

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
275 STATE STREET
ALBANY, NY 12210

Office: (518) 465-5161

emmanuelalbany@juno.com

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Pastoral Ponderings

“Resurrected women, men and children today also require caring communities that are willing to nurture and strengthen them until they are able to walk alone: to remove the graveclothes of self-doubt, social isolation, marginalization, and oppression; to tear away the wrappings of fear, anxiety, loss and grief, so that unbound women, men and children might walk in dignity and become creative agents in the world.”

~ The Rev. Veronica Miles

I met Pastor Danny recently. He has served the Chin Baptist Church in Rensselaer since July 2014. He lived in the United States for many years, in Seattle, Chicago and Arizona before coming to New York. His English is excellent and in our conversation I learned things about Myanmar/Burma that I had not known before. He said that there are 135 languages spoken there – 135 languages in a country about the size of the state of Texas! I also learned that there are 40 Karen dialects and at least that many Chin dialects. Members of the Chin Baptist congregation in Rensselaer do not all speak the same language. Pastor Danny preaches in Burmese, which most of his Chin congregants understand. While he is speaking Burmese, Powerpoint slides with English and one Chin language translation are projected on the screen. English is for the young people who do not know any of the languages of their homeland.

I am struck, once again, by the resourcefulness and resiliency of our Chin and Karen brothers and sisters. I recall stories of other immigrant congregations and their efforts to hold fast to their faith while straddling multiple cultures. I recall stories from the early Christian communities who stood fast despite obstacles like poverty, government persecution, social exclusion and internal conflict. As the apostle Paul described it, “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.” 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

Faith communities are resilient. We keep on keeping on because of our shared hope. That shared hope comes from Jesus, who is Resurrection and Life. We know that things are not yet as they should be, that the powers of sin and death and disease and evil diminish life, but we also believe that the Kingdom of God is present and active. And in the fullness of time, God’s reign on earth will be as it is even now in heaven.



Hope is our response to the world and hope is what we extend to each other within community. We are the Community of the Unbinding. As we saw in the story of Lazarus, God raises the dead, but we are the ones called to unbind each other, to loose the graveclothes and to help those struggling to live in the full, abundant life which God promises. In this season of Eastertide, and in every season, we bear the hope of resurrection for a world that needs us to bear it.

Blessings, *Kathy*

Maundy Thursday

April 2

Meal at 5:30

Tenebrae Worship following

The Seven Last Words of Christ by Theodore Dubois

Please sign up in fellowship hall.



Good Friday Worship

Noon

at St. Vincent DePaul Church (900 Madison Ave.)

sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches

This year's service includes the reflection "In the Green Wood and the Dry" as written and presented by the Reverend Bertrand T. Fay. We are grateful to Fr. Fay for his willingness to share a work that will draw us into the experience of Good Friday as we identify with and place ourselves into that event. Our ritual this year will create a stronger distinction of the loss of Good Friday and the celebration and joy of the Easter resurrection. Please join us for a service of contemplation, reflection and silence.

Easter Party

Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m. to noon

For children ages 1-12

Games... Craft Activities... Candy making

Treasure Hunt and more...

Lunch included

Please sign up!



Easter Morning

April 5

6:30 a.m. FOCUS Sunrise Service

Rev. Jerrod Huguenot preaching

(West Capitol Park steps;

Swan St. opposite the Alfred E. Smith Bldg.)

7:00 a.m. Breakfast at Emmanuel

10:00 a.m. Celebration of the Resurrection

with Holy Communion

11:00 a.m. Reception

From Service to Others...

The following article recently appeared on the ABCUSA website:



FOCUS Churches of Albany: Serving People in a Broken and Hurting World

The story below is about a ministry of the FOCUS Churches of Albany, which is a recent recipient of the Matthew 25 Grant, sponsored by ABCUSA.

Emmanuel Baptist Church of Albany, NY, and six other congregations in the area have combined their energies to provide services to their needy neighbors through FOCUS Churches of Albany. FOCUS celebrates the common calling of the churches involved to be God's servant people in a broken and hurting world.

Last summer, with the help of an ABCUSA Matthew 25 Grant, FOCUS kicked off *Food Empowerment 2014*, working to strengthen families to have more control over access to fresh produce. The project goal is to empower low income individuals in Albany, who experience food insecurity, to learn how to grow, cook, and have access to and choices for an adequate supply of safe, nutritious, and appropriate food items.

Gardening in a Bucket is an important component of the ministry. Guests of the Food Pantry were able to take home container gardens which included pots, soil, seedlings, and expert advice on how to grow tomatoes, green peppers, and cabbage. The Pantry also gave out more than 100 seed packets. Many of the guests had gardened before but now had no space for a traditional garden. They were enthusiastic about container gardening and many took home multiple pots as well as seedlings. There were 133 households enjoying fresh produce through their participation in Gardening in a Bucket this year.

Gardening in a Bucket (GIAB) for Kids is a combination art/gardening event. Children decorate pots as they like, then plant cherry tomato seedlings in them. GIAB for Kids went "On the Road," taking the project to a local family homeless shelter and also to two free day camps for underprivileged children. These children came from low-income urban families and had never gardened before. In all, 52 children participated in the project this year. They had a great time, and the volunteers who ran the events did too!

The FOCUS Churches of Albany are truly serving as the hands and feet of Christ to their hungry neighbors.

NOTE: *The Matthew 25 Grant, sponsored by ABCUSA, is funded by a generous donor whose goal is to help meet the needs of "housing, feeding, education and health with regard to the less fortunate." Ministries must be in relationship with American Baptist Churches to be eligible to apply. Awards for the Matthew 25 grant are made twice a year, in April and October, with application deadlines of March 1 and September 1. To view the guidelines and download the application form, click here.*

Sunday, April 12, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Introduction to US/ Mexican Immigration Issues
featuring Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry Students



Please join us to learn more on this very troubling issue. There will be a lots of time for discussion.

- * 6:30 pm - Dessert & Fellowship
- * 6:45 pm - Introduction to PCUSA response to immigration issues and possible Hamilton Union involvement by Rev. MJ Pattison
- * 7:15 pm - First person impressions from the Cornerstone Protestant Campus Ministry's Jan.'15 Mission trip to the US/Mexican border by students

Please RSVP to Charlotte Hasselbarth (chasselbarth@hotmail.com)



Emmanuel Offers Space for Refugee Assistance

The Refugee Community Health Partnership will be providing Quick Help in Emmanuel's parlor on Mondays from 9:30-12:00 noon, beginning April 6. Quick Help volunteers, assisted by volunteer Karen and Burmese interpreters, will offer help to refugees attempting to navigate American culture. Karen people are invited to come and bring with them whatever they may need help with in understanding or doing – e.g. completing job applications, understanding bills, re-certifying for Medicaid, making appointments, applying for college, contacting their health plan, writing a resume, understanding a letter their child brought home from school, what to do about a traffic ticket – matters that can be handled appropriately within a short time period or continued the next week.

The Refugee Community Health Partnership operates within the organizational structure of the Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc., whose mission is: "To provide services to the community that will support and promote healthy families, adults and children. Our agency is dedicated to improving the neighborhood as a setting for family life, contributing to health and well-being, and promoting education and employment as a means of self-development." The co-organizers of the Program are Edmund Russell Altone, JD, MA, MPH, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Health Policy Management and Behavior, University at Albany School of Public Health, and Susan E. Kukuk, BA, a community volunteer with refugees.

Congregational Meeting to be Held

The next quarterly congregational meeting will be April 12, following worship. One item of business will be discussion of "The Charter for Compassion." The Charter for Compassion represents a number of individuals, communities and institutions who affirm the central role of compassion in our public and private lives. At the congregational meeting, we will discuss the possibility of affirming this statement as individuals and/or as a congregation. The text of the Charter is below. More information may be found at [www.http://charterforcompassion.org/](http://charterforcompassion.org/)

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect. *It is also necessary* in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women to restore compassion to the center of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

THE FAITH & HUNGER NETWORK OF NYS PRESENTS:
WORKING TOGETHER TO END HUNGER

ELLEN TELLER, (Keynote)

Director of Government Affairs

Food Research & Action Center, Washington D.C.

Saturday

April 11, 2015

1 - 4 Pm

Sisters Of St. Joseph

Carondelet Hospitality Center

385 Watervliet Shaker Rd., Latham

Program also includes:

Panel: Anti-Hunger Work in New York State

4 Workshops:

- What's Faith got to do with it?
- Regional CROP Walks
- Bread for the World Offering of Letters
- Local best practices in grassroots advocacy

CABA, CACC and FOCUS Churches of Albany are some of the many sponsors of this event.

Attention, CABA Women...

Here are some dates for you to consider:

- * **CABA Women's Convention**
April 24-26 Owego, NY Registration: \$30
- * **CABA/ABW Summer Meeting**
July 11 at Clifton Park Ctr. Church
- * **CABA/Adirondack Retreat**
September 18 & 19 at Christ the King Retreat Ctr., Greenwich
- * **Old Fashioned Revival**
September 23-25 at Old Stone Church, Saratoga



Watch for details as the events draw closer.

If you have questions, you may speak with Karen Kendall.



Since Spring is here, Service to Others Commission has discontinued the collection of winter clothes for the Karen congregation. Thank you to all who have donated. Your generosity is very much appreciated.



Notice of Meetings...

- April 7 ~ Coordinating Council: 5:30
- 11 ~ Karen/EBC mtg.
- 12 ~ Quarterly Congregational Mtg. Diaconate

Award Presented To Emmanuel

Historic Albany Foundation has recognized Emmanuel's efforts to maintain and restore our building. They selected Emmanuel to receive the *2015 Preservation Initiative Award for Exterior Repair*. There is no financial component to this, but it sure feels great to be recognized for our hard work.

By doing the repairs and continued improvements, the life of our building is extended, our ministries are multiplied. As we move forward we can pride in our accomplishments and we can hold up this award to potential donors. Just think, any attempt to replicate Emmanuel at this point in history would cost millions. We are blessed to have such a precious resource.



Ladies Lunch Scheduled

Emmanuel ladies will gather at Normanside

Country Club on **Thursday, April 2** (11:30 a.m.) to enjoy lunch together. If you plan to attend, please contact Gail Hill or Betty Mallory so adequate seating can be arranged.



Nursing Home Visits Continue

The Choir will share their gift of song at the Eddy in Cohoes on Saturday, April 25. The group will gather for rehearsal at 9:30, and the program will begin at 10:00. If you have questions about this special music ministry, you may contact Michael Clement or Pat Hunziker.

Remember the Food Pantry...

April: deodorant

CROP Walk May 3

12:30 Registration 1:30 kick-off at First Lutheran Church



If you would like to participate in this 3 1/2 mile walk to raise funds for the hungry, you may contact Karen Green. She has all the details and registration packets.

Happy Birthday

- Anthony Malone
- Geoffrey Bray
- Andrew Malone
- Matthew Normile
- Chris LaBarge
- Ian Leet
- Tenosha Ford
- Hannah Scheu
- Lillian Matejcak
- Alyce Malone
- Jonathan Bray
- Kristen Stroebel
- Karen Green



- 5th
- 6th
- 6th
- 8th
- 11th
- 13th
- 16th
- 18th
- 20th
- 21st
- 23rd
- 23rd
- 27th

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

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



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