

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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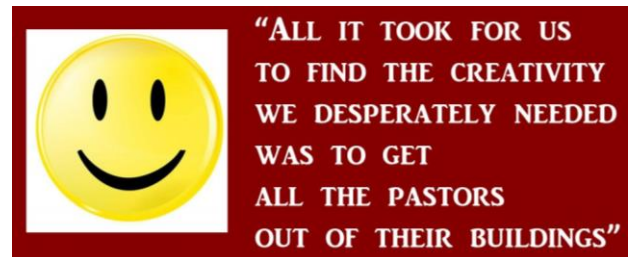
Pastoral Ponderings



In the church year, this is the season of Pentecost and after Pentecost. We sometimes call it “Ordinary Time” which was originally “Ordinal Time,” as in ordinal numbers. Pentecost falls on May 31 this year. The next Sunday, June 7 is the First Sunday after Pentecost, June 14 is the Second after Pentecost and so on. So, Pentecost is one Sunday with a whole season that follows. Pentecost celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which comes as a flood of energy. Acts 2 offers the competing images of a mighty wind and fire and multiple language and a stirring speech by Peter. It feels like the Holy Spirit provides more energy and creativity than can be absorbed by those present.

Sometimes, on Pentecost Sundays, preachers take to their pulpits to suggest that today’s Christians need to reclaim that creativity, that people in the pews need to go out into the world with energy like that of wind and fire to share the love of Jesus. Sometimes, preachers do that in an effort to break up the ruts that we perceive the church might be falling into.

Last week, I attended the Festival of Homiletics as an on-line event. I usually attend in person every 3 or 4 years. It is a very high quality preaching festival which educates and inspires about 2000 preaching nerds like myself every year. One of my favorite things this year was the pastor who said “All it took for us to find the creativity we so desperately needed was to get all the pastors out of their buildings.” It was not an insult. It was offered as ironic humor at a time when the healing of laughter is sorely needed. It acknowledged how much creative energy pastors and church leaders have been exerting in response to the pandemic.



So, all those Pentecost preachers who exhorted their flocks to be creative with Spirit energy (and I might have been one of them) have seen that happen in a highly unexpected way. After all the times that we were encouraged to “get beyond the walls of the church building”, here at last, is where we find ourselves. You have demonstrated your commitment to being a worshipping community by faithfully showing up for Zoom church every Sunday since March 22. Thank you

continued...

for your patience with each other as we all navigated new technology and learned how to set up our devices and mute ourselves. Thank you for your patience as I learned, and am still learning, how to lead worship and preach across cyberspace.

I trust that the Holy Spirit is active and moving among us still. And we need that creative, life-giving energy, probably now more than ever. Friends, we are the church TOGETHER. It is our unity of spirit and love, not our presence in a building, that empowers our work on behalf of the gospel. We need each other. Life is going on in the midst of pandemic. We need our community for mutual support through all of our joys and concerns. We need our community to discern together how to be present for each other, how to keep growing in the way of Jesus when we can only gather in person in small, socially-distanced groups.

Your church leaders have been working hard, but **we are all in this together and we need everyone.** If you have ideas or questions or concerns, or if you are willing to volunteer in any way, please contact me or a member of the Executive Team: Jean Burton, Jan Curtis, Ellen Corcoran, Karen Green, Judy Henningson, Brian Hughes, Curtis Klope, Tom Lahut, Becca Leet, Edith Leet, Marilyn Malone, and/or Ruth Pushee.

Peace,

Kathy

PS. If you are reading this and have not been able to connect with us on Sunday mornings because of technological barriers, we miss you. We are working to get everyone connected who wants to be connected. We don't know all of the needs, but we are prepared to help with such things as finding compatible devices and installing internet service. We want everyone to be able to gather in community. If you are dealing with a technological barrier, please contact me and let's talk.

Coffee Break with the Pastor

Pastor Kathy is considering offering a Zoom coffee break, probably on a Thursday or Friday morning. It would simply be a time to connect with 6-8 other people to catch up with each other outside of any formal meeting. No agenda except to enjoy each other's company for 30-40 minutes. If this is something you would be interested in, please let Kathy know.



Update from the Executive Team...

Your Executive Team is keeping tabs on the status of the Covid-19 pandemic and New York State policies. Churches will be among the last facilities to open. We anticipate that we will not be able to return to the sanctuary before Labor Day, at the earliest. If there is a resurgence of the virus in the late summer or fall, our return will be delayed indefinitely. In the meantime, Executive team is developing:

- a plan for a safe return to the sanctuary, when it is possible
- a plan for continuing on-line worship so that everyone may participate, no matter where they are or what their health status
- a plan for smaller gatherings of socially distanced people, wearing masks, throughout the summer

Summer Worship Design Teams

We will continue to gather for worship via Zoom this summer. It will be a richer experience for everyone if we design worship together. We need 4-6 different people to serve on each of two worship design teams this summer. No experience required. Newcomers and long-timers welcome. Your task is to be part of a group that meets together (via Zoom) to consider all the elements of worship and how to engage those elements most effectively across digital space. Your input as someone who participates from the gallery view would be most beneficial to me, because most of the time I'm in the speaker view. Let me know which team you wish to join.



June 7- July 19

The Tie That Binds

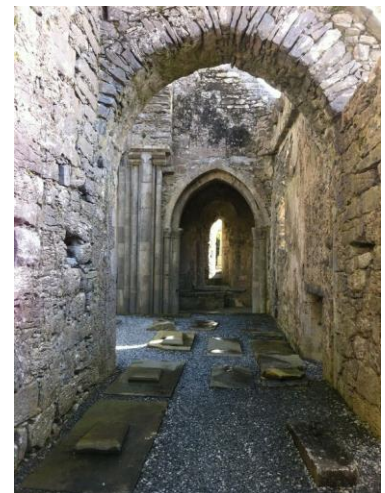
One of the most treasured hymns in the last century was *Blest be the Tie That Binds*. We sing it on almost every Communion Sunday. In this series, we will consider how our relationships with God and with each other form and transform us. At a time, when we may not reach out and touch each other physically, we will reflect on the strength of our other spiritual connections.

The first meeting of this Worship Design Team will be Tuesday, June 2 at 1 p.m.

August 9-30

Bless to Me

The tradition of blessing prayers has endured through centuries among the people called "Celts." These blessings reveal a sense of the holy in every moment, in everything, in every person. This is a way of living—of observing and celebrating, blessing and being blessed by the ordinary acts and encounters of life. Inspired by this tradition of Celtic spirituality and using resources from the Iona Community in Scotland, we will spend time this month steeping in the blessings that surround us and live within us. **This Worship Design Team will meet the first week of July, date to be determined.**



Communicating During Covid

Reminder: Kathy's current e-mail address is pastorkathy@emmanuelalbany.org Some of you are still using the old address. Her mail is still being forwarded from that address, but it would be better to get the new one into your contacts and to delete that old one.



Our presence in digital space is more important than ever now that we are not gathering in our building. If you are a Facebook user, please follow us there. Your comments and interactions with those posts are a vital part of our presence there.

<https://www.facebook.com/EmmanuelBaptistChurchAlbany/>



We have a new YouTube channel. This is the place to find recordings of any Zoom Worship services you missed or want to see again.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIbEdiNURt1wVW3-_NUCiNQ

May 14, 2020

Greetings FOCUS Friends,

It is with a heavy heart that I send notice of my departure as the Executive Director of FOCUS. It has been a wonderful journey and the friendships I've made will last a lifetime.

While my leaving requires me to face a health giant, I will not have to do it alone, as my family will be there to offer the love and support that I need to conquer the giant. In that I have established extended family relationships here in Albany, it is difficult to leave, which means grieving the loss.


Author Henri Nouwen said this, "Every time we make the decision to love someone, we open ourselves to great suffering ... the greatest pain comes from leaving ... we have to trust that the risk of loving is always worth taking." Having the capacity to love, and some love hard, leaves a footprint in our lives that we must grieve. Even without knowing what the future holds, we always risk loving others, and now after loving the people and the mission of FOCUS, I must grieve the leaving.

I am so very grateful for the journey and no matter what God has in His plans for my life, I will keep trusting His guidance. Please know that I am truly honored to have served as the leader of this wonderful mission-oriented program, and to have met many of you who are anchored in the mission.

Thank you for your caring nature and your warm response to the organization's needs for together we do what we cannot do alone. As I hand over the reins to my friend and advocate, Acting Executive Director, Richard Becker, I trust that you will join him in carrying the torch.

Sending thoughts of loving care, warm hugs and a heart of generosity!

Humble and grateful,


Rev. Renee Hollinshed, MS, CGS
Executive Director,
FOCUS Churches of Albany



FOCUS
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

The FOCUS Board has named a search committee for the next permanent Executive Director, with the goal of finding a highly qualified person who will begin work by the end of August. The committee is made up of board members from each of the covenant congregations. Pastor Kathy is serving as Emmanuel's representative on the search committee.

Executive Director – FOCUS Churches of Albany, NY, a faith-based Not-for-Profit set in the heart of Albany, seeks a part time person (30 hours) with strong administrative skills to oversee a food pantry and year-around breakfast program as well as to help lead a passionate volunteer core of diverse faiths to fulfill a shared vision of service for the future.

Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree or higher from a recognized college or seminary. The successful candidate must demonstrate that they are well organized with strong skills in personnel management, program oversight, and board relations. The Executive Director must be able to manage budget and financial issues, and development of new resources through grant writing and community support for the work of FOCUS. Strong communication skills are critical within the organization, with the general public and other community organizations as well as staff and guests of the FOCUS programs. Applicants must demonstrate an ability and desire to work inclusively with diverse groups and individuals ranging from the guests of FOCUS programs to partner churches and inter-faith partners as well as the Albany community at-large. Experience with or understanding of church functions, ecumenical and inter-faith issues highly desirable. More information about FOCUS is available at:

www.focuschurches.net

Salary negotiable, commensurate with experience. FOCUS offers a competitive benefits package including health insurance, retirement savings plan, vacation and other leave benefits.

Potential candidates should send a letter of interest and a resume by June 17, 2020 either via regular mail to: FOCUS Churches, 275 State Street, Albany, NY 12210; or by email to info@focuschurches.net. We cannot respond to phone or email inquiries.



FOCUS Summer Services

The tradition of joining together for worship three times in the summer will continue in 2020, but with slight alterations for the current reality. None of the services will be inside a church building. Following our long-standing pattern, each host church will provide worship in the style of its tradition. Information about how to join each service on-line will be provided closer to the worship time.

The summer schedule is:

July 5 – Delmar Reformed Church hosting at 10:00 a.m.

August 2 – First Church in Albany hosting at 10:00 a.m. (Drive-in service)

September 7 – Westminster Presbyterian Church hosting at 10:00 a.m.

**Welcome
to
Westminster**

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff



Emmanuel rejoices with Westminster Presbyterian Church in the call of the Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff. Pastor Heather began her ministry there on May 27, with Pentecost Sunday as her first official Sunday. Pastor Heather provided excellent care to Emmanuel during Pastor Kathy's sabbatical last year.



From the Mission Team...

America for Christ Offering 2020

America for CHRIST OFFERING 2020

“You shall
LOVE your
NEIGHBOR
as **YOURSELF.**”
MATTHEW 22:39



Jesus teaches us to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39). Our church follows the teaching of Jesus by reaching out to the community and providing for our neighbors’ needs, physical and spiritual alike. Our church’s efforts are supported by American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), which provides resources for

cultivating leaders, equipping disciples, and healing and transforming communities. Through ABHMS, we serve neighbors in Puerto Rico and other places in the United States in long-term recovery after natural disasters. ABHMS provides many ways to help our church love our many neighbors, near and far!

Each year, our church supports this work through our generous gifts to the America for Christ (AFC) Offering. This year we will be receiving the offering in June. Each dollar given increases the ministry and impact of ABHMS to serve neighbors with ministries incarnating Christ’s love, justice and compassion. Further, a portion of this offering (28%) will be shared with our American Baptist Churches region for strengthening local church leaders through programming, pastoral search support and other efforts to help our local church thrive, especially in these times when North America is its own challenging mission field!

Please give generously to this year’s AFC Offering and help us to reach our goal, as we partner with ABHMS to love our neighbors and share the gospel! You can mail a check to the church marked AFC in the comment line or you can give to this special offering through the giving function on the Emmanuel church website here: <https://www.emmanuelalbany.net/giving>

**Remember the
Food Pantry... bar soap**

✓ **May 31 is Pentecost Sunday –
remember to wear red for the
Holy Spirit and to bring a sign of
peace to worship.**

**Deadline for the July
MOSAIC is June 18.**



Happy Birthday...

Donna Brown	8 th
Danielle Johnson	9 th
Barbara Lahut	9 th
Bob Green	10 th
Sarah Malone	13 th
Eddie Simpson	17 th
Robin Bray	18 th
Adele LaBarge	19 th
Erin Wilkerson	19 th
Ken Cole	19 th
Eh Kui Do	24 th
Edith Leet	29 th



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

Summer begins June 20!

CROP Update

The pandemic did not keep Emmanuel from participating in the annual CROP walk which raises money to help end hunger and poverty through long-term sustainable approaches to significantly reduce or eliminate hunger. A portion of the funds raised remain in the Capital District to support local food pantries and feeding programs. Team Emmanuel members – Jean Burton, Judy Henningson, Kathy Moore, Nancy Horan, Edith and Ian Leet, Marilyn and Tony

Malone – have raised over \$2300 so far. Donations may still be made by sending a check made out to CWS/CROP to Nancy Horan at 13 Chapman Drive, Albany, 12203 by the first week in June. Or through the website:

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/albanyny/Team/View/130525/Emmanuel-BaptistAlbany>



Edith and Ian's route



Jean Burton's walk



Emmanuel Baptist Church
275 State St.
Albany, NY 12210

