

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Pastoral Ponderings



Here is my confession: I went to the Medieval Feast out of duty. I wasn't sure what to expect. I wasn't sure I would like it. I didn't know what would be required of me and if I would meet those expectations. I went because it was associated with my church. If it had been somewhere else and I had been invited, I probably would have found some excuse not to go. Here is the rest of my confession: It was much more fun than I anticipated. I plan to go next year too.

There are some people who think of church the way I thought of the Medieval Feast. They don't know what to expect. They don't know what will be expected of them. They don't think they will like it. Sometimes, some of those folks wind up in church because someone pressures them into going. They attend out of a sense of duty. I wonder, if they come to Emmanuel, what do they think afterwards? I hope they think what I thought "I'm glad I did that." "Worship is more fun that I anticipated." "I plan to go back again."

The things that helped me engage in the Medieval Feasts are the same sorts of things that help people engage in worship. Here's what I noticed:

- People had prepared to conduct the event in specific ways. The teamwork of everyone doing his/her own task combined to make the entire event a success. This is analogous to the careful preparation done by the lay leaders, the choir, the preacher and others who lead worship.
- People were excited to be there and entered into the spirit of the event with gusto. Shouts of "Huzzah" were heard. Maybe we could encourage a few more "Huzzahs" or "Amens" in worship.
- Gifts of music and dance and storytelling were offered and accepted graciously. Our worship is richer when we share our gifts.

As we enter into the season of Eastertide, we celebrate new life and resurrection. May our worship reflect that newness of life and energy and purpose. Let us welcome all who find their way to us and pray that they have more fun than they anticipated!

Blessings,
Kathy

Medieval Feast... March 9, 2013



At our Medieval Feast on March 9, one of our guests asked Pastor Kathy, “Do Baptists have a tradition of feasting during Lent? Actually our congregation, to my knowledge, has neither a tradition of feasting nor a tradition of fasting during Lent. We are more into introspection and using solemn times to contemplate and try to discern God’s will for our lives.

So as a Christian church, why would we put on a Medieval Feast. What does one have to do with the other? Not much, really, except that the givers of the original medieval feasts were Christians.

Actually it has more to do with our building, our wonderful Gothic building with its square tower and its huge sanctuary beautifully paneled in American chestnut.

Completed in 1871, it is one of Albany's architectural and historic treasures. Like many medieval castles and manor houses, it is built of stone. And like them, it has suffered the ravages of time. We are faced with repairing cracks in the walls, shoring up the foundation, and patching leaks in the roof. Not wanting our church to suffer the fate of other churches in the area, our Corporate Management Commission wants to make the repairs quickly.

More than our own sacred space is involved as well. Our building houses the offices of the FOCUS Churches of Albany and the Interfaith Food Pantry it runs. Many hungry people find nourishment here. Our building also is home to the Hunger Action Network of New York State and the New York StateWide Senior Action Council. Both organizations work for a more just society by addressing systemic issues of hunger and poverty.

Not having the requisite funds in hand, we decided to hold a fundraiser. We realized that with the right banners and flags, our sanctuary could be transformed into the great hall of a medieval manor. Then we added our Baptist love of good food and *Voila!*—or perhaps *Gadzooks!*—we hit upon holding a Medieval Feast.

At the Feast, all the guests were lords and ladies. The food, made from medieval recipes, was served with ceremony and flourish. Musicians, singers, storytellers, and tarot card readings entertained the guests. Dances and other surprises, including the Town Criers voluminous store of advertisements for medieval necessities rounded out an evening of merriment.

It was fun to pretend to be a lord or a lady, but I think our understanding of Christianity has evolved to the point where we realize that a society in which a few people are at the top and lots of people are at the bottom is just the opposite of the kind of society Jesus called for. The customs we reenacted reminded me of how far we have come toward a more just society—or not.



Lords and ladies dined in splendor at a medieval feast. The meal was served on trenchers, slabs of bread allowed to harden. Guests of the highest status sat closest to the Lord and Lady. They were given trenchers cut from the top of the loaf and thus became known as the “upper crust.”

Continued...

Today when we celebrate the Lord's Supper or have a fellowship meal, we do not sit according to rank or status. We are all children of God and therefore all brothers and sisters. No one is worth more than another.

At the end of a medieval feast, guests could eat their trenchers, now soaked with the juices of the meal. Often, however, the trenchers were given to the poor who waited outside the gates hoping for just such leftovers.

Today the leftovers of our meals are more likely to go to our pets, the compost pile, or the dump. But we still have the poor who look to us to relieve their hunger. At Emmanuel, we do that by helping run the FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry. Hungry people receive fresh, wholesome food and enough for several days. But the fact that we have 375 families a month who turn to us because they are hungry means that we are still far from the just and equitable society Jesus envisioned.

Our building is an important resource for us as we try to live the kind of Christian life Jesus modeled for us. It is an important resource for our community as well. So we took a night to play at being lords and ladies. And we will use the money raised to preserve our building so that we can continue to serve our members and our neighbors with the hospitality and concern for their welfare that Jesus proclaimed as one of the great commandments.

And this is just the beginning. We will need many more pledges, gifts, and fundraisers before we are finished with our extensive repairs. But if we have as much fun in the process as we did at the Feast, it will be a joyful time for us.

Wæs hæil! (To your health!) -- Edith Leet



Lords and Ladies...

Lord and Ladies gathered in the Great Hall at Emmanuel on March 9 for an evening of great food and much storytelling, singing, dancing, and revelry. Our own Lord Jim and Lady Kathy appeared beautifully attired.

Many volunteers from Emmanuel worked feverishly on Friday and Saturday to transform our sanctuary into the Great Hall. Cooks chopped, sautéed, stirred, boiled, baked, sliced, seasoned, mixed, and otherwise created a sumptuous meal.

All of this was an effort to raise funds for the stabilization of Emmanuel's building through Room for Grace. A great time was had by all.

Now that the bills have been paid, we can deposit \$2790 into Room for Grace. More than half of this amount came from outside sources. Sponsors from Emmanuel allowed us to offer reduced tickets for many. Many neighbors purchased tickets, bought ads in the program, and contributed as sponsors. This was a major undertaking for Emmanuel. It is a fun event that we hope to repeat next year, so keep a lookout for announcements in 2014.



The Feast Planning Committee (Jean Burton; Brian Hughes; Becca Leet; Edith Leet, chair; Amy Palmer; and Jim Wilkerson) is grateful for the many efforts of our faithful volunteers and sponsors. We couldn't have done it without you! (EL)

Church Life Cycle

Save the date of April 21 for an important conversation about Emmanuel's sense of identity, mission and vitality. We are planning three separate, but related conversations for this spring. Each one will have its own focus. This first one will start with a presentation of a church's life cycle. We will discuss the stages of life common to all churches and the factors that affect a church's health and longevity. In light of this life cycle model, we will discuss what stage of life Emmanuel might be enjoying and how to sustain our vitality. These conversations will influence decisions about how to focus our mission and set priorities. **Your voice is important. Please plan to attend.** We will start with a potluck dinner at 5:30 in fellowship hall. The event will end no later than 7:30. If child-care is desired, please inform the church office by Wednesday, April 17. If you need transportation, please inform Pastor Kathy.



“Help or Hindrance”

Faith Community Response to Domestic Violence

Saturday, April 13

at Emmanuel Baptist Church

Registration: 9:30 a.m.

Program: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

This free half day conference is an opportunity for faith leaders in the Capital Region to discuss how to improve their faith community's response to domestic violence. It is an event dedicated to the memory of Tonette Thomas, murdered on November 26, about a mile from the site of this workshop.

Contact Karen.Ziegler@albanycounty.com for more information or registration

Sponsored by:

Healing Hearts Ministry; Emmanuel Baptist Church; Westminster Presbyterian Church; African American Cultural Center of Capital Region, Inc.; Albany County Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (ACCADA), Albany Presbytery, AVillage, The Capital Area Council of Churches, Capital Region Theological Center, Equinox Domestic Violence Services, and FOCUS

(as of March 8, 2013)



Tools for Caregivers Day – Resources You Can Use When a Senior Relies On You

April 13, 2013

8 a.m. -- Noon

St. Sophia's Church, 440 Whitehall Rd. Albany, NY,

Registration begins: March, 2013

Workshops include:

Making everyday routines easier when your loved one has dementia

Coping with caregiver stress; Preparing for the Medicaid application process;

How to qualify for a Veteran's pension in an assisted living facility or other setting;

Tackling difficult care giving conversations; Hospice Palliative care and the caregiver: how they work together to help your loved one

From Service to Others...



Dinner Planned for Shelter

On April 14, Emmanuel will provide a meal for guests of the Interfaith Shelter. If you are willing to prepare a chicken casserole or salad, please let Karen Kendall know. Guests are always sincerely grateful for the meals we provide.

Emmanuel Focuses on Hunger Issues

At a recent Faith and Hunger Network event, several of us heard a speaker from the Eastern Field Office of Bread for the World. For those of you who are not familiar with this national organization, their mission is as follows:

“Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.”

Each year Bread for the World encourages faith communities throughout the country to participate in an “Offering of Letters” by writing personal correspondence to Congress, sending a powerful message to our political leaders and helping us to move closer to ending hunger. This year’s Offering of Letters campaign is called “A Place at the Table.” Here at Emmanuel we are planning a special service on April 21, focused on hunger issues and the Biblical basis for advocacy to end hunger. We will be seated at tables, and during the service there will be an opportunity for all to write letters to representatives in Congress and sign a petition addressed to the President. Background information, sample letters, writing supplies and addresses will be provided.

At Emmanuel we are well aware of the needs in our immediate community from our involvement in FOCUS. On a national level, more than one in seven Americans – including nearly one in four children – live below the poverty line (\$22,811 for a family of four). Since 2006, food banks have seen a nearly 50 percent increase in clients seeking emergency food assistance.

More information about specific issues and programs will be shared prior to the 21st. We also encourage you to attend a showing of the film “A Place at the Table” (see below). If you want to read more about Bread for the World, visit their website www.bread.org (NH)



How is it possible that people in this country continue to go hungry, despite our abundance of food?

A Place at the Table, a new eye-opening documentary, answers that question through the lives of three people. Barbie, a young Philadelphia mother, fights to make ends meet and break the cycle of poverty. Rosie, an imaginative fifth-grader, tries to distract her mind from hunger pangs as she learns and grows in rural Colorado. And Tremonica, a sunny Mississippi second-grader, struggles with health problems caused by the poor nutritional value of the food that her mother can afford. Their stories reveal the depth of the hunger crisis in America and the factors that drive it.

View this important film at the Spectrum 8 Theatre on April 10 at 6:30 p.m. or at The Linda WAMC's Performing Arts Studio on April 18 at 7 p.m.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C.
“Food Justice for a Healthy World”
Friday, April 5 – Monday, April 8



In a world that produces enough food for everyone, EAD will explore the injustices in global food systems that leave on billion people hungry. At God’s Table, all are invited and fed, and the poorest in our midst are given a special place.

Inspiring speakers will reflect on the biblical image of God’s great banquet table and offer a faith-based vision for fair and humane food policies and practices, all culminating with Monday’s Lobby Day on Capitol Hill. April 5-8 will be a time to raise faith voices in support of creating more just and sustainable food systems. Scholarships are available! Contact the FOCUS office for more information: 443-0460.



CROP Walk Coming

Karen Green is Emmanuel’s recruiter for this year’s CROP Walk, which will be held on Sunday, May 6. If you would like to participate as a walker, you may get your registration materials from her.

Capital Region “Canstruction” at the New York State Museum

March 28-April 10

9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

April 11, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

4th Floor of the Museum – Free

Teams of architects, engineers, contractors and students will come together to create whimsical and innovative structures using only canned goods. At the close of the exhibition, every can will be donated to the Food Pantries for the Capital District. Visitors are invited to bring in canned goods to the exhibition and use them as votes to help their favorite structure win the Community Choice Award. A group from Emmanuel is going to attend following worship on **April 7**. We’ll eat together so please bring a bag lunch; beverages will be provided.

FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry Part of 2013 *Feinstein Challenge*

FOCUS will receive a percentage of \$1 Million that philanthropist Alan Shawn Feinstein contributes to organizations nationwide to alleviate hunger. **Now to April 30, all donations, contributions, cash and food items brought into the pantry will count toward the challenge.** Each item donated will count as \$1.00. Please spread the word to your fellow parishioners and neighbors! If you are planning on making a contribution to FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry, please do so before April 30.

Pancake Breakfast a Sweet Success: \$2001 raised! Thanks to All.

From Corporate Management...

A Strategy to Begin Sanctuary Stabilization

Emmanuel is blessed with a strong yet graceful masonry architecture for our church building. We are a dynamic church and congregation, yet our church building reflects a heritage created from many energetic and dedicated Baptists. Conceived during the Second Great Awakening of the 1800s, Emmanuel's church structure became a reality after the Civil War, before the era of electricity. Built of Onondaga limestone, Emmanuel's church was described on the 50th anniversary its building as, "a delight to the eye, and an inspiration to the heart, as well as a convenience and help to its activities. Its walls have been salvation and its gates a perpetual praise. Long may it be a fountain of blessing to this people and to their children after them . . ." **

We are those children. Our congregation of energetic and dedicated Baptists has changed and matured in many ways since 1871. To continue that Baptist priesthood of believers, we should, "come as living stones, and let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple, where you will serve as holy priests to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ." ***

Emmanuel's Corporate Management is seeking a strategy to address long-neglected exterior repairs. At January's Annual Meeting, a graphic presentation highlighted many areas of instability. The link here: emmanuel-albany-exteriors.blogspot.com provides some graphics from the 1/20/2013 meeting.

For the next decade, CM seeks to make an annual goal of \$30,000 available for sanctuary stabilization. In past years, we have made great progress identifying exterior needs. Recent interior repairs have made Emmanuel a much more worshipful and comfortable location in Albany. These include repairs to the boiler, the Johnson Organ, electrical and fire systems. Estimated exterior needs, defined by our architect, will exceed \$600,000 overall.

Funding is problematic for our church; many, many needs call for help. For Emmanuel's sanctuary structure, no one single source of financing for these repairs will be adequate for this very large task. Fund raising, pledges and contributions will be integrated with governmental and foundation grant applications. In certain years, withdrawing from endowment will be necessary.

Corporate Management is proposing the following resolution for the Sunday, April 14th Quarterly Congregational meeting. Please come and share your thoughts.

Resolved, that, in the coming decade, Emmanuel Baptist Church will expend at least \$300,000 on the exterior Emmanuel buildings by allocating at least \$30,000 annually for sanctuary stabilization.

Future goals seek to use these annual commitments to continue our substantial church repairs. Resources for Emmanuel's structural repairs may be more plentiful in some years. Withdrawing from endowment will be necessary in other years. Multiple years of planned expenditure may occur in a few months. But at a minimum, over a decade of time, the goal of \$300,000 is sought to be available to continue this process.

Discussion at the Quarterly Congregational meeting will occur following the service on Sunday, April 14th. Please come and share your thoughts.

Thomas Lahut,
for Corporate Management

** Blabey, Margaret & Robert (1986). Emmanuel Baptist Church: 1834-1959. In A. Roberts & M. Cockrell (Eds.); *Historic Albany: Its Churches and Synagogues* (pp.180-184). Albany, NY: Library Communication Services.

***1 Peter 2:5 (Good News Bible)

News from Caring & Fellowship...

Circle Dinners are Scheduled

Circle dinners are being hosted to encourage fellowship and getting to know one another better. Sign up sheets are available in Fellowship Hall. The host/hostess will coordinate the potluck meal, provide directions, and determine how many folk can fit around their table. If you need assistance with transportation, that will be arranged. At present we are looking to fill the tables at Julie Shaw's home on Friday evening, April 12th and Tom and Barbara's home on Sunday, April 21st, midday. Watch for future dates and hosts yet to be determined. (BH)



Baked Goods Requested for Cabaret

The choir will be presenting an evening Cabaret on Saturday, April 20th at 7:30 pm at church. Anyone who is willing to provide some bite sized baked goods for the intermission refreshments should contact a member of Caring and Fellowship commission. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. (BH)

Come, Join the Party at Emmanuel Baptist



Emmanuel Baptist Church has so many activities – did you know that Zumba® Dance Fitness is one of them? Since 1987, dance fitness has been a part of Emmanuel Baptist and the surrounding community. For over a quarter of a century now, on Monday and Wednesday evenings, a dedicated group of aerobic dancers have gotten together to dance and exercise their bodies and minds for an hour of fitness and fun. It is an hour well spent and one that you may want to consider attending as a member of the Emmanuel Baptist Community.

Exercise can be fun! So, are you ready to party yourself into shape? That's exactly what the Zumba® program is all about. It's an exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, Latin-inspired, calorie-burning dance fitness-party™ that's moving millions of people toward joy and health. Zumba Fitness® is the only dance-fitness program that blends red-hot international music and contagious steps to form a "fitness-party" that is downright addictive. When participants see a Zumba class in action, they can't wait to give it a try. Zumba classes feature rhythms set to high-energy Latin and international beats. Before participants know it, they're getting fit and their energy levels are soaring! There's no other fitness class like a Zumba Fitness-Party! The Zumba "party" started at Emmanuel Baptist in 2009, and we'd like to invite you to "Join the party!"


Instructors for Zumba are trained to teach classes through the Zumba® Academy. Mary, the instructor at Emmanuel Baptist is licensed to teach Zumba Fitness, Zumba Gold, and Zumba Sentao and is member of the Zumba® Instructor Network (ZIN™). She has been aerobic dancing since 1991 and has been a certified fitness instructor since 1997. She also has experience with ballroom and swing dancing, and is a local member of two dance organizations.

The Spring session of Zumba Fitness will begin April 1 and April 3 and will run for 11 weeks. Please consider joining us on Monday and/or Wednesday evenings for an hour of fitness, fun, dance, and exercise in a party atmosphere – do it to "spring" into shape and to "shape up" your spirit. We've been meeting here for 25 years and are always looking for new faces and friends. Please consider joining the party this spring. For more information, please call Mary at 674-2131. (MS)

Attention, Sunday School Teachers!

End of the year meeting for Sunday School teachers will be held on Tuesday, April 23 at 6:00. If you taught or assisted in the CAT, preschool, primary, junior or youth classes, please come ready to discuss what went well for you, what improvements you would like to see, and what the Christian Growth Commission can do to help you. We will meet at Beth Malone's house. We will provide childcare and a meal. Please RSVP by April 9 to Jim Wilkerson at jimwilkerson65@gmail.com or 506-7646.

"Come to the Cabaret"
Sunday, April 20
 7:30 p.m.
 Emmanuel Singers
 Directed by Michael Clement
Admission free/Donations appreciated



Remember the Food Pantry

deodorant



Deadline for the May issue of the MOSAIC is April 18.

Mark Your Calendar...

April 9 ~ Coordinating Council
5:30; Lahut

14 ~ Diaconate & Lunch
Congregational/Corporate Meeting

20 ~ Cabaret

26-28 ~ ABC/NYS Women's Conference

28 ~ "Rigoletto"

Work Day Scheduled

Saturday, April 20

9 a.m. to Noon

Lunch will be provided.



"Dear Gail and All Members of and Friends of Emmanuel Baptist Refreshments Committee!

The reception was just exquisite for the concert on March 10th, "Women of the Bible". I cannot thank you enough for the time, effort and baking that went into the set up of such a wonderful feast. My beautiful rose and your warm hospitality were greatly appreciated!! Thank you so much for having me to your church! It was a joy to sing there!

Money collected went to Monday Musical Club of Albany's Helen Henshaw Memorial Scholarship Fund – so that we can encourage young musicians and singers to continue the study of music.

Thanks again so much!

*Sincerely,
 Rose Hargrave
 Monday Musical Club, President
 and Michael's Friend"*

Happy Birthday

- Laura Folos
- Anthony Malone
- Geoffrey Bray
- Andrew Malone
- Matthew Normile
- Chris LaBarge
- Ian Leet
- Tenosha Ford
- Hannah Scheu
- Isaac Folos
- Alyce Malone
- Greg Folos
- Jonathan Bray
- Kristen Stroebel
- Karen Green



- 1st
- 5th
- 6th
- 6th
- 8th
- 11th
- 13th
- 16th
- 18th
- 19th
- 21st
- 21st
- 23rd
- 23rd
- 27th

If your birthday is not published in our monthly listing, please notify Dorothy at 465-5161.

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