolent human rights movement as it was expressed in his life and teachings.

The Scholarship Committee of the Capital Area Council of Churches awards the scholarship each year to graduating seniors who, in part, show a commitment to the ideals and teachings of Dr. King. Applicants are also rated on financial need, academic record, and evidence of service to school, faith, community and society. Students chosen as finalists are invited for an interview before the committee.

Last year, the Committee awarded three \$4,000 scholarships to students from Albany Leadership Charter School, Shenendehowa High School and

South Colonie High School who are now attending LeMoyne College, Ithaca College and Union University.

Eligibility requirements:

- ♦ A high school senior or high school graduate preparing for the first year of college;
- ♦ A resident of, or a member of, a religious institution in the capital area;
- ♦ Acceptance and maintain good standing at an accredited college or university.

Application and all related material must be postmarked no later than March 31st.

***Scholarship Application forms are available
 at www.capareacc.org.***

Be Smart About Your Giving by Jeff Bryant, Bryant Asset Protection

Is it better to give cash or stock as my annual stewardship pledge?

Are there any other alternatives that will benefit both you and the church as we pledge?

If you're getting ready to fill out your annual pledge card, you may want to look through your portfolio before you write a check. Since our church is a qualified charitable organization and donations may be deducted on your federal income tax return as an itemized deduction, you should consider donating appreciated stock from your investment portfolio instead of cash. This works for folks whose marginal tax bracket is 15 percent or higher and who claim itemized deductions.

Given the run-up in the stock market over the past 12+ months, many investors who bought individual stocks are very likely to own shares that have substantial unrealized gains. And some of those shares were bought just about 12 months ago.

The tax benefits — which include deducting the amount of the charitable donation AND escaping the unrealized gains on the donated stock — come from the fact that the deduction for a donation of property to charity is equal to the property's current fair market value. And when the donated property is an investment, the donor does not have to recognize the capital gain. These rules create a "double play" of tax benefits: a charitable deduction AND avoiding tax on the unrealized capital gains of the donated property.

For example, let's say you bought stock for \$5,000 last May and today it is worth \$10,000. You plan to donate the entire amount to a charitable organiza-

tion. If you sold the \$10,000 stock instead of donating it, you would pay capital gains tax on the \$5,000 gain in value. The tax rate for long-term capital gains is 15 percent. Therefore, the tax savings for donating rather than selling the stock would be \$750 ($\$5000 \times 15\%$).

In addition, you can claim a deduction of the market value of the donated shares — the full \$10,000 — as a charitable donation deduction. If you are in the 25 percent federal tax bracket, this could generate another \$2,500 ($10,000 \times 25\%$) in tax savings. This brings your total tax savings to \$3,250. If you are in a higher tax bracket, your donation deduction will be even more. Also consider this: you are giving a gift that is two times what it originally cost you.

So as you can see, your tax benefits from making a donation of appreciated stock versus giving cash can be substantial. The stock can be easily transferred to the church's brokerage account.

But be careful here: this will not work if the stock has NOT been held for more than a year. Consider

donating your required minimum distribution from a retirement account. For the past few years, people over age of 70-½ have been able to transfer up to a maximum of \$100,000 from their IRAs to charity tax-free. The gift counts as your required minimum distribution for the year, but it is not included in your adjusted gross income. This can be a great way to avoid having to pay taxes on your RMD and helping your church with its operational needs and mission work.. You get if a tax break even if you don't itemize your deductions.



Your **JOURNEY TO GENEROSITY**

Stewardship letter was mailed to you last month.

Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.
Deuteronomy 7:9



CLOSET

FAMILY CLOTHING THRIFT SHOP

50 VOORHEESVILLE AVE
 VOORHEESVILLE, NY 12186
 [518] 250-9755

Karie Jean's Closet Update

As we close 2019 we can truly say that we are blessed, bountiful donations, countless new shoppers, amazing volunteers and a supportive community.

We exceeded our projected sales goal for 2019 and ended the year with a 60% increase over 2018. But it is not just about money. We gave away 47% of the clothing donations we received.

We are working with several agencies that identify those in need and send them to the Closet.

Our network of agencies increases each year as word of our mission spreads.

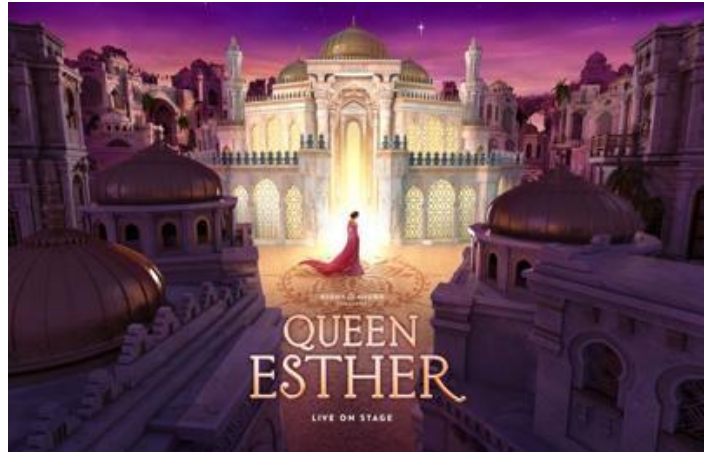
Many of our shoppers and volunteers are from St. Matthew's and other area churches. Community support is important to our success.

If you would like to be a part of this project, please contact Linda Martin, 518-250-9755.



Angel's Corner

*As we open to our angels,
 we become healed by our own surrender,
 changed by what we receive;
 happy and whole
 by what we remember.*



Deadline for tickets is June 1.

St. Matthew's is offering a bus trip July 27-28 to The Sight & Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA to see the production of "Queen Esther." Set in the opulent yet perilous Persian Empire, Queen Esther is a captivating tale of bravery. Esther's great beauty takes her from an ordinary life to the palace, where she becomes queen. But she hides her true self and never tells her new husband, the King, that she is Jewish.

With a crown on her head and a secret in her heart, can she find the courage to trust in God's plan and believe that she was made for such a time as this? Experience one of the most riveting Bible stories of the Old Testament as it comes to life with magnificent sets, special effects and live animals in this brand new, original stage production. For pricing and information, contact Peggy McQuade at st.mattswelcome@gmail.com.

FUMCV Calendar of Events

(on our web site, FUMCV.org)

It has come to my attention that not everyone is familiar with the workings of the calendar on our website. It is located at the bottom of the page labeled "Calendar & Weekly Announcements." Scroll down to the bottom of the page to locate the calendar. Click on an event and it will give you specific information about the location and time of the event.

This calendar has both church activities and non-church related activities (such as AA, Girl Scout's, etc.). If you want to know, for example, if the social hall is available on a certain day, just look at the calendar for that day. If the room has already been reserved, you will see it there! As always, feel free to call me if you have questions. ~Carolyn Barrett

UMW Circle of Friends

At our meeting on February 12, we decided where the money from the Mission Bazaar would go. We made \$3600 at the bazaar and added another \$100 from our treasury to distribute \$3,700. Thank you all for helping with the bazaar and shopping there.

Capital Area Council of Churches	\$400
Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless	500
Interfaith Partnership Safe Haven	500
New Scotland Community Food Pantry	300
The Food Pantries	300
Regional Food Bank of NE NY	300
Neighborhood Center of Utica	200
Next Step	100
NS Neighbor to Neighbor	100
Albany District UMW Pledge	300
ZOE	80
Kekeli	100
Rod Fortran Campership	260
Karie Jean's Closet	<u>260</u>
Total	\$3,700

The meeting was a combined Circle of Friends, Crafty Christians and Mission Bazaar meeting. We decided to combine the Circle of Friends and Crafty Christians. I have stepped down as president but will remain treasurer of the combined group. Sharon Trossbach will be heading the new group. It has been a pleasure heading the Circle of Friends for the past five years. Please support this new group. Sharon will be giving more information on this (please see back page).
~Kathy Bryden

UMCOR Sunday is March 22

We read or watch on the news and see communities overwhelmed by natural disaster. We hear about humanitarian crises arising from civil unrest and war. We know that famine and drought are caused by climate change and see in our own community signs of food insecurity. And of course, when we are also in the midst of our own suffering, it is hard to see beyond our own needs to help someone else.

It can seem like too much. How could we possibly make a difference? How can our limited resources make a dent in the seemingly never-ending need of the world? We begin to shut out the reminders of suffering. We become blind. We willfully ignore the great needs of our siblings in Christ. But the reality is that as followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to respond with extravagant grace. Just as Jesus invited the disciples into the work saying, "We must do the works of him who sent me."

Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), we can make a difference in the lives of communities and individuals whose lives have been upended by storms, wars, climate change, and displacement. Through UMCOR, we see the impact of extravagant grace through the generosity of United Methodists.

UMCOR lives out signs of Christ's extravagant grace in the world by prayerfully working with communities that are overwhelmed by natural or man-made disasters. UMCOR builds on the strengths of what is already available in a community and actively involves the people affected in recovery efforts. One of the wonderful aspects of The United Methodist Church is that we can do so much more together than we ever could do on our own – and through our connection UMCOR has been doing this for 80 years.

The special offering received on UMCOR Sunday helps support the small but impactful UMCOR staff who are specialists in disaster response and recovery. Funds also ensure adequate training for emergency response coordinators, construction volunteers, and case managers who assist victims of disasters, chain saw gangs and sheetrock installers. Because we join our church's offerings with those of United Methodist congregations around the world, UMCOR remains strong in its day-to-day operations. When needs are immediate, UMCOR can respond quickly and efficiently with signs of extravagant grace and expert assistance. Let us continue to ministry together.

*This little girl is so pretty
I had to post two pictures of her.*

CAN YOU . . .



. . . GUESS WHO?!



FIRST UNITED

**METHODIST CHURCH
of Voorheesville**

Est. 1815

Gary M. Kubitz, Lead Pastor

pastor@fumcv.org

Tuesday-Thursday, 9:30—12:30 pm

Fridays by appointment

Noel John, Associate Pastor

naemjohn2019@gmail.com

Wednesday, 4:15— 8:15 pm

Carolyn Barrett, Church Administrator

office@fumcv.org

Tuesday through Friday, 9am — noon

68 Maple Avenue, Voorheesville, NY 12186

www.fumcv.org ♦ office@fumcv.org

518-765-2895; Parsonage: 518-765-2743

March 2020 Issue

The Churchmouse



Coming Soon...

***Look for information about
Easter flowers coming soon!***

Crafty Christians & Circle of Friends

To keep you all up to date, we have been meeting to determine the fate of the two groups. As a result, we will be joining forces to combine the missions of both groups.

Starting February 24, we will be meeting the second and fourth Mondays of each month. On the first Monday of the month, we will begin at noon with a bring your own lunch. The fourth Monday we will begin at 1:00 pm. Each Monday we will begin with scriptures and prayer, then continue with fellowship in faith and our service ministries.

Currently, we are starting on a project to create tote bags, largely created from recycled fabrics. No one is obligated to participate in this, but since it is an easy project, cutting help would be appreciated. Others who sew will put the totes together. Initially these totes will be sold at Karie Jean's Closet.

Please feel free to join us at any time, all are welcome! If you have questions, feel free to ask!

~Sharon Trossbach, Crafty Friends Leader