

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
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Pastoral Ponderings

As part of our monthly healing ritual, participants in worship on December 21 were given the opportunity to write short prayers or to name songs which summed up their faith, akin to Mary's use of the Magnificat. Nine people chose to name songs, which included *Because He Lives, His Eye is on the Sparrow*, and *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*. Two people listed *Be Thou My Vision*. One person recorded the lyrics "Mortals join the mighty chorus, which the morning stars began" which is part of the hymn *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*. And three people chose *Joy to the World*.

Isaac Watts wrote the lyrics to *Joy to the World*, but it was not intended as a Christmas hymn. Watts began writing hymns at age 15. *Joy to the World* is Watt's adaptation of the last part of Psalm 98 which says "Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity."

For many years, only Psalms were sung throughout the Presbyterian Churches. The first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States convened at the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in May of 1789. The Rev. Adam Rankin rode horseback from his Kentucky parish to the seat of the Assembly to plead with his fellow Presbyterians, to reject the use of Watts hymns. He cautioned the Assembly Commissioners "to refuse to allow the great and pernicious error of adoption the use of Watt's hymns in public worship." In the long term, Rev. Rankin's arguments were not persuasive. Today *Joy to the World* may be the most popular hymn in the country. It was published in over 1300 hymnals in North America before 1979, according to the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology*.

Psalm 98 and/or *Joy to the World* is appropriate for any season of the year, perhaps none more fitting than the beginning of a new year. Henri Nouwen once wrote "Joy is essential to spiritual life. Whatever we may think or say about God, when we are not joyful, our thoughts and words cannot bear fruit. Jesus reveals to us God's love so that his joy may become ours and that our joy may become complete. Joy is the experience of knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that nothing — sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death — can take that love away. . . .Joy does not simply happen to us."

We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day. It is a choice based on the knowledge that we belong to God and have found in God our refuge and our safety and that nothing, not even death, can take God away from us." (from *Here and Now: Living in the Spirit*, 1994)

Sisters and brothers, as we greet the new year with all the wonder and sorrow that it may hold, let us choose joy.

Blessings,
Kathy

Advent 2014

Emmanuel's observance of Advent was brought to you by the 2014 Advent Committee: Andrea Carver, Karen Kendall, Liselle LaFrance, Amy Palmer, Frank Scheu, and Jim Wilkerson. If you particularly appreciated an event or idea, please share your gratitude with them. If you have ideas for themes or activities to include in Advent 2015, please share them with Pastor Kathy now, while they are fresh in your mind. Special thanks go to Liselle LaFrance for the lectionary bookmarks, to Andrea Carver and Amy Palmer for the blue Advent banner and to Judy Henningson for the new white Christmas banners.



Between Advent and Lent, is a season called Epiphany. We don't have an Epiphany Committee, but Andrea and Frank are doing extra duty as Advent Committee members. They are organizing a church outing to an Albany Devils Hockey game on **February 15**, the last Sunday before Lent begins. Watch your bulletins for announcements about how to purchase tickets.

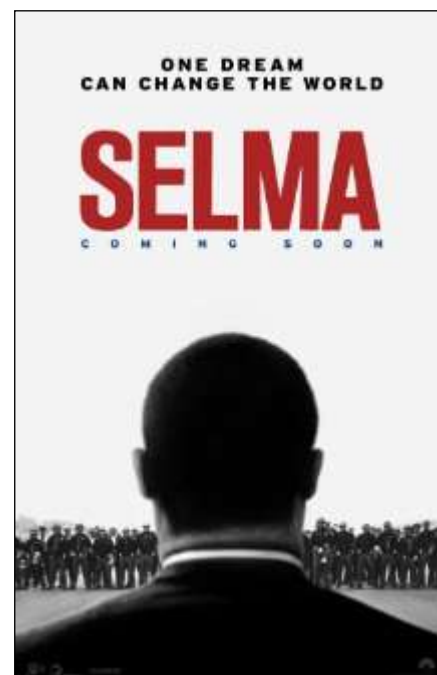


The Rev. Dr. Ray Schooler, Director of Development for International Ministries, will be our guest on January 24 and 25. On Saturday, we will host an informal coffee and dessert discussion about International Ministries, its past history and future directions. Bring a dessert to share and join us on January 24, at 7:00 p.m. at Emmanuel.

Rev. Schooler will preach in morning worship on Sunday, January 25. Rev. Ray Schooler was born and raised in Texas, but ministry has provided opportunities to live in several different places. He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, BA; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, M.Div; and Trinity Theological Seminary, D.Min. He has served in local church ministry in several capacities. Ray served on the American Baptist Churches, General Board and also as President of the Board of

International Ministries (IM). It was in this role with IM that he discovered a passion for Global Missions and presently serves as Director of Development with IM. He counts it a real privilege and honor to serve the Lord on behalf of all involved in Global Missions. He and his wife (Gail) live in Buffalo, NY and have five adult sons.

In December, we began to have conversation about how Emmanuel might respond to systemic racism in our culture, particularly in our justice system. We are continuing to talk about this – with each other and with potential action partners in Albany. This month, the motion picture *Selma* will be released. It tells the story of the civil rights movement with a focus on Dr. King and the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in 1965. Film critic James Rocchi says “Selma is one of the best American films of the year - and indeed perhaps the best - precisely because it does not simply show what Dr. King did for America in his day; it also wonders explicitly what we have left undone for America in ours.” We hope to organize a Saturday afternoon at the movies for all interested Emmanuelites with a gathering afterwards to discuss Rocchi's question about the anti-racism work that has been left undone. Watch ebc-announce and weekly bulletins for more information as it becomes available.



Ways to Connect in 2015

EBC-Announce is our church listserv. We use it to share prayer requests and updates, reminders about upcoming events, and news from our denomination or ecumenical partners. Subscribers get e-mail messages delivered to your inbox. Some weeks there are no messages. Some weeks, there might be as many as 15. It will not overwhelm your inbox. If you are not subscribed and want to be, send a e-mail request to Dorothy at emmanuelalbany@juno.com.

Emmanuel's Facebook page has followers from across the United States and 7 other countries. They include people who are currently active, former members, friends of friends, and people we've never met before. Our Black Lives Matter photo was seen by over 380 people. If you are a Facebook user, you can find us at <https://www.facebook.com/EmmanuelBaptistChurchAlbany>. Like our page and comment on our postings to help increase our visibility.



Emmanuel also has a Twitter account. We only have 12 followers so far, but you can help bring that number up! Follow us using: @EmmanuelAlbany

Catch the Vision Dinner, Sunday, January 25

The Menu

Roast Pork with Gravy

Vegetables

Corn pudding

Brownie Sundaes

The mission team members are providing this meal as a fund raising event to support our February trip to Bluefields, Nicaragua. We need to raise \$3000 to purchase essential medications. We are requesting a minimum donation of \$10 for this meal, but are hoping you will be able to give even more. Please sign up at church or call the office to indicate your attendance.

Catch the Vision Dinner is our annual meeting for 2015. We will conduct the necessary business of voting on the slate presented by the Nominating Committee and a few other agenda items, but primarily this will be a celebration of our life together in 2014 and an anticipation of what God might be doing with us in 2015. This is NOT your typical annual meeting. Expect a new format, perhaps even an interactive game-show style meeting. You don't want to miss it!



Annual FOCUS Worship Service

Save the date – February 1, 2015. On that Sunday, Emmanuel will join other FOCUS congregations for our annual worship service at First Church in Albany, 110 North Pearl Street. Our guest preacher will be The Rev. Dr. Paula Gravelle, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches. Dr. Gravelle has served in active ministry for 29 years. Prior to her work with the Council of Churches, she was Director of Pastoral Care at Ellis Hospital in Schenectady. She is an Empire State College graduate with a B.S. in Community and Human Services earned at the Northeast Center. She was born and raised in Niagara Falls and moved to the Capital Region in the 1970s. She also holds a master's of divinity from Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, and a doctorate of ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington. She lives in Latham.

From Service to Others...



Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering to be Received

Following God's call does not come without certain sacrifices. Retired ministers, missionaries and their widowed spouses often have limited options for adequately planning for the future. Medical problems, moves or the death of a spouse can also cause these leaders to find themselves far from the church family that once supported them.

RMMO provides financial support for the retired ministers, missionaries and widowed spouses who have helped build our churches. The assistance provided by RMMO restores that lifeline and ongoing connection to the ABC family. Like anyone else, retired ministers and missionaries experience anxiety and worry when unforeseen expenses arise. RMMO exists to alleviate the stress and hardship of unexpected expenses.

RMMO recipients have used their funds to:

- Pay for medical expenses not typically covered by Medicare; expenses that include hearing aids, dental services and vision care
- Pay for emergency medical procedures for themselves and their families
- Purchase prescription medication not covered under health insurance
- Make emergency home repairs.

We will receive this offering on January 18 and 25. Envelopes will be provided for your convenience.

Dinner to be Delivered

On January 16, Emmanuel will provide a meal for guests of the Emergency Overflow Shelter. The menu has not yet been determined, but if you would like to help, please contact Karen Kendall. Guests are sincerely grateful for the meals we provide.

Save the date... **January 25, 2015**

FOCUS and the Hunger Action Network of New York will hold their annual joint benefit **EMPTY BOWLS** at the Elks Club, 25 South Allen Street, Albany from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. Each participant will receive a handcrafted bowl and will be able to fill it with soup from the Chef's Consortium of the Hudson Valley, and have, on the side, some artisan bread from the Rock Hill Bake House of Glens Falls.



**Remember the
Food Pantry**

Shampoo

Please Note:

- January 1 ~ **Church Office Closed**
Happy New Year!
- January 6 ~ Coordinating Council
5:30 at Malone's
- January 19 ~ **Church Office Closed**
- January 25 ~ Annual Meeting
- January 30 ~ Choir Cabaret: Benefit for
Mission Trip

A new Church Directory will be published early in the new year. If your contact information has changed, please let Dorothy know. Thank you.

**Deadline for the February issue of
the MOSAIC
is January 18.**



Dear Friends:

It was a pleasure to worship with you during Advent. I enjoyed seeing old friends and meeting some of the newer members of the church. It's nice to have faces to go with directory listings!

Your warm greetings and acknowledgement of my thirty years of service to Emmanuel touched my heart, and I deeply appreciate the thoughtful, generous gift. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Dorothy

Happy Birthday...

January



- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Ellen Corcoran | 3 rd |
| Kathy Donley | 4 th |
| Michael Clement | 11 th |
| Avan Neer | 11 th |
| Rosemary Koonce | 14 th |
| Monica Scheerer | 15 th |
| Lucas Silverman | 15 th |
| Mattie Blassengale | 18 th |
| Jean Burton | 21 st |
| Samuel Koonce | 24 th |
| Chelah Collins | 25 th |
| Erica Edwards | 25 th |
| Hunter Spann | 25 th |
| Gretchen Scheu | 26 th |
| Veronica Collins | 28 th |

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



Nursing Home Visits Resume

The Choir will begin their schedule of monthly nursing home visits on January 24 when they travel to the Eddy Geriatric Memorial Ctr. in Troy. The group gathers for rehearsal at 9:30, and the program begins at 10:00. If you have questions about this special music ministry, you may contact Michael Clement or Pat Hunziker.

Men's Gathering Scheduled

Emmanuel men will begin the new year by enjoying lunch together at Normanside Restaurant on Wednesday, January 7. If you plan to attend, please contact Bob Hunziker or Roy Mallory so adequate seating can be arranged.

If you have not yet submitted your Annual Report, please do so as soon as possible. We wish to distribute the Book of Reports on Sunday, January 18.

Emmanuel Baptist Church
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