



# FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TROY, NY

## FEEDING the HUNGRY in BODY and SOUL

**Spirit, Service, Community**

### VISION NEWSLETTER

**January, 2018**

#### **The Parable of The Parking Lot**

Dear friends on the journey,

How many of you remember how awful the church parking lot was not that long ago?

What had once been a few dips in the pavement had turned into the foothills of Mount Everest!

One of the greatest resources of our physical plant had turned into one of our greatest liabilities. We even had one of our staff members break a bone in her foot. Not good!

So we took a deep breath and shelled out the money (thank you, endowment!) to finally fix what was so clearly broken.

The problem was, the parking lot could not simply be re-paved.

It had to be excavated.

Our contractors removed pile after pile of dirt in order to determine why so many sink holes had appeared on the surface.

What did they find?

A multitude of air pockets created around the remains of a crumbling foundation left over from whatever previous edifice had occupied that spot.

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First United Presbyterian Church  
1915 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180

10:00am worship with nursery care available.

## PASTOR'S NOTE

And we were crumbling right along with it.

In order to repair the parking lot properly, our contractors had to completely remove the remains of the crumbling foundation, fill in the air pockets with fresh dirt, and ensure the new foundation was sufficiently sturdy before they could even begin to start thinking about laying down asphalt and striping their work with lines.

Which is where we have been, as well.

These past four years of ministry together at First United have been all about excavation, removing the crumbling foundations of previous eras, filling in the gaps, and pounding down a stable foundation upon which to build an exciting future.

It has taken a lot longer than we thought it would, the same way the excavation of the parking lot went well beyond the planned time. But our work has been necessary, just as it was for the parking lot.

The good news is that 2018 will bring our metaphorical "laying of the pavement," in the First United parallel of the parking lot story.

Our architect, Barb Nelson, will present her final report of our renovations options at the January 28<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the congregation. Upon receiving your feedback, the Building Visionaries will then develop a timeline and funding strategy to present to the session for implementing these recommendations.

My expectation is that the most urgent items – heat, accessibility, bathrooms, and kitchen – will be completed by the end of the year.

In the meantime, the session has been conducting a thorough assessment of our membership rolls, both removing long-time inactive members and encouraging long-time visitors to unite officially with the congregation.

The Branding Team, as well, has been honing in on a new series of symbols to describe our new identity visually.

By the time we say "Happy New Year 2019," my hope is that our FUPC foundation will be even stronger than that of our new parking lot, and that we will be well on our way to building upon the new foundation of our ministry together.

**With deep love and gratitude,**



# **VIBRANT WORSHIP and SPIRITUAL LIFE**

## **“Words of Wisdom” Advent, Christmastide, and Epiphany December 3, 2017 – February 4, 2018**

*Based on The Letters from Paul and Peter to the Early Church*

### **Words of Wisdom Epiphany Sunday – Communion January 7, 2018**

*Based on Matthew 2:1-12*

Canceled due to Sub-Zero Temperatures

### **The Baptismal Spirit Baptism Sunday – Renewal January 14, 2018**

*Based on Acts 19:1-7*

Time With Young People: Renewal of Baptismal Covenant  
Children's Church: Beloved  
Adult Ed: Spirituals Hymn Sing

### **The Body of God Second Sunday After the Epiphany January 21, 2018**

*Based on 1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

Time With Young People: Honoring the Body  
Children's Church: Discerning God's Call  
Adult Ed: New Member Class and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training

### **Feeding and Falling Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany January 28, 2018**

*Based on 1 Corinthians 8:1-13*

Time With Young People: Stumbling Blocks  
Children's Church: Called to Truthful Love  
Annual Meeting with lunch

## VIBRANT WORSHIP and SPIRITUAL LIFE

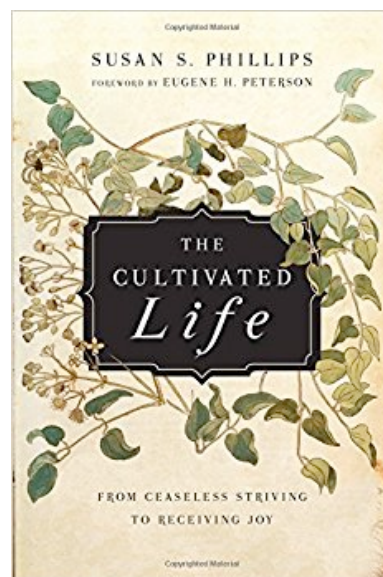
The “Soul Feast” group meets monthly to discuss

***The Cultivated Life:***  
***From Ceaseless Striving to Receiving Joy***  
**By Susan S. Phillips**

***Chapter Two: Finding and Receiving Refreshment, and***  
***Chapter Three: Listening as a Way of Receiving Cultivation***

**Monday, January 8, 7pm**  
**Pastor Gusti's Home**  
**529 Pawling Avenue**

Contact the church office  
if you would like us to order your copy.  
Monthly drop-ins are welcome.



### FUPC Shawl Ministry

The meeting on Tuesday, Jan 9, has been canceled. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 13 at 1 pm  
Everyone is Welcome to Join!!

### Mid Life Women's Midwinter Meditation

**Thursday, February 1, 7pm**  
**Pastor Gusti's home – 529 Pawling Avenue**

The second gathering of the FUPC "Midlife Women's" group will gather at Pastor Gusti's home for a midwinter meditation. "Woman" is defined as anyone who has at any time in their life identified as gender female and/or biologically female. "Midlife" is defined as well beyond "the roaring twenties" yet far from thinking about retirement.

At midwinter we pause to meditate upon the gifts this season has brought and to turn toward the promise of new life hibernating underfoot. Pastor Gusti will put together a ritual for the evening that includes yet another opportunity for one of our members to release her marriage, accept her divorce, and receive the possibility of new life emerging from the winter of her life.

Christopher will again prepare heavy appetizers for us to nibble on before and after the ritual - and then make himself scarce. Water and soda will be available as beverages. Please keep this event alcohol free out of respect for our members in recovery.

Leave as early as you need; stay as late as you like.



The MLK  
Committee  
of TAUM  
In partnership  
with  
collaborating  
agencies

## ***Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.***

Sunday, January 14, 2018 at 3:30 pm

### **Interfaith Worship Service**

Bethel Baptist Church, 2165 Fifth Avenue, Troy

**Rabbi Debora Gordon**

of Congregation Berith Sholom, Troy NY, will be preaching  
Reception to follow

Offering to benefit the Scholarship Fund will be received

Monday, January 15, 2018 at 8:00 am

### **Community Breakfast**

Franklin Terrace, 126 Campbell Avenue, Troy

**Daquetta Jones,**

Executive Director of the YWCA of the Greater Capital Region, speaking

**Tickets are \$22 (payable in advance) and \$25 (at the door)**



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## Albany Presbytery Winter Spiritual Retreat

January 29 - 30, 2018

Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, Greenwich, NY  
Lead Facilitator: Rev. Rick Spalding

**Please register no later than Friday: January 12, 2018 at:**

<https://albanypresbytery.org/events/winter-spiritual-retreat-jan18/>

or by calling the Presbytery office at (518) 273-4991

No business or education, no policies or votes (!): only attention to God and to each other. Everyone is welcome: ordination not required.

Come for refreshment; leave with deeper friendships. Christ the King Spiritual Life Center is located just south of Greenwich in Washington County.

**Cost:** (Overnight accommodations include 3 meals)

Double Occupancy Room: \$50/person

Private Room: \$90/person

Monday Commuter: \$25/person – includes dinner

Monday dinner and program only

Tuesday Commuter: \$20/person – includes breakfast

Tuesday breakfast and program only





**The Session met in Stated Meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 7pm, in the McCarty Room.**

**Items Addressed Included:**

- Reception of new member Sue Wright by letter of transfer
- Discussion of Rev. Ted Wright's work in Albany Presbytery as moderator of the Staffing Process Advisory Team
- Approval, with regret, of Louise LaPoint's resignation from session (she has moved out of town to be with her mother this winter)
- Approval, with enthusiasm, of a \$15,000 surplus budget for 2018. (The surplus will likely be used as seed money for renovations.)
- Approval of 3.5% raises for Kirby Kay Clark and Elizabeth Rowell.
- Approval of up to \$500 additional pastor mileage reimbursement for 2017 only.
- Call for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, Sunday, January 28, immediately following worship. Lunch included.
- Ongoing work of Linda O'Malley and Katy Davis to distill our identity as a congregation into a "brand" with logo, etc.
- Assigning David Hains to work with the Personnel Committee to discern a way forward with our music ministry in the fall of 2018 and beyond
- Electing Dana Parker and Peg Smith (Peg Drew, alternate) as commissioners to the February 10, 2019 Stated Meeting of Albany Presbytery.
- Approval of removing a large number of inactive members from the rolls, due to either their own request or to lack of response to an outreach letter: Catherine Adsit, Carol Bailey, Mel Borham, Harry Bungay, Richard Harding, Heather Hewitt, Alyssa Jaffarian, Jennifer Jaffarian, Phyllis Lewandowski, Kate McGuire, Dylan O'Connor, Jacob O'Connor, Jeff Pfiester, Kelly Pfiester, Cara Rogers, Miriam Russell, Darton Strayor, Deborah Strayor, Nancy VenDerhoof, Jeremy Warden, Mary Ann Willbrant

**The Session will meet again in Stated Meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 7pm in the McCarty Room. Visitors are welcome and encouraged.**



## Albany Presbytery Constructive Workshop

January 20, 2018 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Facilitated by the Rev. Laurie Ferguson, PhD

*Your participation is vital to us all!*

**New Covenant Church  
916 Western Avenue  
Albany, NY 12203**

**January 20, 2018  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Lunch: \$8.00/person**

The focus of this event will be an in-depth conversation about questions and concerns that are facing the Presbytery. Facilitating this conversation will be the [Rev. Laurie Ferguson PhD](#).

We will take a good look at the recent assessment of positive aspects in our presbytery life — and also discuss some of the more challenging observations. Our Staffing Process Advisory Team (SPAT) hopes that honest and fruitful conversation will help to clear up misconceptions, clarify certain issues, and lay groundwork for movement into the future God intends.

Dr. Ferguson is well-versed in church systems and dynamics. She comes to us highly recommended.

Register at <https://albanypresbytery.org/events/albany-presbytery-workshop-012018/> or call the presbytery office at (518) 273-4991



### *January Birthdays*

1 Hope Zewou  
3 Elaine Savaria  
8 Bonnie Kerr  
13 Becki Linzner  
21 Debbie Brown  
22 Joan Rogers  
24 Florie Parmelee  
25 Rebecca Rector  
27 Rachel Dotson  
29 Joey Warman



## PASSIONATE MISSION AND ADVOCACY

### Environmental Theme Program

#### **Tips for the Month**



Turn off your dishwasher's heat dry setting. Open the door as soon as you can after it finishes running and prop it enough to let the dishes air dry.

Buy energy efficient light bulbs.

When getting carry out meals let the restaurant know whether or not you need flatware ("silverware")

Keep liners in your trash cans until they are completely full, remembering that it may not be full when it looks so. Carefully push the trash down to see how much space is taken up by air. Then continue to add trash and "compress" until the bag is completely full

### Joseph's House Inn From the Cold

The next Joseph's House "Inn From the Cold" (church-based additional winter indoor shelter for selected homeless men) will begin **Thursday, February 1**. As you know, FUPC provides the first week of evening snacks for this program – this will be the third session for this winter season.

As we have done in past years, the Social Justice Team (formerly Mission Committee) is now soliciting donations of snacks from the congregation. The following is a list of suggested items - but we happily accept others! There is a box in the back of the sanctuary labeled "Inn From The Cold" – nonperishable\* items can be placed there.

We need your donation by or on **Sunday, January 28**, please!

Cheese and crackers	Fresh fruit*
Mayonnaise/mustard	"Snack cups" of fruit
Popcorn/flavored chips	Nuts/dried fruit packets
Cold cuts/sliced cheese*	Soda/ice tea/cider*
Peanut butter/jelly/pickles	Granola/breakfast bars
Other savory/salty snacks	Salsa/chips
Loaves of sandwich bread	Cash is also always welcome!

Also, please watch the expiration dates of your items – we should not donate past dated food.

Thank you for helping the Joseph House folks!

\*Perishable items – due to our small refrigerator this year, please coordinate your donation with Lois Jensen (ph: 518-274-3578) or consider donating cash so items can be purchased.

## Albany Presbytery Immigration Network

### Human Trafficking Awareness

Thursday, January 11,

7:00pm – 8:30pm

**First Presbyterian Church of Ballston Spa**

**22 West High Street**

John Kelly, Law Enforcement Coordinator for Saratoga Center for the Family will offer a presentation. The entire community, Ballston Spa area congregations and Albany Presbytery congregations are encouraged to attend.

Please contact Pastor Gusti if you would like a ride to this event.

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**The Troy Sanctuary Movement** will meet again **on January 18th, 6pm at Oakwood Community Center**. Action items include pushing against the Rensselaer County Sheriff's move to implement the 287(g) program and to strategize around sanctuary policies at the city level.

The 287(g) program is a partnership between ICE and local law enforcement created by 1996 immigration reforms. ... Under these agreements local law enforcement agencies enter into an agreement that they will enforce federal immigration laws and receive four weeks of training from immigration officials.

There are two types of programs: task force and jail models. The task force models permits officers to enforce immigration laws while on the ground performing regular duties and the jail house model permits enforcement of immigration laws once an individual is brought into jail for booking.

The program operates to deputize the local officers to do a myriad of tasks typically performed by immigration officials including: access to ICE databases, ability to issue detainers, make arrests (in some cases) based on violations of immigration laws, and complete some immigration forms. Under the task force model, officers have more latitude and many criticize the programs as lacking in oversight by federal agencies.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has denounced both of the 287 (g) programs as creating a dangerous environment for families and entire communities because they lead to racial profiling as local law enforcement officers enforce immigration laws.

# CALENDAR

**Monday, January 1**  
New Years Day~ Office Closed

**Tuesday, January 2**

**Wednesday, January 3**  
No Teach the Preacher

**Thursday, January 4**

**Friday, January 5**

**Saturday, January 6**

**Sunday, January 7**  
Worship canceled due to sub-zero temperatures

**Monday, January 8**  
7:00 p.m. Soul Feast~ McCarty RM

**Tuesday, January 9**  
3:00 PM Worship Team – McCarty RM

**Wednesday, January 10**  
4:00 p.m. Teach the Preacher~ McCarty RM

**Thursday, January 11**  
2:00 PM Finance Team – Church Office  
7:00 PM Immigration Network – Ballston Spa

**Friday, January 12**  
Office Closed~  
Kirby Kay's Vacation (11-19)

**Saturday, January 13**

**Sunday, January 14**  
10:00 a.m. Worship  
10:00 a.m. Nursery Care  
11:15 a.m. Fellowship  
11:30 a.m. Spirituals Sing Along  
3:00 p.m. MLK Service – Bethel Baptist

**Monday, January 15**  
Office Closed  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
8:00 a.m. MLK Breakfast – Franklin Terrace

**Tuesday, January 16**

**Wednesday, January 17**  
Office Closed  
4:00 p.m. Teach the Preacher~ McCarty RM

**Thursday, January 18**  
4:30 p.m. Social Justice Team – Adult Ed Space  
7:00 p.m. Albany Presbytery Immigration Network

**Friday, January 19**  
Office Closed

**Saturday, January 20**  
10:00 AM Albany Presbytery Constructive Workshop

**Sunday, January 21**  
10:00 a.m. Worship  
10:00 a.m. Nursery Care  
11:15 a.m. Extended Fellowship

**Monday, January 22**  
Pastor Gusti at NY Immigration Conference

**Tuesday, January 23**  
Pastor Gusti at New York Immigration Conference  
7:00 p.m. Session Meeting – McCarty Room

**Wednesday, January 24**  
4:00 p.m. Teach the Preacher~ McCarty RM  
7:00 PM Branding Team Meeting – McCarty Room

**Thursday, January 25**

**Friday, January 26**

**Saturday, January 27**

**Sunday, January 28**  
10:00 a.m. Worship  
10:00 a.m. Nursery Care  
11:15 a.m. Extended Fellowship

**Monday, January 29**  
4:00 PM Albany Presbytery Retreat

**Tuesday, January 30**  
Albany Presbytery Retreat

**Wednesday, January 31**  
4:00 p.m. Teach the Preacher~ McCarty RM

**Please note new office hours for Kirby Kay Clark, Administrative Assistant:**

**Monday, Wednesday, and Friday**

**9am – 1pm**