



LENT

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I greet you in the wonderful name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

I trust that the New Year has started on a good footing for you. I can hardly believe that it was just November and December when we were busy preparing to celebrate the birthday of the Messiah and soon coming King. By the time you receive this newsletter, it would be less than three weeks before entering into the Lenten season. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (2/10/2016) and ends on Holy Saturday (3/26/2016). It is a season consisting of forty days, not including Sundays, because Sundays are considered to be always little Easters.

Lent is a time spent preparing for the joyful expectation of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today, so often the focus of Lent is on self-denial, on “giving up something,” such as coffee, meat, and the likes. Historically, Lent began as a time of fasting and preparation for those receiving instructions for baptism and later all Christians embraced it as a time of penance.

Acts of self-denial are encouraged during Lent particularly when the sacrifice connects with our Christian commitment to Christ as we meditate on his suffering and death. As we view Lent as a time to prepare to celebrate the Resurrection, it also becomes a season for evangelism and true conversion – a time for us to grow through repentance, Christian fellowship, prayer, fasting, and focusing upon our baptism covenant. Lent is not just giving up something for the sake of giving it up. It is a time when we as Christians are to be seen as signs of God’s kingdom in this world, intentionally taking upon ourselves the grace of God so that, when Easter comes, we know in the depth of our hearts what the celebration is all about.

I invite you to devote some quality time during the Lenten season for spiritual growth and reflection. This year, let us make it a time for growing in our faith, to honor our covenant commitment, and to bask in the joy of what it means to live the Christian life. May the Spirit of this Lenten season dwell in you.

Rev. Andy M. Anderson

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ALTAR GUILD

We are in need of flower donations for the altar for February 14th and 21st; also March 6th, 13th and 20th. If you wish to provide flowers in memory or honor of loved ones or for some other special reason, please contact either Pauline Filsinger at 475-6025 or the church office 475-0011. The cost of a floral arrangement is \$20.00.

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GOOD WORKS

Make sure you give a pat on the back to members of the Youth Sunday School class who volunteered at the Salvation Army Christmas Bureau at the OnCenter on December 23rd. The Bureau distributed foodstuffs and gifts to 11,000 people. It's an amazing operation. Our youth volunteers were Zoe Fortin, Ronan Fortin, Halle MacKnight, Alex MacKnight, Cate Streissguth and Will Streissguth. We were also thrilled to have with us Josh Mattice who volunteered after arriving home for the break from the University of Buffalo.

Submitted by Mike Streissguth

(There are pictures on the bulletin board in the narthex.)

By Maxine Adams in recognition of Black History Month

We, those of us known today as African- Americans, have been called coons, darkie, mulatto, Negro, colored, Sambo, tar-baby, auntie, uncle, girl, boy, blackie, and many other derogatory names. This continues until today but these attempts to diminish us as a people, to make us feel useless, and to break our spirit have failed. We remain strong.

The first Africans who arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 were initially identified as indentured servants. In 1641 the status of African workers went from indentured servants to slave.

It is usually thought that Africans were slaves when they arrived in America but the opposite is true. Free Africans were brought to America and subsequently enslaved. To make them slaves they were given slave names, not allowed to speak their native language, not allowed to play drums and not allowed to practice their own religion.

I have had to be strong in order to survive learning the history of my people. Some things caused me to dissolve into tears. An example is this quote from *Unchained Memories, Reading from the Slave Narratives*: "My job was taking care of the white children up at the Big House and I also had to feed the little Negro children. I remember quite well how those poor little children used to have to eat. They were fed in boxes and troughs under the house. They were fed corn meal mush and beans. When this was poured into their box, they would gather around it the same as we see pigs, horses and cattle gather around troughs today."
(Octavia George)

In 1865 the 13th Amendment to the Constitution was passed which prohibited slavery in the entire country. However, ending slavery has not ended racial issues in America although there has been progress. African-Americans have survived by being strong and by being lovers of freedom. We are a people of industry. We delight in the beauty of our kind and in ourselves. We have spoken



out against injustice, not only for ourselves but for others as well. The enslavement, beatings, indignities, and failures we have suffered served to make us strong and only the strong survive.

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

January brought the winter weather we knew was coming! We have been able to take the children out for some snowy fun as the temperatures have been relatively mild. Our Imagination Playground, relay races and parachute have been wonderful alternatives when we must stay indoors.

January also allowed the staff a Staff Development Day to receive training at McMahan/Ryan Child Advocacy Center. The center is a wonderful resource to the community and the staff was impressed by the array of services they offer as well as the knowledge they obtained at the workshop.

We have been busy beginning student assessments and parents have helped by working in our Quiet Room during playtime so that teachers can conduct individual assessments.

With next year's registration well underway, we still have some openings, so please spread the word for interested families to call Kathy at 475-2344. They can also visit our website at www.bellevueheightsnurseryschool.org.

The next few months will be busy with many special events. We have guests coming from the Onondaga County Sheriff's Department to teach us about bicycle and pedestrian safety. Also, our Friends from the Rosamond Gifford Zoo will be visiting with their Zoo to You program.

Hopefully the winter weather has been manageable for all and Spring isn't too far away :))

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REMINDER:

Civic Morning Musicals is celebrating its 125th anniversary this season and has invited back former Concerto/Vocal Competition Winners including **Gordon Hershberger's daughter, Amy**. Amy will be performing with Sar-Shalom Strong on piano & harpsichord and Gregory Wood on cello **in Hosmer Auditorium at the Everson Museum of Art on Sunday, February 14, 2016 at 2 pm**. Tickets \$20 at the door or at civictimorningmusicals.org. Students free with valid ID.



**5 THINGS NOT TO SAY TO SOMEONE WHO'S SUICIDAL –
AND WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD** by Tina Szymczak
(submitted by Kim Kromer Murphy)

All my life I've battled severe depression. On numerous occasions I've been suicidal. It's a horrible thing for all involved. Here are some of the most unhelpful (and helpful!) things I've been told during these times.

1. Don't tell me: "God doesn't give us more than we can handle."

First, you don't know what my belief system is. Perhaps I don't believe in God. Or maybe I do, but the pain *does* feel like more than I can handle. I'm the one dealing with it. I'm the one who has to wake up and face each day. If God dealt me this hand intentionally, it feels like he made a mistake – there are days I truly feel like I can't deal with it. When you say something like that, it makes me feel ashamed.

Say instead: "I understand you might be thinking of suicide. I will do everything in my power to get you the help you need."

And then actually do it. Make calls to a doctor or my therapist. Take control of an out-of-control situation.

2. Don't tell me: "Just think of your family. Aren't your children and spouse enough?"

I love my family with all my heart. When I'm feeling suicidal, I actually think I would be sparing them the pain that is me. Saying something like this makes me feel guilty, but not better.

Say instead: "Your family loves you no matter how you feel inside."

Talk to me about my family in general. What are the kids into? What do my husband and I enjoy doing together? Remove the guilt and focus on the positives.

3. Don't tell me: "Things will be different tomorrow."

You don't know that – don't tell me things that sound nice, but aren't necessarily true. The truth is I might feel 100 times worse tomorrow.

Say instead: "Let's take this a minute at a time."

Instead of making false promises, remind me to live just one minute or one second at a time. Tell me while you don't know what tomorrow will bring, you'll always be there. Offer to sit with me and help pass the time. Let's watch a movie or some other mind-numbing activity. Every minute I stay is a step toward recovery.

1. Don't tell me: "You're being selfish."

Wow, just wow. How is that helpful? A person who's suicidal is in insurmountable pain. If wanting someone to notice me and sit by my side while I fight my inner demons is selfish, then so be it.

Say instead: "I want to help you."

Tell me I'm not a burden to you or my friends and family. Tell me you'll be with me every step of the way and really mean it. Ask me what they need.

2. Don't tell me: "Just snap out of it."

The absolute worst thing to say *ever*. Depression is a very real medical diagnosis. Would you tell someone with cancer or diabetes to "snap out of it?" Believe me, if "snapping out of it" were a possible solution, I'd do it.

Say instead: "I know what you're going through is real."



If you're feeling suicidal, reach out to friends, family or a doctor – someone to walk on the road to recovery with you. Get help when you need it. Don't be afraid to reach out.

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UMW NEWS

During our worship service on Sunday, January 3, 2016, Gloria Brunner was presented the 2015 Special Mission Recognition Pin. As Jeanie Brown says, "Gloria keeps things rolling along nicely." She does a lot of work for the church – President of the Circle of Concern; Treasurer of Bellevue Heights' unit of the United Methodist Women; a member of Friends in Faith & Fellowship; a regular collator of our newsletter, The Signal; a member of our Bible Study group; works as "take-out lady" at our two annual Roast Beef dinners and, also, works at Brown Memorial's food pantry. Congratulations, Gloria, on receiving this well-deserved honor!

February Birthdays

Happy Birthday to you!!!



Please notify the office by phone or e-mail with additions or corrections.

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Virginia Fletcher | 17 Jason Vaughn |
| 04 Lindsay Nogash | 18 Emily Lowin |
| Marge Tyler | Scott Kroft |
| 05 James Streich | 19 Janet Garman |
| 06 Emily Mocete | Kay Yenny |
| Emily Nielsen | Michca Fortin |
| Murray Vortice | 21 Patricia Makely |
| 07 Carolyn Yucha | Richard Black |
| Jennifer Leonard | Christian Morgan |
| Heidi Kovarik | 22 Bev Martin |
| 08 James Thompson | Michael Holley |
| 11 Bruce Yenny | 23 Kirsten Martin |
| 12 Tia Merrick | Amelia Ott Egan |
| James Williams | Emily Ott Francis |
| 13 MacKenzie Phelps | Patrick Mocete |
| Lisa Woolner | Lee Ann Hill Gilbert |



14 Andrew Starkey	23 Dava Lee Schmidt
15 Charles Brown	24 Stephen Newman
16 Connie Simoneau	25 Suzanne Hamilton
Carol Karins	Ni'Zavier Evans
John Ott	26 Jason Morey
	27 Jessica Ann Hanson
	28 Cynthia Travis

City Wide Youth Group 2016

Save the following dates for some exciting activities for youth in Grades 7-12:

Schedule:

Feb. 7	Skyzone or Wonder Works after church
Feb. 14	No meeting
Feb. 21	No meeting
Feb. 28	Habitat for Humanity Bowl-a-thon 12:00 pm **
Mar. 6	Easter Cards 6 pm at church
Mar. 13	No meeting
Mar. 20	Serve meal at Brown Memorial UMC 2 pm
Mar. 27	Easter – No meeting

****Come and join the Fun! The 15th Annual Youth/Adult S.W.E.A.T. for Habitat Bowl-a-thon** will take place **at Bowl Mor Lanes in East Syracuse** on **Sunday, February 28th**, starting at **12:30 pm**. If you would like to join the BHUMC team of bowlers on this day, please see Diane Dermody for more information. This will be the 15th year that BHUMC has participated in this event. The funds collected this year will go to build tool storage sheds for Habitat houses. If you can't join us that day, any donations will graciously be accepted.

If you have any questions, please call:
Diane Dermody or Laura Mattice



Bellvue Heights UMC Signal – Feb 2016

From Brown Memorial:

To our Friends at Bellevue Heights,
Thank you so much for your generous donations to our Christmas store.
Your kindness was well received.
God bless you all.

K. Stoughtenger for
Life Skills, Brown Memorial

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From Sandy Murphy:

Thank you so much for the generous holiday gift. I am very blessed to be among all of you and am grateful for the opportunity to worship with you through music. Best wishes for a happy, healthy and musical 2016.

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From Linda Snow:

Once again, I am overwhelmed by your wonderful Christmas gift to me. I really appreciate your kindness and support throughout the year. This is just the icing on the cake!! Thank you so much.

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY:

Feb. 7 – 5th Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration of the Lord: Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Cor. 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

Feb. 10 – Ash Wednesday: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Cor. 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Feb. 14 – 1st Sunday in Lent: Deuteronomy 26:1-13; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Feb. 21 – 2nd Sunday in Lent: Genesis 15:1-12; 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35



Feb. 28 – 3rd Sunday in Lent: Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

COFFEE HOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:

February	Staff Parish
March	Christians in Action
April	Friends in Faith and Fellowship
May	Choir
June	Finance
July/August	Congregation Signups
September	Church Council
October	Youth Group
November	Worship
December	United Methodist Women
January	Trustees

USHERS FOR FEBRUARY:

Head Usher – Ray Brunner
Regular Ushers: Ted Jewett, Dottie Montgomery, Jim Montgomery

GREETER:

Dawn Daggett
much.

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SAFE SPACE FOR KIDS

During the February break (Feb. 15-19), Erwin First United Methodist Church provides a Safe Space for Kids, an all-day school vacation program providing a free place for our urban neighborhood kids who, for financial or other reasons, may not have a safe place to be. The program includes interactive games, arts and crafts, local trips, and many other exciting projects. Two meals are provided each day free of charge for children between the ages of 8 and 12. Erwin First is inviting all churches to lend a hand. Here are some ways to help: 1) money donations; 2) food donations; 3) helping out with a meal one day out of the five – breakfast and/or lunch for approximately 30 children; 4) volunteering to chaperone any field trips; 5) providing ideas for activities or field trips; 6) donation of craft items for activities. Please call Susana Senties-Nevin, Safe Space Coordinator, at 682-2085 if you wish to help.

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FREE CONCERTS

Temple Concord proudly presents the 2015-16 **Regina F. Goldenberg Cultural Series**, a monthly series of FREE concerts performed at Temple Concord, 910 Madison Street, Syracuse - open to everyone! All performances unless otherwise noted are on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm. Free parking in the Temple lot, on the street, or 1200 E. Genesee St. Medical Building lot.

February 16, 2016 – **Peter Rovit, violin, Arvilla Rovit, viola, Ida Tili Trebicka, piano** – An evening of charming duets and trios for violin, viola and piano.

March 13, 2016 (Sunday at 2 pm) – **Syracuse Pops Chorus** – The Syracuse Pops Chorus, Inc. was started by Lou Lemos twelve years ago as the Syracuse Symphony Pops Chorus. This 125 member, volunteer chorus performs concerts throughout the Central New York area, including several each year with Symphoria. Repertoire includes American Songbook, Broadway, and more!

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES



Congratulations to:

Sue and Jim Hamilton 2/10/1978

Please notify the church office, either by email or phone, of any necessary changes.

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Men's Fellowship Breakfast

The January and February meetings have been cancelled because many of our attendees are "Snowbirds" and are in Florida or some other warm place. It didn't seem fair for the speaker to have to come out in the cold at an early hour for such a sparse audience!! Next breakfast date TBA.

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Bellvue Heights UMC Signal – Feb 2016

SPAGHETTI DINNER & AUCTION

GET READY for SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2016

GET SET and

GO TO:

Spaghetti Dinner/Auction – Live/Silent
5:30 PM Preview 6:30 PM
\$6.00 Adult Starts 7:00 PM
\$3.00 (3-12)

BID ON:

Crafts, Services, Gift Baskets, Restaurant
and other Gift Certificates, Homemade Sweet
Tooth Goodies

AUCTIONEERS PRESENT

Ann Barnes at the piano

Proceeds benefit "Love Gifts."

Hope to see you there!!